



REAL RACE, EQUITY AND LEADERSHIP



# The City Leader's Compass to the **My Brother's Keeper Landscape**

### About the National League of Cities

The National League of Cities (NLC) is the nation's leading advocacy organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. Through its membership and partnerships with state municipal leagues, NLC serves as a resource and advocate for more than 19,000 cities and towns and more than 218 million Americans. NLC's Center for City Solutions provides research and analysis on key topics and trends important to cities and creative solutions to improve the quality of life in communities. Learn more at [www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org).

### About the Race Equity and Leadership (REAL) Initiative

In the wake of the 2014 unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, the National League of Cities (NLC) created the Race, Equity and Leadership (REAL) initiative to strengthen local leaders' knowledge and capacity to eliminate racial disparities, heal racial divisions and build more equitable communities. REAL offers tools and resources designed to help local elected leaders build safe places where people from all racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds thrive socially, economically, academically and physically. Learn more at [www.nlc.org/REAL](http://www.nlc.org/REAL).

### Special Thanks to Our Funders

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# The City Leaders Compass to the My Brother's Keeper Landscape

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# Introduction

Across the country, a growing number of city leaders and diverse stakeholders are committing to addressing the disparities that face our nation's boys and men of color and their respective communities. City leaders are tackling disparities by focusing on indicators, such as high school graduation rates, unemployment rates and arrest rates, among others. To continue to improve outcomes for boys and men of color, the commitment to addressing these disparities by city leaders will be critical.

In February 2014, former President Barack Obama's administration launched the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Community Challenge and the ["MBK Task Force Report."](#) This was a pivotal point in expanding the number of city leaders who became committed to improving outcomes for boys and men of color (BMoC). The continued commitment of the Obama Foundation and MBK Alliance to sustain this work will be vital to its future success.

Recognizing that cities are one of the main vehicles that drive systemic change, the National League of Cities (NLC)—in collaboration with stakeholders and funders—supported numerous cities as they maximized their local, community-focused role to address the disparities facing boys and men of color (initially, black men and boys). We recognize that the defining force behind these disparities is the institutional systems that continually fail to create the environment for boys and men of color to succeed. Therefore, this guide provides a resource to help local elected officials and senior city staff on

their journey through the MBK landscape to identify tangible ways to change broken systems.

Using lessons learned through previous technical support, interviews with local elected officials and senior city staff, input from internal and external experts, as well as research and analysis, this guide highlights a comprehensive set of actions cities can take to reduce disparities. The actions are less about specific programs than the systemic changes that span the six MBK milestones. Additionally, it is important to note that while all the strategies are not from MBK cities, they represent actions that can be tailored for MBK cities to support boys and men of color locally.

As this guide was crafted for cities, there are sections that may not align completely with the original MBK language, but all sections are tailored to support cities' efforts to take local action.

As your city begins or continues its journey through the MBK landscape, this guide will be an effective compass and ongoing reference tool as you consider actions to improve outcomes for boys and men of color. It is important to remember that a city leader's unique opportunity is in taking policy action to undo the systems that create the barriers to success that boys and men of color face daily. We look forward to supporting your city on its journey through the MBK landscape, which will improve the lives of boys and men of color and their communities for generations to come. Happy traveling!!

# Part I: Understanding the Current MBK Landscape

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE FIELD

Since the launch of MBK Community Challenge, cities of all sizes across the country have made strides toward improving outcomes for boys and men of color. Whether establishing an advisory council or convening decision-makers to launch a citywide initiative, city leaders have played a definitive role in shaping the environment and changing systems that impact males of color.

While this work has produced observable successes in many communities, there is still more work to be done. From understanding the status of all MBK cities and communicating strategies to support the network, to helping cities effectively advocate for change locally and building strong peer networks—there are strategies that can move this work forward. Understanding each city's status and direction can help national funders and partners across the field allocate resources to MBK cities that need them the most.

### BMoC Data in MBK Cities

Since the initiative started in 2014, MBK cities are already touching the lives of:

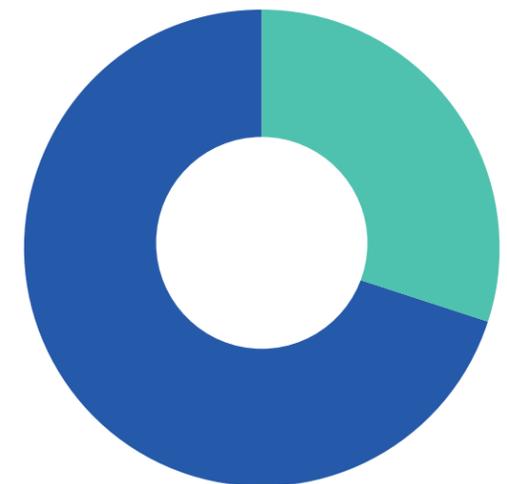
# 17,604,023\*

## Boys & Men of Color

\*Based on ACS 2011-2015 ACS 5-Year PUMS Files

There are 17.6 million self-reported boys and men of color in MBK cities nationally. These communities range from urban to rural, and from populations of fewer than 50,000 to greater than 1 million. Additionally, more than 30 percent of self-reported boys and men of color in the U.S. are represented in MBK cities, evidence that many local elected officials across the country have acknowledged and committed to addressing the existing and growing disparities in their cities.

### Boys and Men of Color Impacted by MBK



■ Entire U.S. ■ MBK Cities

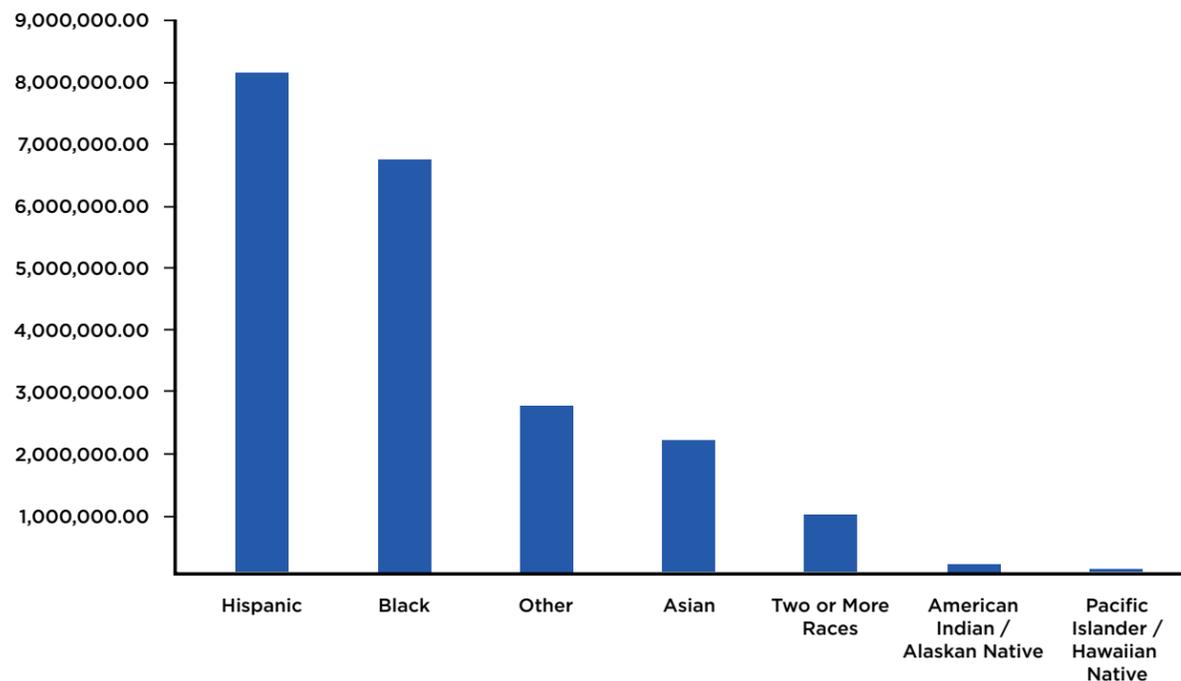
This represents more than 30% of self-reported boys and men of color in the U.S.

**Demographics**

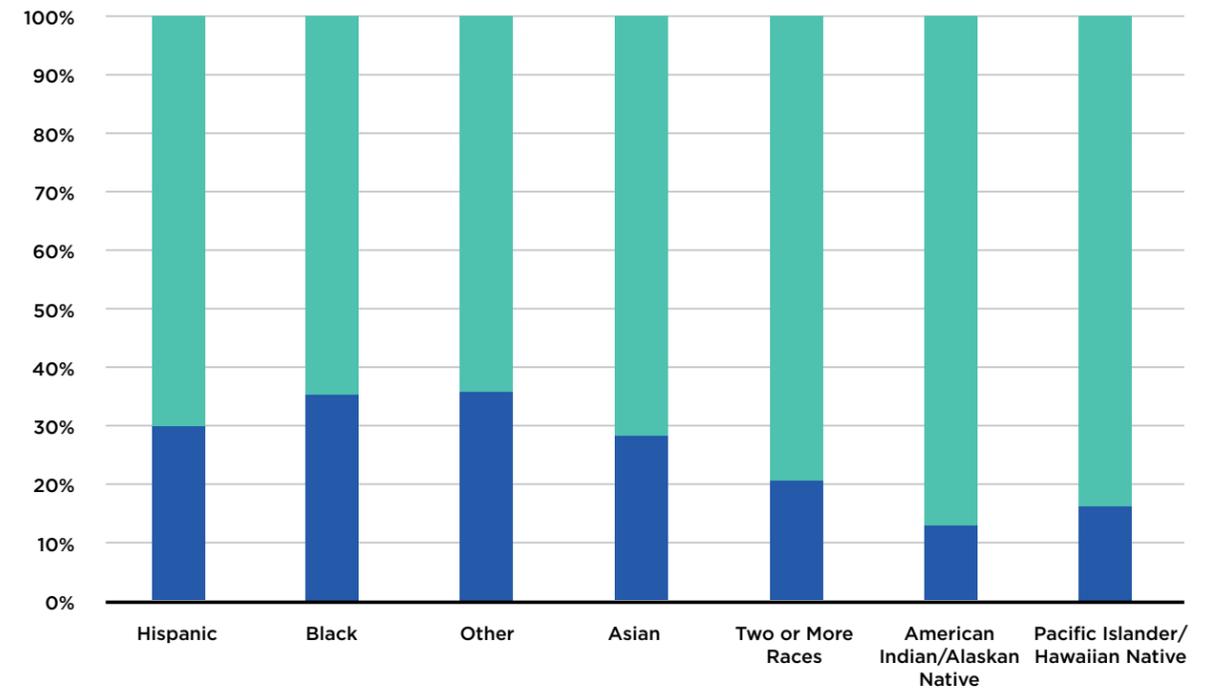
When disaggregating the data further by race and ethnicity, black and Hispanic males represent the largest group, close to 85 percent, among boys and men of color within MBK cities. The disaggregated data in MBK cities reflects the entire population of boys and men of color.

Even with the success that we have seen as several mayors and city leaders have committed to My Brother's Keeper, there is still more work to be done. After disaggregating the 30 percent of boys and men of color within MBK cities, fewer than 30 percent of men within each racial group are being touched.

**Boys and Men of Color Impacted by MBK**



**Boys and Men of Color Impacted by MBK**



“I accepted the challenge ... If more Mayors would accept the MBK challenge and work ... We can reduce the disparities facing all boys and men of color.”

MAYOR WILLIAM JOHNSON | HOLLY HILL, SC

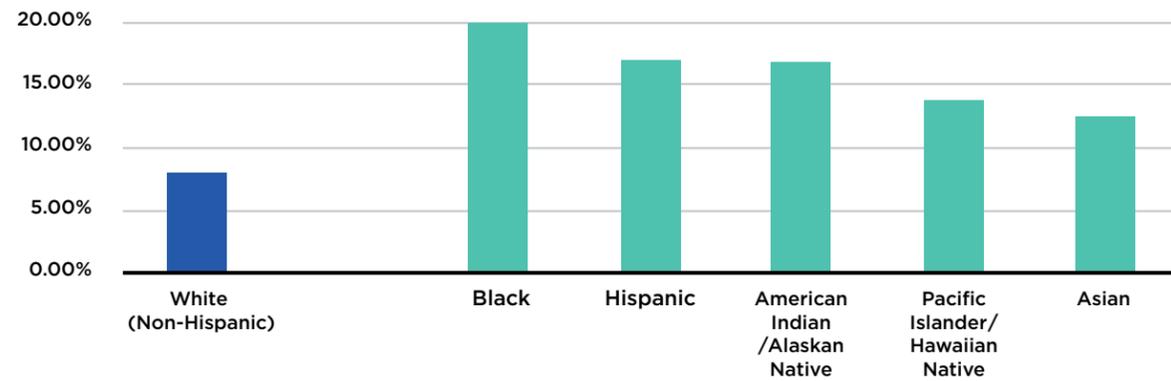
**Basic Data Indicators of Success**

Across some basic indicators such as poverty and educational attainment within MBK cities, regardless of the successes that MBK cities may witness locally, there is still a need for more systemic actions.

income below the poverty level than white males. When the data is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, black males are 2.5 times more likely to be in poverty among MBK cities than other racial groups.

**Poverty**—Among males, boys and men of color are two times more likely to have an

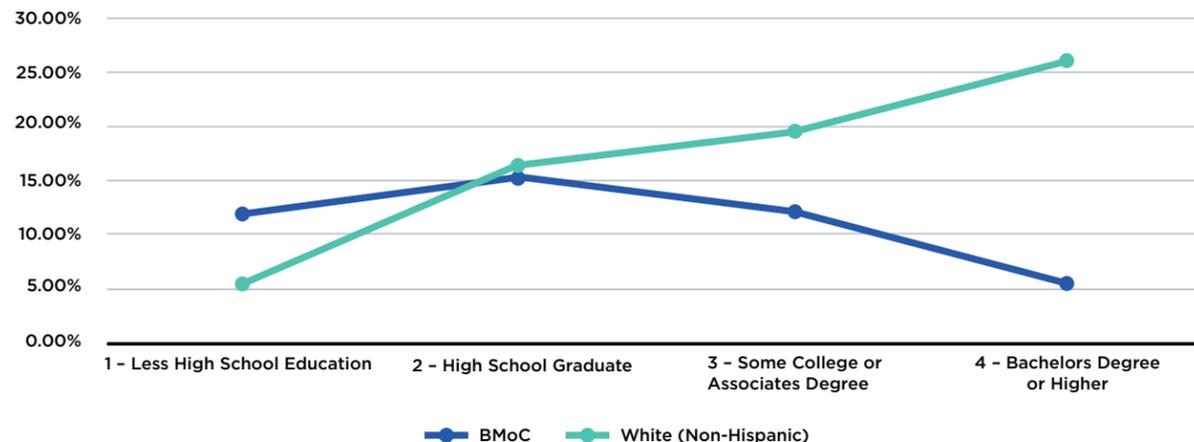
Percentage of Males with Income below the Poverty Level among MBK Cities



**Educational Attainment**—The continuum of education attainment in the graph below illustrates that the gap between boys and men of color and white males in graduating from high schools has closed. However, significant disparities remain elsewhere (i.e., college completion) along the continuum, which restrict boys and men of color from opportunities that can lead to their success. Boys and men of color are 4.5 times less likely to have completed college or a higher

degree than white males. Some of the barriers that lead to this disparity are based on the resources available to support boys and men of color at educational institutions. Additionally, in some communities in which boys and men of color live investments to cultivate their talents are limited. The mismatch between talent and opportunity is a major barrier to their ability to achieve success.

Median Percent of Educational Attainment in MBK Cities



While there is work still to be done, the data points demonstrates a momentum in the nation among city leaders to address the disparities facing boys and men of color and shines a light on where cities need to continue to target resources.

Additionally, as with any change in administration nationally or locally, there is a need to find ways to sustain the momentum and efforts beyond a given term or change in political priority. This document seeks to support local elected officials' ability to start and sustain their efforts.

- More than 50 percent of the MBK plans target all six milestones.
- Milestone 3 (Graduating from high school ready for college and career) was selected by 84 percent of the MBK cities as a target area of focus, making it the most selected milestone among the six milestones.
- Only 40 percent of the plans specifically focus on boys and men of color versus all youth.

“Generations of men and boys of color will reap the benefits of President Obama’s leadership in addressing their needs. This work extends beyond who is in the White House. We have a responsibility to provide equal opportunity to education, jobs and careers. By removing barriers for some of our most vulnerable citizens, we all win.”

MAYOR KAREN FREEMAN-WILSON | GARY, IN

**MBK Plans/Reports in MBK Cities**

Based on what is known publicly to date, this section provides a glimpse into the actions of current MBK cities. These data points are based on researching and analyzing MBK plans, news reports, conversations with cities and the White House MBK reports. The data below do not, however, reflect the breadth of cities that have committed to MBK, which further emphasizes the need for an environmental scan of all MBK cities to understand what action looks like on all levels.

Across the publicly available 50 MBK plans that we reviewed, we learned:

- All of the plans have demonstrated support from a local elected official through a letter of commitment in the report and/or media reports highlighting their support.
- Fewer than 20 percent of the plans acknowledge they have completed a policy analysis, and the actions in a significant number of plans are more program focused, rather than systems focused.
- Fewer than 40 percent of the MBK plans have demonstrated a commitment to disaggregating data by race, gender and ethnicity.



The City Leader's Compass to the My Brother's Keeper Landscape

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Hobson	AL	X			
Prichard	AL	X			
Anniston	AL	X	X		
Birmingham	AL	X	X		X
Wilmot	AR	X			
Little Rock	AR	X	X		
Mesa	AZ	X			
Tempe	AZ	X			
Phoenix	AZ	X		X	
Tucson	AZ	X		X	
Claremont	CA	X			
Coachella	CA	X			
Compton	CA	X			
Culver City	CA	X			
East Palo Alto	CA	X			
Fresno	CA	X			
Hawthorne	CA	X			
Modesto	CA	X			
Oxnard	CA	X			
Rialto	CA	X			
Richmond	CA	X			
Riverside	CA	X			
Sacramento	CA	X			
Santa Ana	CA	X			

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Santa Barbara	CA	X			
Stockton	CA	X			
Vallejo	CA	X			
West Sacramento	CA	X			
San Francisco	CA	X		X	
San Jose	CA	X		X	
Long Beach	CA	X	X		X
Los Angeles	CA	X	X	X	
Oakland	CA	X	X	X	X
Denver	CO	X	X	X	
Bridgeport	CT	X			
Mashantucket	CT	X			
New Haven	CT	X			
Hartford	CT	X		X	
Washington	DC	X	X		X
Wilmington	DE	X			
Dania Beach	FL	X			
Lauderdale Lakes	FL	X			
Miami	FL	X			
Palm Beach County	FL	X			
Sanford	FL	X			
St. Petersburg	FL	X			
Miami Gardens	FL	X	X		
Riviera Beach	FL	X	X		

The City Leader's Compass to the My Brother's Keeper Landscape

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Tallahassee	FL	X			X
Tampa	FL	X	X		
Jacksonville	FL	X	X		
Orlando	FL	X	X		
Albany	GA	X			
Augusta	GA	X			
Fulton County	GA	X			
Macon	GA	X			
Atlanta	GA	X		X	
Savannah	GA	X	X		
Kauai	HI	X			
Davenport	IA	X			
Des Moines	IA	X			
Dubuque	IA	X			
Boise	ID	X			
Aurora	IL	X			
Rockford	IL	X			
Village of Phoenix	IL	X			
North Chicago	IL	X	X		
Chicago	IL	X	X	X	
Elkhart	IN	X			
Goshen	IN	X			
Nappanee	IN	X			
Gary	IN	X	X		

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Indianapolis	IN	X	X		
South Bend	IN	X	X		
Fort Wayne	IN	X	X		
Kansas City	KS	X			
Louisville	KY	X	X		
Baton Rouge	LA	X			
Caddo Parish	LA	X			
Jonesville	LA	X			
Saint Joseph	LA	X			
Shreveport	LA	X			
New Orleans	LA	X	X	X	
Holyoke	MA	X			
Springfield	MA	X			
Newton	MA	X	X		
Boston	MA	X	X	X	X
Fairmount Heights	MD	X			
Mount Rainier	MD	X			
Forest Heights	MD	X	X		
Salisbury	MD	X	X		
Baltimore	MD	X	X	X	X
Portland	ME	X			
Benton Harbor	MI	X			
Buena Vista	MI	X			
Grand Blanc Township	MI	X			

The City Leader's Compass to the My Brother's Keeper Landscape

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Highland Park	MI	X			
Redford Township	MI	X			
Detroit	MI	X		X	
Flint	MI	X	X		
Lansing	MI	X	X		
Southfield	MI	X	X		
St. Paul	MN	X			
Brooklyn Park	MN	X	X		
Minneapolis	MN	X	X		
Ferguson	MO	X			
Normandy	MO	X			
St Louis	MO	X			
Kansas City	MO	X	X		
Glendora	MS	X			
Okolona	MS	X			
Poplarville	MS	X			
Starkville	MS	X			
Yazoo City	MS	X			
Greenville	MS	X	X		
Jackson	MS	X	X		
Charlotte	NC	X			
Creedmoor	NC	X			
Greensboro	NC	X			
Hillsborough	NC	X			

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Salisbury	NC	X			
Spring Lake	NC	X			
Winston-Salem	NC	X			
Durham	NC	X	X		
Nashua	NH	X			
Atlantic City	NJ	X			
Bridgeton	NJ	X			
East Orange	NJ	X			
Jersey City	NJ	X			
Newark	NJ	X			
Princeton	NJ	X			
Trenton	NJ	X			
Vineland City	NJ	X			
Camden	NJ	X	X		
Albuquerque	NM	X			X
Las Vegas	NV	X	X		
Albany	NY	X			
Hempstead	NY	X			
Ithaca	NY	X			
New Rochelle	NY	X			
Niagara Falls	NY	X			
North Hempstead	NY	X			
Syracuse	NY	X			
Buffalo	NY	X	X		

The City Leader's Compass to the My Brother's Keeper Landscape

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Rochester	NY	X	X		
New York	NY	X	X	X	
Berea	OH	X			
Cincinnati	OH	X			
Dayton	OH	X			
East Cleveland	OH	X			
Massillon	OH	X			
Akron	OH	X	X		
Cleveland	OH	X	X		
Columbus	OH	X	X		
Portland	OR	X	X		
Carlisle	PA	X			
Johnstown	PA	X			
Allentown	PA	X	X		
Harrisburg	PA	X	X		
Pittsburgh/Alleghany County	PA	X	X		
Philadelphia	PA	X	X	X	
San Juan	PR	X			
Providence	RI	X	X		
Denmark	SC	X			
Goose Creek	SC	X			
Holly Hill	SC	X			
Union	SC	X			
Charleston	SC	X	X		

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Columbia	SC	X	X		
Chattanooga	TN	X			
Knoxville	TN	X	X		
Memphis	TN	X	X		
Nashville	TN	X	X		
Brownsville	TX	X			
Edinburg	TX	X			
Fort Worth	TX	X			
Laredo	TX	X			
Longview	TX	X			
Prairie View	TX	X			
Austin	TX	X		X	
Dallas	TX	X	X		
Houston	TX	X	X		
San Antonio	TX	X	X		X
Salt Lake City	UT	X			
Chesapeake	VA	X			
Portsmouth	VA	X			
Richmond	VA	X			
Charlottesville	VA	X	X		
Lummi Nation	WA	X			
Seattle	WA	X	X		
Tacoma	WA	X	X		
Milwaukee PS	WI	X			

City	State	MBK Cities	Cities United Cities	Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Grantee	Bloomberg Associate Cities
Oak Creek	WI	X			
Madison	WI	X	X		
Milwaukee	WI	X	X		
Charles Town	WV	X			
Huntington	WV	X			
Ranson	WV	X			

Based on the maps, here are some preliminary facts that we have learned about current MBK Cities.

- Baltimore, Maryland; Boston, Massachusetts; and Oakland, California, are the only cities that currently or in the past have worked with all three BMoC initiatives. (Note: A city’s involvement in BMoC initiatives does not always translate into meaningful change on the local level.)
- Only 37 percent of the MBK cities are involved in at least two of the three national BMoC initiatives.

From the MBK map, cities should have a clearer sense of where the work is occurring locally and nationally to support boys and men of color. City leaders can also gain insight on the existing national resources, which they can connect to and leverage locally.

### The Future of MBK Cities

MBK cities are at a pivotal point in improving outcomes for boys and men of color. Cities are taking promising actions that can be implemented in other communities. There are also future actions that can leverage a city’s strengths and their sphere of influence to ensure greater impact on the success of boys and men of color.

MBK cities should:

- Increase focus on policy, practices and procedures (systems change);
- Develop strategies that have a generational impact and;
- Institutionalize MBK structures within the city.

## THE COST OF INACTION

A disproportionate number of boys and men of color face significant challenges that impact their ability to be contributing members of society. Regardless of the proportion of people that communities of color represent in a city, city leaders’ inaction—due to demographic size, civic engagement or personal belief—will result in the community paying a high economic price. The cost borne by residents can affect a city’s ability to leverage limited resources to be competitive in the local and global market and reduce potential GDP by hundreds of thousands of dollars.

### Partner Resource Spotlight: National Equity Atlas

Researchers refer to youth who are not in school or college, are unemployed, and are between the ages of 16 and 24 as “opportunity youth,” and have calculated the cost associated with them. Currently more than 1.5 million boys and men of color in the U.S. are considered opportunity youth. There are two main costs that each city incurs—fiscal (municipal/taxpayer) and broader social costs. The fiscal costs are lost taxes, additional health care paid for by the taxpayer, expenditures for the criminal justice system and corrections, all welfare and social service payments and lost savings in lower education spending. The social costs to residents are lost gross earnings, additional health expenditures, criminal justice system expenditures and victim costs, non-transferable welfare and social service payments, public and private cost of education, marginal excess tax burden and

the lost productivity spillovers across the workforce.

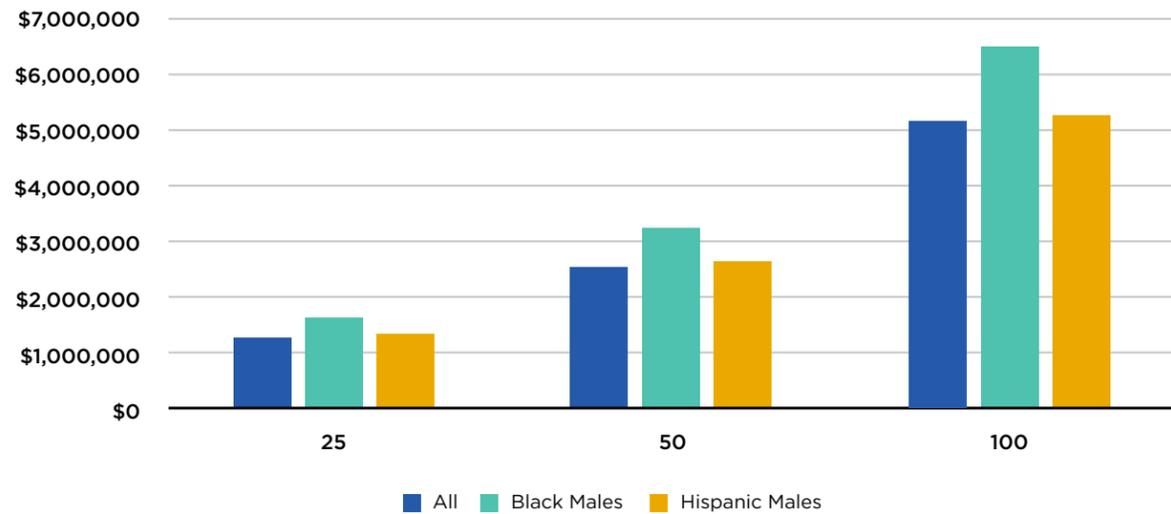
The combined fiscal and social costs for each opportunity youth in a city is \$51,340 annually and \$939,700 over their lifetime. When looking at black and Hispanic males specifically, the combined fiscal and social cost for each male increases to \$64,750 and \$52,750 respectively, and the total cost over their respective lifetimes is \$1,004,930 and \$914,930.

Multiplying those costs by the more than 1.5 million boys and men of color who are opportunity youth, it is costing cities and residents more than \$77 billion a year and \$1.4 trillion over their lifetimes. The graphs below represent the local impact for small cities and medium to large cities based on the general number of boys and men of color who are disconnected in cities.

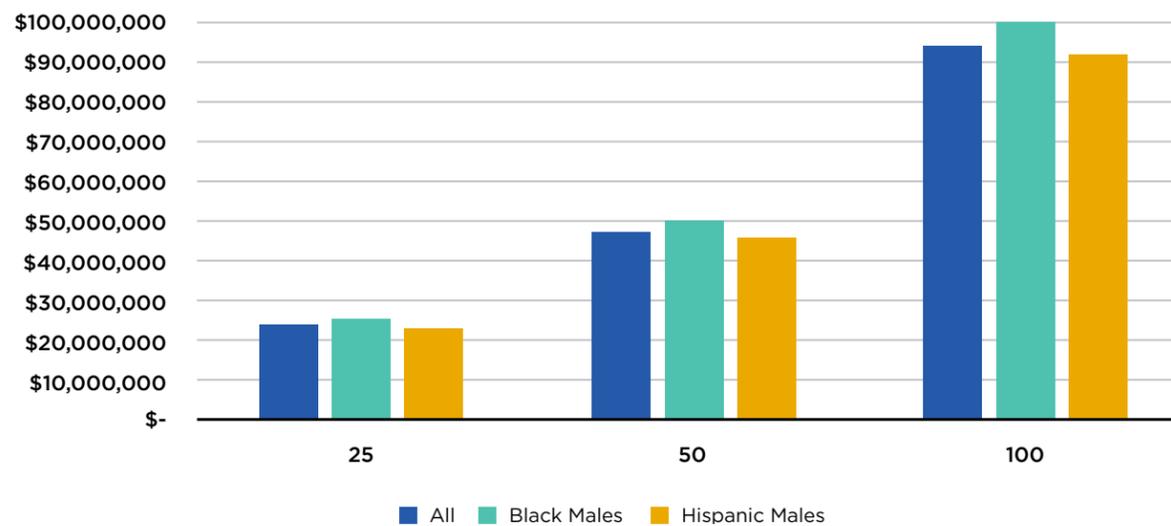
### Small Cities

For small cities, the costs for just 25 boys and men of color could range from \$1.2 million to \$1.6 million annually and \$22.8 million to \$25.1 million over their lifetimes. These expenses can be astronomical for a city that is consistently managing limited resources to balance budgets, improve services and attract new residents and business. The calculations for small cities demonstrate that there are significant costs for cities with disconnected boys and men of color, even when the number is low. Despite the significant costs, small cities are better able to identify and target opportunity youth, which can result in swifter changes in these communities.

Yearly Combined Fiscal and Social Costs for Small Cities by the Number of Opportunity Youth



Lifetime Combined Fiscal and Social Costs for Small Cities by the Number of Opportunity Youth



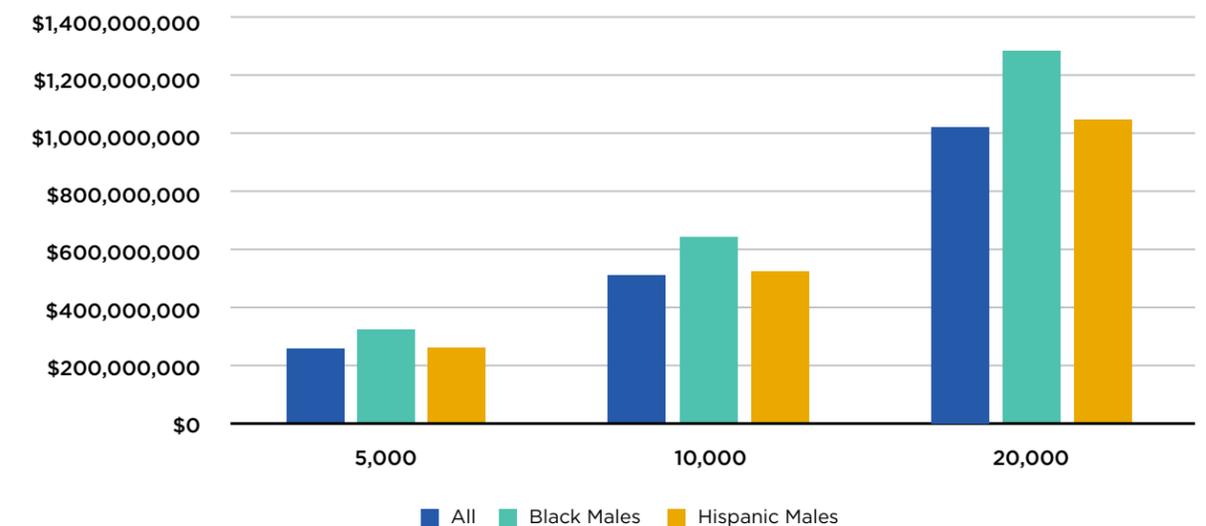
MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA, LONG BEACH, CA

Medium to Large Cities

For medium to large cities, the need to act is also urgent, as having just 5,000 boys and men of color who are disconnected can cost between \$256.7 million and \$323.8 million yearly and between \$4.7 billion and \$5 billion over their lifetimes.

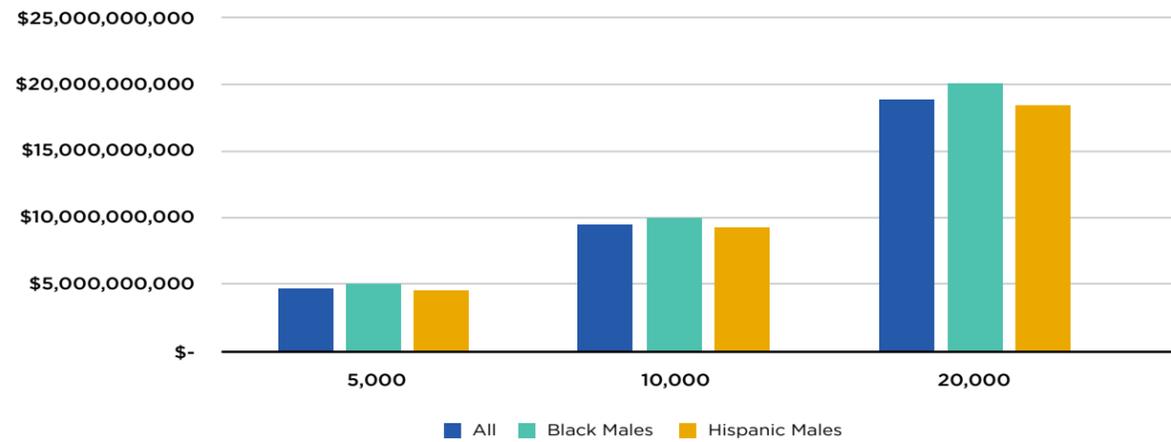
These costs can hinder a city's overall success. It is incumbent on medium and large cities to see from an economic perspective the need to take action locally to improve outcomes for boys and men of color.

Yearly Combined Fiscal and Social Costs for Mid to Large Cities by the Number of Opportunity Youth



## The City Leader's Compass to the My Brother's Keeper Landscape

**Lifetime Combined Fiscal and Social Costs for Mid to Large Cities by the Number of Opportunity Youth**



As cities seek to compete in today's market, they must deal with balancing priorities locally. In [NLC's "State of the Cities Report,"](#) the top challenges facing cities are the economy, budget and finance and public safety. These issues are important for a city to thrive. When tackling the challenges in these areas by breaking them down by race and gender, most cities will find that boys and men of color represent a significant portion of the target audience. Consequently, for a city to see significant

results, it must be intentional about focusing efforts to improve outcomes for boys and men of color.

To learn more strategies for assisting boys and men of color who are opportunity youth, read the Forum for Youth Investment's report, "[Opportunity Youth Playbook: A Guide to Reconnecting Boys and Young Men of Color to Education and Employment.](#)"

"It is important that mayors engage and impact the lives of boys and men of color. We must understand that the success of each of our cities is based on the enhancement of our youth. Our willingness is to invest now so that the city of Birmingham's youth can benefit for years to come."

FORMER MAYOR WILLIAM BELL | BIRMINGHAM, AL



COUNCIL PRESIDENT ASHANTI HAMILTON, MILWAUKEE, WI



MAYOR TOM HENRY, FORT WAYNE, IN



# Part 2: Maximizing Municipal Leadership in MBK

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Regardless of city size, community demographic or location, municipal leadership is integral in shaping the conversation around boys and men of color, creating funding streams, passing legislation and building strong networks. With nearly 200 cities committed to the My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge, there is a need to ensure that current and future city leaders know the unique role they play, which complements the community, school districts and other sectors focused on improving outcomes for boys and men of color.

In this section, city leaders will learn some of the critical reasons why their leadership is needed, but also learn the various strategies they can employ to lead their MBK efforts.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CITY LEADERSHIP IN MBK

City leaders can use their spheres of influence and power to ensure the systemic and long-term success for boys and men of color. They can raise the level of awareness and prioritize city resources to help address the disparities that impact our various communities.

As a caveat, several MBK cities tend to focus heavily on programming for boys and men of color, rather than on the municipal policies, practices and procedures that impact their daily environments. Though programmatic responses can be useful, they are often short-term and narrow fixes that are usually dependent on funding. While they might satisfy constituents, many programs—even

the effective ones—are rarely scaled or appropriately measured. Without city leaders spending time to address environmental factors (housing, safety, health, employment, economic development), desired outcomes will be realized only by a small number—boys and men of color fortunate enough to be involved in select community programs offered by nonprofits and municipal agencies. Ultimately, city leaders have a larger role to play to ensure that systems and policies provide equitable opportunities for boys and men of color to succeed.

## TAKING ON THE TRIPLE P'S IN GOVERNMENT

City leaders have the unique opportunity to not only change the outcomes of boys and men of color by creating programs that target individuals, but also the systems that perpetuate the generational barriers to their success.

Within municipal government, the areas that are usually invisible to the public fall within the internal policies, practices and procedures, or the “Triple P’s.” In this document, when the term “policy” is used, it will describe an action that requires legislation in the form of an ordinance. For example, [“Ban the Box” laws are policies that more than 100 cities](#) have passed mainly through city council votes.

“Practices and procedures” are internal administrative actions that impact the way a policy is implemented. For example, many cities are moving toward racial-equity budgeting practices. The city of Portland, Oregon, has modified its practices and

“procedures to ensure that each department assesses its funding priorities through a racial-equity lens—simply by asking, Who benefits?” and, “Who is burdened by department funding priorities?”

The key to making system change within local government is being willing to tackle the Triple P's. By ignoring these, city leaders will not effect the system changes needed to positively impact boys and men of color for generations to come.

**“I formed the Office of Public Engagement to oversee and support the work of the Mayor's Office of Black Male Engagement... a mission to engage and empower individuals and organizations to take action in dismantling systems of inequity that create measurable change for our young men.”**

**MAYOR JAMES KENNEY**  
PHILADELPHIA, PA

### CITY LEADERSHIP ACTIONS

There are a number of ways municipal leaders can effectively lead and support MBK efforts within their local communities. Highlighted below are four areas of actions seen in MBK communities and supported by

NLC's history of working with cities. Refer to [Part 4: Achieving Success within the MBK Milestones](#), to learn when these actions are employed with each strategy through the icons represented.



#### ADVOCATING FROM THE BULLY PULPIT

In both mayor-council, and council-manager forms of government, it is imperative that city leaders garner public support for, and city-wide commitment to, improving outcomes for boys and men of color. Without public support, MBK community-driven initiatives may be viewed as only community-of-color challenges—never being owned by the city at large. Therefore, city leaders leveraging the bully pulpit increase the odds that a diverse group of public/private sectors commit to critical action steps to improving outcomes for boys and men of color.

#### City Spotlight: Louisville, Kentucky

Since Mayor Greg Fischer began his term as the mayor of Louisville, Kentucky, in 2011, he has used his platform to focus on the plight of black men and boys. Within the Jefferson County public school system in 2014, the suspension rate of black boys was three times that of white boys. Additionally, the city discovered disparities facing black men and boys in other systems. The mayor's commitment and advocacy for changing the outcomes of black men and boys led to the city joining NLC's Black Male Achievement initiative, Cities United, and the My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge. As part of these efforts, the city raised \$226,400 to develop [Zones of Hope](#), and the city donated \$500,000 to its [Reimage program](#) to support their efforts and increase national attention. Mayor Fischer leveraged his platform to create awareness for the challenges facing black men and boys, to acquire funding and to engage the city and community stakeholders. Campaign for Black Male Achievement CEO Shawn Dove has publicly identified the city as the epicenter for black male achievement.



#### CONVENING STAKEHOLDERS

A city leader's voice and position can be effective in recruiting the right people to the table to address issues that negatively impact boys and men of color. City leaders are encouraged to actively recruit and convene a diverse group across the various sectors.

When considering who sits at the table, the stakeholders who should be represented are boys and men of color, businesses, nonprofit organizations, community members, local/state/federal government agencies, program evaluators, local elected officials and school district representatives. The list above is not meant to be exhaustive, but it can serve as a starting point for cities. The critical question to ask when convening stakeholders to support boys and men of color is, “Who is missing from the table?”



MAYOR GREG FISCHER, LOUISVILLE, KY



### ADOPTING/IMPLEMENTING POLICIES, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

The one area in which municipal leaders play a critical role is adopting and implementing policies, practices and procedures. A lack of focus on this area could limit the opportunity to reform policies that compromise programmatic efforts and eliminate structural barriers, which could otherwise increase the chances for sustainable changes. Even if the community is focused on the city's policies, practices and procedures, it may potentially miss the root causes that can only be seen or changed internally within city government by a municipal leader.

#### City Spotlight: Seattle, Washington

The 2008 shooting of five black males in a southeast neighborhood of Seattle caused former Mayor Greg Nickels and his city staff to tour the neighborhood to understand the challenges facing the community. They found 80 burnt-out streetlights, which are

uncommon in other parts of the city, and which can compromise the health and safety of a community. With the [Race and Social Justice Initiative](#) underway, city employees were well positioned to analyze the underlying system that created this inequity. They found that the complaint-based system used to identify burnt-out streetlights was not working well for all communities. With 80 percent of the neighborhood's population made up of people of color and more than half of the residents being low income, the city used a racial-equity tool to understand the reason for the burnt-out lights and developed a solution that changed policies and practices.



### LEVERAGING FUNDING AND CITY RESOURCES

In many cases, city leaders have the ability to modify and approve the city's funding priorities. Every city may not be able to reallocate funds, but all cities have the option to redirect staff time and leverage city facilities to support their MBK initiative.

A lack of funding for community initiatives can stunt the growth of great programs and city actions that would otherwise blossom. Cities should play a critical role in bringing funding to the My Brother's Keeper initiatives by self-funding, repurposing grant funding and leveraging their resources to fundraise for additional grants—including community and foundation investments—to help further implement their MBK plans.

#### City Spotlight: Orlando, Florida

The City of Orlando's Families, Parks and Recreation department serves about 5,200 boys and young men of color via robust youth programs at 18 recreation centers, eight middle schools and five high schools located throughout the city. The department also operates a comprehensive youth initiative in the city's majority-community-of-color Parramore neighborhood, which struggles across a number of success indicators (unemployment, crime, academic success, etc.). The city has leveraged AmeriCorps VISTA funding to hire a My Brother's Keeper coordinator. It has also embedded its MBK work throughout the department by offering, among other things, academic assistance, science and technology enrichment activities, college access assistance and youth employment opportunities to boys and young men of color in its citywide network of facilities and programs. Known as [MBK Orlando](#), the program aims to improve academic performance, increase employment and reduce incarceration among this population. Successful outcomes include a 63 percent drop in juvenile arrests in the Parramore neighborhood, employment obtained for

284 boys and young men of color and college access assistance provided to an additional 550 MBK youth.

Failure to leverage funding and resources impedes the systemic changes needed to impact boys and men of color for generations to come.

### REAL'S CORE VALUES TO ENGAGE THE TRIPLE P'S FOR MBK COMMUNITIES

Understanding the need for municipal leadership in changing policies, practices and procedures of government systems is critical. Race, Equity And Leadership (REAL) over the years has identified four core values for city leaders committed to improving outcomes for boys and men of color. When developing and implementing MBK locally, cities should integrate the values below into their work to increase their chances of attaining the same or greater success as cities that have applied these values.

#### DISAGGREGATE AND SHARE DATA

Disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender and geography allows a city to gain a greater understanding of the BMoC population and where they live. As a result, policymakers can learn how a policy might impact one group differently than others and ultimately make better decisions. Without making a demographic distinction, it is challenging to measure impacts and effectiveness of interventions for each

milestone. Policy decisions that are based on sound disaggregated data can positively impact boys and men of color and their families.

Additionally, an effective communication strategy with disaggregated data will improve public trust and add clarity to interventions. Data is of its greatest benefit to boys and men of color when it is shared with transparency across departments, companies, nonprofits and/or school districts. When data is maintained within silos, cities run the risk of duplication and mismanagement of already limited resources. Therefore, city governments must identify the legal routes to share data across departments, school districts and partner nonprofits to have the greatest impact on boys and men of color.

### APPLY A RACIAL-EQUITY LENS

Collecting and sharing disaggregated data is a key step in applying a racial-equity lens—the questions, “Who benefits?” and, “Who is burdened?” by a policy, program or procedure within city government.

Applying a racial-equity lens should be an action step for all MBK cities as it is focused on internal city barriers that have systemic implications. The assessment allows city leaders to understand the potential implications of their actions while providing greater information to advocate for or against city or community action. It is important to note that when applying a racial-equity lens to city policies, practices and procedures, the results may not be seen immediately, but they will create opportunities for future generations of boys and men of color along with their families.

### INCLUDE AND ENGAGE BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR

Intentional inclusion and engagement of boys and men of color as equal partners in analyzing and developing policies, practices and procedures is critical to My Brother's Keeper success within local communities. From understanding how policies and practices play out in the lives of boys and men of color, to providing them a place at the table to advocate, vote and help to implement city actions, their engagement should translate into power to shape city strategy. Every MBK city must find opportunities to include and engage boys and men of color early and in meaningful ways. The National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education and Families created, “[Authentic Youth Civic Engagement: A Guide for Municipal Leaders](#),” which offers a promising framework on engagement.

**“A positive step forward for our community has been the Fort Wayne UNITED initiative. The activities and education initiatives center on listening, input and engagement and lasting, meaningful and positive impact on the lives of black men and boys.”**

**MAYOR TOM HENRY**  
FORT WAYNE, IN

### FOCUS INTERGENERATIONALLY AND ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN

When working to improve outcomes for boys and men of color, there are critical points in their lives that directly impact success. Whether reading at grade level by the end of third grade, or reducing their contact with the justice system, the [MBK milestones](#) and Arnold Chandler's “[Life Course Framework for Improving the Lives of Boys and Men of Color](#)” lay out critical points and provide additional insights for understanding the problem and possible solutions. This document expands on that work and will help city leaders understand how they can impact boys and men of color in ways that begin to break the cycle of poverty perpetuated through mass incarceration, lack of employment opportunities, stagnant education attainment and the growth of single-parent families. Similarly, McDaniels and Caldwell's “Beyond Plight: Promoting the Optimal Development of Black Boys and Men Across the Life Course” takes an ecological perspective to promoting strengths and assets. City leaders can use Beyond Plight tools to examine policies and propose interventions that address the ecological system.

Additionally, cities must simultaneously take action that directly supports boys of color as well as their families, and promotes their successful outcomes. Especially within the early years of a child's life, this strategy can increase the potential success of the boy of color by increasing the success of the parent or guardian in his life. For example, imagine that a city launches a citywide book reading initiative for kids through local libraries and recreation centers.



To reinforce children's reading, cities must consider the resource needs of parents and the community, whether it be improving access to the location, expanding library or recreation hours, or even co-locating job training, adult literacy programs and other services in the facility. The [Forum for Youth Investment highlights](#) federal resources such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that cities and counties can leverage to support local efforts. This multi-generational strategy is ultimately what can help boys of color and their families succeed. Finally, all these efforts must determine common metrics that indicate success. Across and within cities the strategic alignment of policies and programs must be focused on demonstrating growth in protective factors and decline in risk factors. Sustainability and funding requires information on whether the policies and programs are reaching desired goals.

# Part 3: Launching your City's MBK Initiative

## STEPS FOR MBK ACTION

The MBK Alliance is taking the lead in supporting the MBK Community Challenge cities going forward. To be recognized as an MBK Community Challenge City, it is important to follow the four **Playbook Action Steps** outlined below. These steps are critical to effectively leveraging the bully pulpit, understanding the challenges facing the community and building broad community support to act. To further assist cities, a checklist is also provided to help monitor progress toward becoming an

MBK Community Challenge City and successfully launching and sustaining an MBK program locally.

While supporting a select group of cities focused on Black Male Achievement (BMA), the National League of Cities created a BMA Roadmap to help cities develop their BMA plan and track their progress. The modified **BMoC Roadmap** can be an effective tool to assist a city in completing the four MBK Action Steps.

“Through MBK Orlando, our city is implementing a wide array of strategies to address persistent opportunity gaps in the lives of our young men of color.”

MAYOR BUDDY DYER | ORLANDO, FL



MAYOR BUDDY DYER, ORLANDO, FL

### STEP 1:

#### ACCEPT THE MBK COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

To accept the MBK challenge as a mayor, contact MBK Alliance staff at [communities@mbkchallenge.org](mailto:communities@mbkchallenge.org) and provide the following information:

- The designated point of contact on your staff, with contact information
- Confirmation of your pledge to build and execute a plan that targets at least two of the six milestones
- Announcement of your acceptance of the challenge with a press release or media statement

### STEP 2:

#### CONVENE A “LOCAL ACTION SUMMIT” TO BUILD AN MBK COMMUNITY

Take the following actions before the summit.

- Locate and convene boys and men of color and **diverse decision-makers** to identify:
  - high-level challenges facing boys and men of color and their communities across the various systems
  - the structures needed to sustain the city's commitment
- Design the Local Action Summit to discuss and clarify:
  - the previously identified high-level challenges facing boys and men of color
  - the community vision for boys and men of color to help inform the convening body's vision—using an asset-focused approach

This summit should serve as the launching pad for greater conversation in the broader community. Take the following actions after the summit.

- Collect feedback from the community to **develop a shared vision that is clear and concise for boys and men of color**, and then report it back to the community.
- Finalize the **sustainable structure** and decision-makers who will initially be in the room.

### STEP 3:

#### CONDUCT A POLICY REVIEW & FORM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

As you conduct a policy review, it is important to have the right people in the room who are knowledgeable about both systems and programs. Additionally, the MBK team should have a clear sense of the places and systems that pose challenges for boys and men of color as it considers policy changes.

To prepare for the policy review:

- **Identify the data** indicators and ways to track data that connect with each of the previously identified challenge areas that current decision-makers have the power to change at a systems level.
- Engage decision-makers who are committing to be at the table to identify opportunities to change systemic policies.

Consider using PolicyLink's "[Building Place-Based Initiatives for Boys and Men of Color and Vulnerable Populations](#)" when constructing your city's policy review.

After conducting your review, reassess who should be at the table to effect meaningful systemic changes.

### STEP 4:

#### LAUNCH A PLAN OF ACTION, NEXT STEPS & A TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

Before launching your local MBK action plan:

- Using the policy review insights, identify and commit to a set of comprehensive strategies that connect to data indicators and can lessen the disparities facing boys and men of color.
  - develop protocol for tracking data, benchmarks and timelines to ensure the transparent assessment of progress toward goals.
- Strategically identify opportunities for community input throughout the planning process.
- Identify existing, new and potential resources needed for the city to implement policy changes, while helping partners assess their resource needs.

During the process of developing your plan, focus less on programs and more on policy change, as the policy change will have generational impact on boys and men of color. In the MBK Action Plan, create a community engagement plan to receive feedback during the implementation process.

**FINALLY, LAUNCH YOUR MBK ACTION PLAN PUBLICLY!**

## FILL IN YOURSELF

### STEP 1:

#### ACCEPTING THE MBK COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

Which milestones will your city commit to tackling? List at least 1 recommendation for each milestone:

Milestone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Milestone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 2:

#### CONVENE A "LOCAL ACTION SUMMIT"

Brainstorm your city's Local Action Summit:

Who will plan: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What will you accomplish: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When will the event occur: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where are potential locations for the summit: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 3:

#### CONDUCT A POLICY REVIEW

What data points do you want to focus on to drive your city's implementation of the community challenge?

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### STEP 4:

#### LAUNCH A PLAN OF ACTION

Which community organizations will you bring to the table by the launch of your plan of action?

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# Part 4: Achieving Success within the MBK Milestones

## THE MBK MILESTONES

This section offers specific actions that MBK cities can take to improve outcomes for boys and men of color. The wording for some milestones, recommendations and strategies is modified to focus specifically on city leaders' action. The respective modifications and strategies are based on conversations and work with MBK cities, other cities and national experts in the field that have made progress in improving outcomes for boys and men of color.

Consequently, some city examples or strategies may not specifically target boys and men of color and may not come from MBK cities, but the goal is to provide MBK cities with strategies that are working for communities across the country which can be tailored to fit their local needs.

These strategies allow for MBK cities with limited, intermediate or advanced capacities to identify actions that are meaningful for their respective communities.

STRATEGY IMPACT ON BMoC	
<b>Low</b> 	These strategies may work, but typically have limited impact on boys and men of color and reach a small number of boys and men of color for a limited period.
<b>Moderate</b> 	These strategies have been implemented in some communities and have shown some evidence of success anecdotally and have broader impact, with some long-term success.
<b>High</b> 	These strategies have been shown through data, expert interviews and city accounts to impact boys and men of color or other groups at a systemic level.

CITY CAPACITY LEVEL	
<b>Limited</b> 	Cities that are typically beginning conversations to accept the MBK Community Challenge. The city has limited MBK structural support, data to support MBK, funding and resources, and city leader support.
<b>Intermediate</b> 	Cities that are in the process of completing the initial four steps to become an MBK city. The city has developed some structures needed to sustain MBK, is currently building resource and funding sources, is able to collect and analyze general data, and has garnered some city leader support.
<b>Advanced</b> 	Cities that have completed the four MBK steps. The city has developed a sustainable MBK structure, secured funding/resources, constructed data collection and analysis feedback loop disaggregated at least by race and gender, engaged the community, and obtained strong city leader support.

**Effective Strategies for Cities with Limited Capacity**

Recognizing that MBK cities are at varying points of capacity, we have highlighted strategies that are suited to those with

limited, intermediate and advanced capacities. This section specifically describes moderate- to high-impact strategies for cities that have limited capacity to implement their MBK plans.

MILESTONE 1: ENTERING SCHOOL HEALTHY AND READY TO LEARN	
<b>1.2.2 Libraries/City Agencies Support of Informal Care</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Encourage/leverage libraries, museums and city agencies to support informal care providers and boys of color ( <a href="#">Denver, CO</a> )
<b>1.2.3 Early Health and Developmental Screenings</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Collaborate with schools and health providers to promote Early Health and Developmental Screenings ( <a href="#">Houston, TX</a> )
MILESTONE 2: READING AT GRADE LEVEL BY THIRD GRADE	
<b>2.2.3 Computers and Tablet Access</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Provide low-cost computers or tablets for low-income communities of color ( <a href="#">Mooreville, NC</a> )
MILESTONE 3: GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL READY FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER	
<b>3.3.2 After-school Coalition Building</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Build an after-school coalition focused on boys and men of color ( <a href="#">Brooklyn Park &amp; Brooklyn Center, MN</a> )
<b>3.4.2 Citywide High School Graduation Goal</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Set a community-wide goal for high school graduation ( <a href="#">Philadelphia, PA</a> )
MILESTONE 4: COMPLETING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OR CREDENTIALING	
<b>4.1.1 FAFSA Campaign</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Launch an annual FAFSA campaign ( <a href="#">Los Angeles, CA</a> )
<b>4.2.2 Youth Council</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Create or activate youth council or community advisory group to provide insights on increasing postsecondary completion ( <a href="#">Portland, OR</a> )
<b>4.2.3 Citywide Postsecondary Graduation Goal</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Set a community-wide goal for college completion ( <a href="#">Houston, TX</a> )

MILESTONE 5: SUCCESSFULLY CONNECTING TO THE ECONOMY	
<b>5.1.2 Mentoring City Policies</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Pass policies to incentivize city staff to mentor through targeted mentorship programs ( <a href="#">Louisville, KY</a> )
<b>5.1.3 Private Sector Recruitment</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Recruit private companies to invest in the long-term success of boys and men of color to provide internships, job shadowing opportunities, apprenticeship programs and pathways to a career ( <a href="#">Birmingham, AL</a> )
<b>5.3.4 Municipal Regional Collaboration</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Collaborate regionally with local governments and regional stakeholders/ partners to leverage combined resources to change the regional community ( <a href="#">24.1 Missouri</a> )
<b>5.3.5 Municipal Staff Diversity</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Develop and execute strategic plan to ensure the city government reflects the community served ( <a href="#">St. Paul, MN</a> )
<b>5.4.2 Cross-sector Regional Collaboration</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Convene business, industries, education sectors and community development groups through WIB or other entities to design and implement regional economic strategies, which can improve access to entrepreneurial workforce opportunities for BMoC ( <a href="#">Harrisburg, PA</a> )
MILESTONE 6: REDUCING VIOLENCE AND PROVIDING A SECOND CHANCE	
<b>6.1.2 Violence Prevention</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Start and continue to implement violence- and gang-prevention initiatives. ( <a href="#">Ceasefire, New Orleans, LA</a> , <a href="#">Hampton, VA</a> )
<b>6.2.1 Community Policing Strategies</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Implement recommendations from "21st Century Policing Report"
<b>6.2.2 Community Conversation</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Host community conversations that bring the police and community together ( <a href="#">Tacoma, WA</a> )
<b>6.4.1 Diversion Options Education</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Train city law enforcement officers on existing and new diversion programs to keep boys and men of color out of the judicial system and on how and when to use the programs. ( <a href="#">Models for Change</a> )
<b>6.5.1 Re-entry Resources</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Advocate for services that address re-entry issues accurately and expunge criminal records, reinstate licenses and reduce excessive fines. ( <a href="#">Clean Slate Clearinghouse</a> )
<b>6.5.3 Re-entry Jobs</b> Impact: ★★★★★	Leverage the bully pulpit to advocate for private sector participation in re-entry job opportunities ( <a href="#">Charlottesville, VA</a> )

## MILESTONE 1: ENTERING SCHOOL HEALTHY AND READY TO LEARN

Within cities across the country, many boys and men of color are not healthy and ready to learn due to a variety of social and economic issues that confront their communities. These communities of color are often centers of concentrated poverty. Black, American Indian and Hispanic children are between six and nine times more likely than white children to live in areas of concentrated poverty. Additionally, whites make up 44 percent of the nation's poor, but account for only 18 percent of the poor living in concentrated poverty. Living within concentrated poverty, boys and men of color are more likely to be exposed to issues such as trauma, lead, unsafe drinking water, poorly organized public systems, as well as unhealthy child care providers and facilities—which can jeopardize their school readiness. City leaders must take an approach focused on the policies and practices that negatively impact boys of color, their families and the environments in which they are raised. The MBK cross-cutting recommendations and the Life Course framework highlight this strategy as an intergenerational (two generation) approach. By addressing the living environment and families, city leaders will be able to positively impact boys of color's chance of entering school healthy and ready to learn, as well as future generations.

MBK Report, PG 5

“No matter your background, Long Beach is committed to ensure that all young people have equitable opportunities and that city responds to address the barriers facing our young men of color.”

MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA  
LONG BEACH, CA

### 1.1 RECOMMENDATION: CLOSE THE “WORD GAP” AND SUPPORT ENRICHING HOME ENVIRONMENTS

Closing the “word gap” is a critical need for boys of color to enter school on a level playing field with their peers. As boys and men of color and their families are more likely to live in concentrated poverty, these children speak and hear far fewer conversations overall, leading to an aggregate deficit that results in a 30-million word gap before entering school. This gap creates a divide that is further perpetuated by life experiences and environments. City leaders can play a strategic role in assessing and developing additional opportunities for boys of color in low-income communities to close the 30-million word gap between them and their peers.

#### 1.1.1 Home Visitation and Parent Education

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Expand the scope and reach of parent education or home visitation programs. ([Longmont, CO](#))

#### 1.1.2 Word Gap

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Leverage resources and partnerships to address word gaps.

### City Spotlight: Providence, Rhode Island

Providence Talks was developed during Bloomberg Philanthropies' 2013 Mayors Challenge. The Mayors Challenge is an ideas competition that encourages cities to generate innovative ideas that solve major challenges and improve city life—and which have the potential to spread to other cities. The City of Providence received \$5 million to implement the initiative.

Then-Mayor Angel Taveras knew that most of Providence's children were entering kindergarten behind. He and his team took the opportunity to propose a city-led intervention that would address achievement disparities at the earliest stage possible, taking advantage of children's rapid brain development between birth and age three.

The resulting program, Providence Talks, is designed to help address the needs of low-income children and works to close the word and learning gap, making profound improvements in the healthy brain development and life trajectories of children who participate.

Providence Talks, [now a key initiative of Mayor Jorge Elorza](#), has reached over 1,300 children, and is on track to enroll 2,500 children by December 2017. More than 7,000 recordings have been completed, capturing

a total of 104 million words, and three million conversational turns—the powerful back-and-forth volleys that build vocabulary. Early results show that nearly 60 percent of children who graduate from the program begin to hear more words. On average, the number of words they hear increases by 50 percent. The program also has benefits far beyond the city—Providence Talks is helping to build the evidence base for the importance of parental talk and engagement, and the program itself has the potential to be replicated in other communities. Read the [Providence Talks Playbook](#).

### 1.2 RECOMMENDATION: ENSURE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE, EDUCATION AND HEALTH FOR BOYS OF COLOR, THEIR PARENTS AND OTHER CARING ADULTS

Another area city leaders should focus on is the long-term health and success of boys of color in their early years. These communities should have access to the appropriate resources. City leaders play an important role in providing alternative opportunities for communities of color to receive the educational and health resources they may not have access to during the early years of childhood.



FORMER MAYOR IVY TAYLOR SAN ANTONIO, TX

**1.2.1 Implicit Bias/Cultural Competency Training**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Provide training for community-focused staff within the city and schools on implicit bias and cultural competency. ([Hartford, CT](#))

**1.2.2 Libraries/City Agencies Support of Informal and Family, Friend and Neighbor Care**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Advocating from the Bully Pulpit*

Encourage/leverage libraries, museums and city agencies to support informal care providers and boys of color. ([Denver, CO](#))

**1.2.3 Early Health and Developmental Screenings**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Collaborate with schools and health providers to promote Early Health and Developmental Screenings. ([Houston, TX](#))

**City Spotlight:**  
Rochester, New York

The city of Rochester, New York, under Mayor Lovely Warren's leadership, joined with three other funders to start a joint developmental screening initiative. The investment of \$789,000 helped launch a three-year pilot program to increase vision,

hearing and developmental screenings for young children.

The funding helps partners build capacity for entities already screening children and train child care center staff and teachers to implement the selected screenings with accuracy and consistency. It is also used to train early care and education staff to engage in effective communication with families. The training includes "Tips for Talking with Families," with sample scripts and suggestions on what makes for successful reciprocal conversations, such as starting with the child's strengths, offering information on developmental milestones, discussing why developmental screening is important and having an open format that allows for ongoing questions and support when additional assessments or services are necessary. The city's investment ensures that 1,000 more three-year-olds receive the services they need to support their learning, growth and development.

**1.3 RECOMMENDATION:**  
*INSTITUTIONALIZE EARLY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES WITHIN CITY STRUCTURE RESOURCES*

Seeing beyond education and individual parent responsibilities is important to addressing the environmental challenges that young boys of color face. From targeting land-use strategies to lifting the voices of boys of color, there are internal actions that cities can take to address the environments in which they live that impact their ability to enter school healthy and ready to learn.

**1.3.1 Mayor's Children's Cabinet**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Establish a children's cabinet focused on supporting school systems with funding and advocacy. ([Rochester, NY](#) and [Minneapolis, MN](#))

**1.3.2 Health Disparities Data**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Identify and analyze social, economic, and environmental factors that impact health (e.g., access to healthy food, graduation rates, unemployment rates, etc.) based on race, ethnicity, gender and geography to develop strategies that improve outcomes. ([Oklahoma City, OK](#))

**1.3.3 Housing Authority Family Reunification Pilot**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Collaborate with the local housing authority to develop a pilot initiative to reunify returning citizens with their families. ([New York, NY](#); [Oakland, CA](#); [Chicago, IL](#))

**1.3.4 Early Learning and Land-Use Decisions**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Incorporate early learning opportunities for low-income communities of color into land-use and economic development planning. ([Santa Monica, CA](#))

**City Spotlight:**  
South San Francisco, California

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the city of South San Francisco (population under 75,000) recognized the growing shortage of high-quality affordable child care options locally as development increased. Former City Councilman Gene Mullin led the city council to pass [Chapter 20.310 in the South San Francisco Municipal Code](#) in 2001.

This act sought to address the problem by collecting impact fees from commercial and residential developers to fund the expansion of child care facilities in the city's major employment areas. The city required that the funds be utilized only for capital costs to establish new spaces for child care, not toward operational costs such as paying for staff. The city's legislation was supported by the State of California's impact fees enabling legislation passed in 1987, which provides the parameters for broadly levying development impact fees locally. To date, the city has collected \$2.5 million in fees, which have helped finance the construction and expansion of two buildings and a playground. Ultimately, the city has helped to increase child care options by approximately 15 percent.

Also, the South San Francisco and San Mateo County partnership has helped draw attention to the shortage of high-quality affordable child care through a recent report entitled "[San Mateo County Child Care and Preschool Facilities Task Force](#)." Read the city's 2014-15 nexus study, which explains how new development continually creates the need for new child care facilities and how the collected fees will be utilized to pay new development's fair share for new facilities.

## MILESTONE 2: READING AT GRADE LEVEL BY THIRD GRADE

Research consistently shows that reading at grade level by third grade is a strong predictor for a child's success later in life. [While 46 percent of whites scored at or above proficient in 2015, only 18 percent of black students, 21 percent of Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native students, and 28 percent of Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander scored comparably.](#) The lack of reading proficiency can cripple a boy of color's ability to progress with others in the class and potentially puts him on a path toward failing to complete school and becoming involved with the justice system. City leaders' role in achieving this milestone is to develop strategies that allow boys of color to extend their learning beyond the classroom and to assist with keeping them in the classroom.

### 2.1 RECOMMENDATION: COLLABORATE WITH SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY TO REDUCE CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IN EARLY ELEMENTARY GRADES

Chronic absenteeism can impact the ability of boys of color to read at grade level by third grade. The decrease in classroom learning time can cause them to fall behind, which is often exacerbated by the fact that many also do not enter school healthy and ready to learn. This further accelerates the drift toward a negative outcome. City leaders should work across systems to understand and reduce the environmental factors that can result in absenteeism.

#### 2.1.1 Data Sharing Agreement

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Develop data agreements between health and social service agencies and schools to track factors that contribute to absenteeism.

#### City Spotlight: Oakland, California

The City of Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) launched the Education Initiative, which has built key partnerships with the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), the City of Oakland Mayor's Office, community-based organizations and other service providers. Within the initiative, OHA and OUSD adopted a Data Sharing MOU in 2010, which they [renewed and expanded in 2016](#), to provide a platform to improve the educational outcomes of OHA students. Together, they identified more than 5,700 overlapping students, and developed

and implemented programs focused on improving parent engagement and reducing chronic absenteeism. Due to the Education Initiative and other broader community collaboration efforts, chronic absenteeism rates in the City of Oakland decreased by 25 percent between 2005-06 and 2013-14. Learn about Oakland's work through the [Campaign for Grade Level Reading](#).

### 2.2 RECOMMENDATION: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH-QUALITY ENRICHMENT DURING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME YEAR-ROUND FOR FORMAL AND INFORMAL CARE

On average in the U.S., students spend less than seven hours in school and in most cases only 180 days. Therefore, student success is also connected to learning that occurs outside of the classroom. City leaders have a critical role to play in coordinating stakeholders, leveraging city resources, and sharing data to support boys and men of color across systems.

#### 2.2.1 Summer Learning and Child Nutrition

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Combine summer learning and child nutrition efforts. (NLC Spotlight: [CHAMPS](#))

#### 2.2.2 Promote Access to Opportunities for Expanded Learning

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Provide "all-access" cards to boys of color and their families to gain free admission to museums, zoos and other anchor learning institutions in the city. ([Denver, CO](#))

#### 2.2.3 Computer and Tablet Access

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Provide low-cost computers or tablets to low-income communities of color. ([Mooresville, NC](#))

#### 2.2.4 Gap Analysis for After School and Summertime

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Identify and fill gaps in access to after-school and summertime programs. ([Grand Rapids, MI, and Boise, ID](#))

#### NLC Resource Spotlight:

Voices from the field: After school in small cities

NLC has developed a resource to highlight the work of small cities across the country that are creating partnerships between neighboring cities, community-based organizations and school districts to enrich youths' time outside of the classroom. The highlighted examples for small MBK cities can be replicated to leverage local resources to improve after-school and summer opportunities for boys and young men of color.

"At the community level, we need find solutions that help ensure that our young men of color have an equal chance to succeed."

MAYOR LEON ROCKINGHAM  
NORTH CHICAGO, IL

**2.2.5 Data Sharing Structures**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Develop structures and strategies to share data across in-school and out-of-school systems to support learning.

**City Spotlight: Nashville, Tennessee**

In 2010, [former Mayor Karl Dean](#) launched the [Nashville After Zone Alliance \(NAZA\)](#) in partnership with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) and community partners. NAZA is an intermediary organization that built a system of high-quality after-school programs across the city. They provide academic support and enrichment opportunities for MNPS middle school students that are safe and accessible in schools and community centers. NAZA was created to help middle school students who are at risk of dropping out of school by nurturing a passion for learning and preparing them for the rigors of high school. This is important because middle school performance is an indicator of high school success.

To maximize impact and outcomes of the after-school programs, NAZA established a data sharing agreement with MNPS. NAZA worked to co-develop a data dashboard to enable NAZA staff to have role-based access (i.e., secure and only the data they need) to student information to measure progress on student attendance, behavior and coursework. NAZA's [data system model](#) and data sharing agreement help staff provide tailored resources to support students' classroom experience.

Former Mayor Karl Dean strongly believed in the need to provide young people with safe, productive experiences after school to keep them out of trouble and on track to graduation. He committed \$400,000 from the city budget to launch NAZA in 2010 in one "zone," serving 250 middle school students—with funding increases each year to launch an additional zone annually. Due to his mayoral leadership and support, NAZA expanded to five geographic zones with 44 sites providing extended learning opportunities to 5,000 students from 25 MNPS middle schools in its first five years. Mayor Megan Berry, elected in 2015, continues to demonstrate mayoral commitment by raising the NAZA budget to \$2.85 million to serve 1,510 students after school and 440 in the summer. NAZA replicated the Providence, Rhode Island, AfterZone model ([Providence After School Alliance](#)) and now has also become a model for other cities around the country to follow. Read more about [NAZA](#), their [casestudy](#), and see their [video](#) on NAZA's data partnership.



VICE MAYOR WES BELLAMY, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

**MILESTONE 3:  
GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL READY FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER**

In the life span of a young man of color, graduating from high school is critical for increasing his probability of success. While the graduation rate for whites is 87.2 percent, the graduation rates for American Indians/Alaska Natives, blacks and Hispanics, are on average 14.4 percent lower. Today, lacking a high school diploma drastically limits a person's chance of success. Researchers have found that black males who leave school without graduating have a 68 percent chance of imprisonment, while similar white males have only a 28 percent chance.

Additionally, among 16- to 24-year-old males, 11 percent of whites are not in school or working, compared with 15 percent of Hispanics, 25 percent of blacks, and 28 percent of Native-Americans. Young men of color have the highest rate of disengagement. City leaders should play a major role in providing pathways for young men of color to complete high school and be prepared for college and future careers.

The overall long-term impact of not graduating or not being engaged perpetuates a vicious cycle of increased risks of poverty and imprisonment.

**3.1 RECOMMENDATION:  
INCREASE ATTENDANCE, REDUCE DROPOUT RATES AND ENCOURAGE THE USE OF FAIR DISCIPLINE PRACTICES**

Among young men of color in 2014, the [dropout rate](#) for Hispanics (11.8 percent) and blacks (7.1 percent) remained disproportionately higher than for white males (5.7 percent). Additionally, the [rates of absenteeism](#) spike significantly during high school, with blacks, Hispanics, American Indians (highest rate of absenteeism), and Pacific Islanders all having higher rates than whites. Among the steps cities can take to address these issues are understanding the problems that students face and leveraging current data on police involvement in schools.

**3.1.1 Data Sharing Agreements and Policy Reform**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Develop data sharing agreements between the city police department and local school district, and advocate for crafting school discipline and police involvement policies that reduce school-based arrests and limit negative contact between police and students. ([Philadelphia, PA](#))

**City Spotlight: Hartford, Connecticut**

As part of its Disproportionate Minority Contact project, the city of Hartford Public Schools and the police department reviewed their current data and determined that most of the youth of color were arrested for low-level offenses. In 2012, they established an **MOU** to share data between systems, provide training for police officers and clarify roles when interacting with students.

Their efforts resulted in a dramatic decrease in the number of school-based arrests the following year. [Former Mayor Pedro Segarra](#) said the memorandum between the schools and police “will go a long way to ensure that our kids are held to a certain level of accountability [without] criminalizing the conduct as the first option, because the consequences are far too great.” Hartford’s success led the state to pass a bill that expanded the [model statewide](#).

**NLC Resource Spotlight:  
Alternatives to Arrest**

Through NLC’s ongoing partnership with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation’s Models for Change initiative, several resources were developed to allow cities to create alternatives to juvenile incarceration. The “[Alternatives to Arrest for Young People](#)” issue brief was designed to provide early examples of how law enforcement agencies can divert youth accused of minor offenses from arrest when appropriate. Additionally, several training opportunities are offered to improve relations between police officers and young people.

**3.2 RECOMMENDATION:  
HELP SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES  
RECOGNIZE EARLY WARNING SIGNS  
AND TAKE ACTION**

Identifying and addressing the holistic needs of young men of color early is an important strategy in reducing racial and gender disparities. During adolescence, boys of color may be confronted with a variety of environmental challenges that could impact their ability to continue school and graduate.

Early identification and intervention can promote a young man of color’s successful graduation and future opportunity. Therefore, cities must maximize and use their resources and platforms to work across systems to target young men who are at high risk. Whether launching a [community school](#) in a targeted neighborhood, building a city coalition of partners, developing re-engagement centers, or launching high school graduation goals, city leaders can employ strategies to reach this milestone.

**3.2.1 Wraparound Services and  
Community Schools**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Bring wraparound services into middle/high schools or nearby locations. ([Baltimore, MD](#))

**City Spotlight: Salt Lake City, Utah**

There are currently three [Community Learning Centers \(CLC\)](#) in Salt Lake City. The CLC model provides a common space to co-locate academics, social services and life-skill enrichment for the entire family. Rosa Parks Elementary, the school district’s first CLC, houses a 3,800-square-foot building that includes a health clinic, parent/family center, conference rooms, an early childhood learning center and a full-time mental health worker. In 2013, Salt Lake City finished construction on the \$4.6 million, 30,000-square-foot Glendale/Mountain View CLC. The school district paid about 85 percent of the cost, while the other 15 percent came from a variety of donors. In 2015, Salt Lake City School District secured

\$3 million from a local foundation to fund the development of the third center, Lincoln Community Learning Center. Further, the city leveraged Community Development Block Grant funds to support the development of the CLCs.

**3.3 RECOMMENDATION:  
RECOMMENDATION: EXPAND AFTER-  
SCHOOL ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY  
TO IMPROVE COLLEGE AND CAREER  
READINESS**

**3.3.1 After-school Alignment**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Align after-school programming with postsecondary education, private-sector and economic development goals. ([Portland, OR \(Local\)/\(Statewide\)](#); Orlando, FL; [Los Angeles, CA](#))

**3.3.2 After-school Coalition Building**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Build an after-school coalition focused on the needs of boys and men of color.

**City Spotlight:  
Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center,  
Minnesota**

In 2008, Minnesota’s [Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth](#) was created through a Joint Powers Agreement between the city of Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center (both cities with populations under 80,000), four

school districts, one county and two higher education institutions. The alliance was developed to provide youth (10-19) with after-school and summer opportunities that will increase graduation rates, pathways to college and career, and decrease violence experiences. In 2015, the [Joint Powers Agreement](#) was revised, creating a renewed commitment to the alliance.

Over the years, the alliance incubated several programs and initiatives which incorporated strategic partnerships to evaluate their outcomes. One promising strategy for evaluation is the Youth to Youth Survey (administered every two years), which leverages the Youth Data Squad that recruits other youth to take the survey. The results have been influential in improving access to programming and opportunities for students during out-of-school time. Further, the alliance developed the Impact Scorecard to hold itself accountable to achieving preset regional goals.



MAYOR JEFFREY LUNDE, BROOKLYN PARK, MN



MAYOR RICHARD BERRY, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

**3.4 RECOMMENDATION:**  
**RECOMMENDATION: RECONNECT  
 DISCONNECTED YOUTH TO INCREASE  
 THEIR OPPORTUNITIES LONG TERM  
 THROUGH RE-ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS**

When a young man of color has not completed school or entered the workforce, his city suffers the costs through lost tax revenue and potential increase in social/criminal service costs. As boys of color have the highest rates of disengagement across most cities, it is imperative for cities to find ways to take action. Through NLC's work around re-engaging those who have been disconnected, cities can leverage the tools and resources to support and strengthen local efforts.

**3.4.1 Re-engagement Centers**  
*Impact: ★★★★★*  
*Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █*  
*Leadership Action: Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Establish re-engagement Centers for disconnected youth. ([Dubuque, IA](#))

**NLC Resource Spotlight:  
 Re-engagement Network**

Many cities have a significant number of disconnected youth, and these tend to be young men of color. In response, a growing number of cities have put specific strategies in place to target these youth. NLC launched

the [Re-engagement Network](#) to assist cities in exploring and pursuing re-engagement policy and programming directed at young adults who have not finished school and lack a clear pathway to do so. These efforts include the establishment of one-stop re-engagement centers or virtual equivalents that offer a range of services, including referrals to school completion options and support to re-enroll.

**3.4.2 Citywide High School Graduation Goal**  
*Impact: ★★★★★*  
*Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █*  
*Leadership Action: Advocating from the Bully Pulpit*

Set a community-wide goal for high school graduation.

**City Spotlight:  
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

In 2008, then-Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter set a citywide goal of raising high school graduation rates from the 53 percent rate in 2007 to 80 percent by 2015. As of 2015, the [on-time graduation rate increased to 65 percent](#). To help build momentum, Mayor Nutter established the [Philadelphia Council for College and Career Success](#), which "works to ensure that Philadelphia's youth become productive citizens who are ready to participate fully in our region's workforce and the life of the city." The cross-disciplinary council is focused on aligning various government, nonprofit, and for-profit entities around the collective improvement of high school graduation rates and postsecondary opportunities.

The former mayor used his bully pulpit to create urgency for addressing the low high school graduation rates locally. Mayor Nutter's commitment helped align stakeholders around a common vision and foster and expand successful initiatives and programs. City staff and stable funding have been the backbone of multiple parts of this strategy. Recently, current Mayor Jim Kenney has launched a [community school initiative](#) funded through a soda tax to help support each school's service development which will help to improve educational outcomes for schools in need.



MAYOR LEON ROCKINGHAM, NORTH CHICAGO, IL

## MILESTONE 4: COMPLETING POST- SECONDARY EDUCATION OR CREDENTIALING

After obtaining a high school diploma or an equivalent, attaining a postsecondary education or credentials is a pathway for future success. Such achievements provide opportunities to access quality jobs that can increase household income and allow young men of color to better support their families. Unfortunately, whether looking at graduation rates for four-year public institutions, community colleges or credentialing programs, completion rates for men of color remain low across the board. The impact on cities can be detrimental to their future competitive advantage, especially as the racial and ethnic demographics of many communities are evolving toward communities of color, and the demand for highly skilled workers continues to increase across the nation.

Within this milestone, city leaders should see their role as leveraging their convening and advocacy platforms, as well as resources, to elevate the number of young men of color who complete their postsecondary education or credentialing locally.

“I signed on to this challenge because we are a community that cares about all of our youth and that recognizes that their future is our future.”

MAYOR ROY D. BUOL  
DUBUQUE, IA

### 4.1 RECOMMENDATION: ENCOURAGE FAFSA COMPLETION

Access to financial aid is critical to ensure that a significant number of young men of color can afford to attend and complete a postsecondary education. FAFSA serves as a gateway to access major financial aid options. Unfortunately, young men of color who come from low-income communities may not understand how, or have the appropriate resources or assistance to, complete the application. The impact for cities is that fewer people in local communities are college educated. This situation can directly impact a community's regional, national and global competitiveness. Therefore, city leaders should support young men of color's FAFSA completion by leveraging existing resources and platforms to help them understand the process.

#### 4.1.1 FAFSA Campaign

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Advocating from the Bully Pulpit*

Launch an annual FAFSA campaign.

#### City Spotlight: Los Angeles, California

[Former City of Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn](#) partnered with the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and UNITE-LA in 2002 to launch [Los Angeles Cash for College](#)—a financial awareness campaign that has grown into a regional organization. The organization hosts an annual College and Career Convention, designed to help students and their families prepare for college and the

financial aid application process. It offers free workshops to assist with completing financial aid applications, and provides opportunities for high school seniors to win additional scholarships based on attendance at the convention and workshops. The city continues to financially support the organization and utilizes the office of the mayor to bring together multiple stakeholders across the region. Due to the city's support and leadership, more than 238,000 students have qualified for more than \$34 million in grant aid for college. Current Mayor Eric Garcetti launched [Los Angeles College Promise](#) in 2016, further demonstrating the city's commitment to improving college access and completion within the city.

### 4.2 RECOMMENDATION: ENCOURAGE POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT AND/OR CREDENTIALING COMPLETION

Beyond funding access to postsecondary education, there is the need to increase the number of young men of color who finish these programs. City leaders should leverage local assets and their platforms to provide resources and foster citywide support to encourage more young men of color to complete postsecondary or credentialing programs.

#### 4.2.1 College Access Centers

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Establish college access centers. ([Mesa, AZ](#), [San Antonio, TX](#); [CLIP](#))

#### 4.2.2 Youth Council/Community Advisory Group

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Activate a local youth council or community advisory group to provide insights on increasing postsecondary education completion. ([Portland, OR](#))

#### 4.2.3 Citywide Postsecondary Graduation Goal

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Advocating from the Bully Pulpit*

Set a community-wide goal for college completion.

#### City Spotlight: Louisville, Kentucky

In 2010, the City of Louisville launched 55,000 Degrees, an initiative focused on increasing the number of residents with a postsecondary degree to 55,000 by 2020. This mark would give the city a local degree attainment rate of 50 percent. A study found the city ranked near the bottom among [14 other competitive cities](#) in educational attainment and college enrollment. It ranked last among the cities in bachelor's degree attainment, with just 13 percent of blacks earning that degree. With Mayor Greg Fischer's leadership, the city has recruited a diverse set of stakeholders who are working citywide to promote higher education. Within the 55,000 Degrees goal, the community has committed to support black student degree access and completion by setting a goal of achieving [15,000 degrees](#) in the black community by 2020. The impact of this initiative has promise.

## MILESTONE 5: SUCCESSFULLY CONNECTING TO THE ECONOMY

For cities leaders, the goal is not simply that men of color can enter the workforce, but ensuring they can also connect to broader economic opportunities. This distinction is important, as there are several factors outside of attaining a job that can directly impact men of color, from local land-use policies to capacity-building supports to entrepreneurship opportunities. Focusing on the broader economy is important because men of color who live in concentrated poverty may have limited access to better employment opportunities, and limited economic development and city planning policies can exacerbate community disinvestment.

Researchers have estimated that by 2018 more than 60 percent of jobs will require workers with more than a high school diploma, including certificates and advanced degrees. Among Hispanics and blacks, [only 22.7 percent and 32.4 percent respectively, have an associate's degree or higher, in contrast to 46.9 percent of whites](#). In addition, the employment-to-population rate of [16- to 24-year-olds who do not attend school is 71.7 percent for whites, 68.7 percent for Hispanics, and 46.9 percent for blacks](#). To meet the future demand and address the disparities, city leaders should focus on economic development and land-use planning for communities of color, as well as on increasing access to training and entrepreneurial capacity-building opportunities that better equip young men of color and their communities to succeed.



MAYOR KAREN FREEMAN-WILSON, GARY, IN

### 5.1 RECOMMENDATION: HELP GROW AND IMPROVE SUMMER JOBS AND MENTORSHIP INITIATIVES

For many cities across the country, summer employment and mentorship programs have had a significant impact on low-income communities, which can lead to greater opportunities for boys and men of color. Through leveraging their platform and resources, cities can reduce crime, increase opportunities for continual education beyond the school walls and help youth acquire valuable job skills. The experience can further prepare young men of color and their respective cities to compete in the global market.

#### 5.1.1 CDBG Dollars

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Create and expand summer jobs in communities of color through CDBG funding. ([Omaha, NE](#)).

#### 5.1.2 Mentoring City Policies

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Pass policies to incentivize city staff to mentor through targeted mentorship programs. ([Louisville, KY](#))

#### 5.1.3 Private Sector Recruitment

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Recruit private companies to invest in the

long-term success of boys and men of color to provide internships, job shadowing opportunities and apprenticeship programs. ([Boston, MA](#); [Cincinnati, OH](#))

### City Spotlight: Birmingham, Alabama

Since 1994, the City of Birmingham Mayor's Office Division of Youth Services (DYS) has partnered with the local FOX affiliate, WBRC, to operate the [FOX6 Kids & Jobs Program](#). This program, which is the city's largest youth employment initiative, hosts more than 600 youths ages 14-21 at more than 80 work sites. The Kids & Jobs Program is designed to help cultivate the professional development necessary for youth and young adults to become an integral part of the workforce. DYS leveraged partnerships with numerous agencies in the public and nonprofit sectors to give hundreds of youths exposure to the workforce for the first time. Each spring, Birmingham youth are invited to apply for age-appropriate employment opportunities through the Kids & Jobs Program.

The leadership of former Mayor William Bell and his staff has elevated the program to national recognition by the Obama Administration as a promising model for replication. Mayor Bell stated, "Kids & Jobs Program: that is something that I know that the president and his administration are looking at to see how we can duplicate that across the country. This program gives the private sector an opportunity to work with us on getting young people employed during the summer and instilling in them that work ethic that we all have and we want them to have as well."

**5.2 RECOMMENDATION:**  
*INCREASE ENTRY-LEVEL JOB, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND APPRENTICESHIP (CAREER/TECHNICAL) OPTIONS*

Not all boys and men of color participate in summer employment opportunities. This can create challenges for them as they vie with others who do have work experience. Regardless of access to summer employment opportunities, there should be multiple options for boys and men of color to successfully enter the economy through traditional apprenticeships, entrepreneurial incubators and other modes. Cities leaders can repurpose programs and funding to help develop a pipeline for boys and men of color to successfully enter the economy through various pathways.

**5.2.1 Apprenticeship Options**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Create channels to raise private funds for apprenticeship. ([Oakland, CA](#))

**5.2.2 Entrepreneurship Development**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Build pipelines for entrepreneurship.

**City Spotlight: Portland, Oregon**

The City of Portland started the [Inclusive Startup Fund](#) with a \$500,000 commitment from [Prosper Portland](#) (formerly Portland Development Commission) to build the economic capacity of communities of color. Multnomah County and the State of Oregon also committed \$500,000 and \$250,000 respectively to the fund, which invests between \$20,000 and \$50,000 in startups with founders from underrepresented communities. Mentoring and business advising services accompany each investment.

In 2013, Prosper Portland launched the Startup PDX Challenge, focused on [assisting entrepreneurs from communities of color](#). Each winner received financial resources as well as free rent, free legal counsel and other wraparound services that increase the entrepreneur's chances of success. As part of the evolution of its equity work, Prosper Portland has recently developed a network of programs and partnerships to better serve minority and women entrepreneurs, known as the [Small Business Technical Assistance Partnership](#).

**5.3 RECOMMENDATION:**  
*ACKNOWLEDGE AND CHANGE LAND-USE AND OTHER POLICIES THAT LIMIT ACCESS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES*

In communities across the country, city leaders' land-use and economic development decisions have strengthened or damaged neighborhoods. These actions directly impact boys and men of color and their communities' ability to successfully connect to the economy. Whether they involve train tracks, highways, public

transportation, waste sites or power plants, most of these decisions have negatively affected communities of color. City leaders have the power to acknowledge, right previous wrongs, and prevent actions that damage thriving communities.

**5.3.1 Economic Development**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Advocating from the Bully Pulpit*

Acknowledge and change past economic development wrongdoings that shattered communities by creating racial equity goals. ([New Orleans, LA](#); [St. Paul, MN](#); [Portland, OR](#))

**5.3.2 Predatory Lending**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Pass ordinances that limit predatory lending. ([Texas Municipal League](#))

**5.3.3 First-source Hiring**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Pass first-source hiring policies that target low-income areas of the city. ([Sugar Law Center](#), [PolicyLink](#))

**5.3.4 Municipal Regional Collaboration**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Collaborate with local governments and regional stakeholders to leverage combined resources to change the regional community. ([24.1 Missouri](#))

**5.3.5 Municipal Staff Diversity**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Develop and execute a strategic plan to ensure the city government reflects the community served. ([St. Paul, MN](#))

**5.3.6 Land Use and Zoning**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: █ █ █ █ █

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Change land-use policies and zoning regulations within redevelopment agencies that negatively impact communities of color.



MAYOR BUDDY DYER & COMMISSIONER REGINA HILL, ORLANDO, FL

**City Spotlight: Brownsville, Texas**

In 2003, City Commissioner Rose Gowen, who is also a physician, discovered significant health issues plaguing a high-poverty community of Brownsville, Texas. Based on her findings, the [commissioner and community began to survey options](#) for improving the health and wellbeing of the community. The commissioner identified an opportunity to develop the [mile-long Belden Trail](#)—an abandoned rail line. The 100-year-old rail line ran through the poorest neighborhoods while connecting to schools and other city amenities.

Due to Commissioner Gowen's leadership, the city was able to leverage the [Brownsville Community Improvement Corporation \(BCIC\)](#), which covered 20 percent of the cost, and a [Rails-to-Trails grant](#), which represents 80 percent of the funding, from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to fund the trail's renovation. The results have provided residents space to exercise, commute and better connect with their community. The trail has led to a 20 percent increase in the number of city residents who are within a half-mile of a bike trail. In addition to the development of Belden Trail, the city adopted a long-range plan called [Imagine Brownsville](#), which is business-driven and has generated policies that help to encourage [healthy living](#) and [increased funding for downtown redevelopment](#).

**NLC Resource Spotlight: LIFT-UP**

In 2013, NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families launched Local Interventions for Financial Empowerment Through Utility

Payments (LIFT-UP). The program helps cities align local financial empowerment services with municipal utility debt-collection practices by offering residents who are in debt to city-owned utilities an opportunity to restructure their outstanding balances. Residents also receive financial counseling and services to help get them back on track. To date, NLC has worked with five cities—Savannah, Georgia; St. Petersburg, Florida; Louisville, Kentucky; Newark, New Jersey; and Houston, Texas—to implement the pilot program and test variations of the program model. The Center for Financial Security at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (CFS) conducted an [evaluation of LIFT-UP](#), which shows that participating cities were better able to collect overdue water utility payments with less reliance on costly debt collection agencies or resorting to shutting off service to customers

**5.4 RECOMMENDATION:  
BUILD THE CAPACITY OF COMMUNITIES OF COLOR TO BE ECONOMICALLY COMPETITIVE**

There is an economic advantage to increasing young men of color's viability and competitiveness in the local economy. Each city, whether small or large, must position itself to attract, retain and foster local and global companies. Recognizing that not all companies are good for the community, cities must be intentional about the "corporate citizens" they want to attract. Nationally, the racial and ethnic demographics are changing. As cities see communities of color grow locally, they must address the negative outcomes for success indicators (i.e., poverty, education and

employment) in order to produce a more competitive population. Cities can build the capacity of communities-of-color businesses and modify city contracts to reflect the demographic changes.

**5.4.1 Capacity Building**

*Impact:* ★★★★★ 

*Capacity Needed:*   
*Leadership Action: Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Provide capacity-building opportunities for communities of color to compete for city resources and future community development. ([Minneapolis, MN](#); [Durham, NC](#))

**5.4.2 Cross-sector Regional Collaboration**

*Impact:* ★★★★★ 

*Capacity Needed:*   
*Leadership Action: Convening Stakeholders*

Convene business, industries, education sectors and community-development groups to design and implement regional economic strategies that can improve access to entrepreneurial workforce opportunities for boys and men of color. ([Harrisburg, PA](#))

**5.4.3 Enforce City Women and Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE)**

**Contracting Goals**

*Impact:* ★★★★★ 

*Capacity Needed:*   
*Leadership Action: Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Create an office of municipal contracts or assign an agency to help enforce WMBE goals.

**City Spotlight: Orlando, Florida**

In November 2005, the city council approved the [Enterprise Zone Re-designation—Resolution and Interlocal Agreement between City of Orlando and Orange County](#). This agreement provided the opportunity to start a training and employment effort focused on the city's Parramore neighborhood—a majority black, low-income and high-crime area. In 2008, Mayor Buddy Dyer and the city council created the BLUEPRINT. The BLUEPRINT is a comprehensive approach to leveraging the city's \$1.5 billion worth of Community Venues projects to create local jobs and local business growth. The BLUEPRINT Program Office helps improve employment opportunities for the target population (residents in the Parramore Zone, returning citizens as well as homeless persons) by requiring major redevelopment contractors of these venues in Orlando's downtown to hire or provide them with apprenticeship opportunities. What's more, these companies offer prime and sub-contracts to minority and women-owned businesses. The BLUEPRINT staff monitors the developers and contractors for compliance with said requirements. There are significant sanctions and financial penalties for non-compliance. As a result, the [BLUEPRINT Office](#) over the past 10 years has placed 3,741 target population members in jobs paying \$12.42 per hour on average—the majority of which include benefits. During the same period, the BLUEPRINT program saw the awarding of \$229,926,668 in contracts to minority and women-owned businesses.

## MILESTONE 6: REDUCING VIOLENCE AND PROVIDING A SECOND CHANCE

Young men of color are disproportionately affected by violence, and far too many are involved with the criminal justice system as adolescents and young adults. In 2014, more than 4,000 young black men across the United States were homicide victims, making homicide the [leading cause](#) of death among black men ages 15-34. Additionally, more than 60 percent of the U.S. prison population is comprised of blacks and Hispanics, while they make up only 30 percent of the total U.S. population. For black and Hispanic men born in 2001, the likelihood of being imprisoned at some point is 33 percent and 16 percent respectively, while it is less than 6 percent for white males.

“I believe there are many challenges we can overcome. As we look forward, it is evident that our partnership with MBK will remain a critical component of our city’s future.”

MAYOR JEFFREY LUNDE  
BROOKLYN PARK MN

The impact of these disparities causes greater financial burdens on a city, as data suggest that taxpayers can pay more than \$51,340 per person for each year of incarceration. This tax can ultimately hurt a city’s ability to finance other initiatives that can further strengthen boys and men of color and their community.

### 6.1 RECOMMENDATION: REDUCE VIOLENCE IN HIGH-RISK COMMUNITIES BY INTEGRATING PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACHES

Communities of color represent more than [40 percent](#) of the population arrested for violent crimes, despite representing only 20 percent of the total population. Systemic actions are needed to improve outcomes for boys and men of color that go beyond reducing over-policing or mass-incarceration. Violence in communities of color has long been viewed as a criminal justice issue, while in other communities it has been portrayed as a public health issue. This double standard must be changed. City leaders must use a different lens and address the underlying systems that perpetuate these environments to reduce the violence that disproportionately impacts boys and men of color.

#### 6.1.1 Municipal System Evaluation

Impact: ★★★★★  
Capacity Needed:   
Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Cities should enhance coordinated efforts to prevent youth violence, with a focus on analyzing incidences of violence and murder across systems. ([Milwaukee Homicide Review Board](#))

#### 6.1.2 Violence Prevention

Impact: ★★★★★  
Capacity Needed:   
Leadership Action: *Leveraging Funding and City Resources*

Start and continue to implement comprehensive violence- and gang-prevention initiatives that focus explicitly on reducing violence and violent deaths among boys and men of color. ([Ceasefire](#); [New Orleans, LA](#); [Hampton, VA](#))

#### Resource Spotlight: Cities United

Launched in 2011 through a collaboration of several partners including NLC, [Cities United](#) is a national movement focused on eliminating the violence in American cities related to black men and boys. The 91 mayors (and counting) participating in Cities United aim to reduce homicides in their cities by 50 percent by the year 2025. Moreover, they are committed to restoring hope to their communities and building pathways to justice, employment, education and increased opportunities for residents, using a variety of resources that work beyond violence.

#### City Spotlight: Fort Wayne, Indiana

In 2013, the City of Fort Wayne became a National League of Cities’ Black Male Achievement city and joined Cities United to address the violence and homicide rate that disproportionately impacted young black men. Through Mayor Tom Henry’s leadership and the work of senior city staff, [Fort Wayne UNITED](#) was launched in 2017. Its [mission](#)

is to advocate for and implement policies, practices and procedures that ensure equity and opportunity for black fathers, brothers and sons at home, work, school and in the community using collaborative efforts. Pursuing this mission, Fort Wayne UNITED recently began developing strategies to address violence and the historical and systemic barriers that have impacted young black men in their community. With the mayor’s commitment to improving outcomes for young black men, Fort Wayne UNITED has taken critical steps to build a strong foundation of support and buy-in.

### 6.2 RECOMMENDATION: ENCOURAGE LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NEIGHBORHOODS TO WORK HAND- IN-HAND

Now more than ever, city leaders should play an active role in fostering trust between the police force and local communities. The level of police interactions with boys and men of color and their respective communities has led to mistrust and tension between the groups, making many cities vulnerable to civic unrest. City leaders can build, rebuild, maintain or strengthen these relations to ensure that if and when an incident occurs, the city and community can work collaboratively to find a solution.

#### 6.2.1 Community Policing Strategies

Impact: ★★★★★  
Capacity Needed:   
Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Implement recommendations from [“21st Century Policing Report.”](#)

**6.2.2 Community Conversation**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Convening Stakeholders*

Launch sustained dialogues that are inclusive of the entire community and bring police and community members together to build trust before unrest occurs.

**NLC/US Conference of Mayors' Resource Spotlight: Community Conversation Resource**

NLC, through Race, Equity And Leadership (REAL), in collaboration with the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) and President Obama, persuaded more than 100 cities to agree to sustain conversations on race relations, justice and equity between the community and the police following the [2016 Dallas police shooting](#). More than [105 cities](#) conducted or committed to having community conversations. Additionally, USCM published a report on [49 cities](#) that started their community conversations. NLC provides cities strategies to conduct these conversations which advance racial equity.

**City Spotlight: Tacoma, Washington**

On the heels of a series national events that created tension between the community and police in 2015, the City of Tacoma stepped up and launched a citywide initiative called [Project PEACE](#). With the leadership of Mayor Marilyn Strickland, Councilwoman Victoria Woodard, the city manager and the city police chief, five different community conversations were conducted across the

city, bringing more than 800 participants together to discuss police-community relations and racial healing. The city leadership was instrumental in helping to move beyond conversations to developing six key pillars to incorporate into the policy and daily functions of the police department.

- **Pillar 1:** Build Trust and Legitimacy
- **Pillar 2:** Improve Policy and Oversight
- **Pillar 3:** Social Media/Communication
- **Pillar 4:** Community Policing and Crime Reduction
- **Pillar 5:** Enhance Training and Education
- **Pillar 6:** Officer Wellness and Safety

**6.3 RECOMMENDATION: RECOMMENDATION: ELIMINATE POLICIES THAT CAN INCREASE BMOB INTERACTION WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

In addition to engaging in community conversations, city leaders can change policies that contribute to negative interactions between boys and men of color and police officers. Whether changing curfews, fines or fees, marijuana charges or other minor offenses, cities should leverage their legislative authority to minimize negative interactions between police and young men of color, while finding strategies to increase positive interactions. It is important to note that these policy actions should be used in concert with proper training and modification of administrative policies in police precincts.

**6.3.1 Curfew Laws**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Update or remove curfew laws, which are shown to be the most disproportionately applied juvenile offenses. (NLC's Cities Speak: [Article 1](#), [Article 2](#))

**6.3.2 Fines and fees policies**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Modify local laws to reduce arrest and jailing of people for failure to pay fines and fees. ([San Francisco, CA](#))

**6.3.3 Forfeiture Penalty for Marijuana Possession**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Adopt ordinances that create a reasonable alternative civil penalty for the possession of marijuana.

**City Spotlight: Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Under Wisconsin state law, possession of any amount of marijuana is punishable by up to six months in jail; a subsequent offense is deemed a felony. The City of Milwaukee initially made marijuana possession a municipal ordinance violation for minors and first-time offenders in 1997—with fines ranging from \$250 to \$500 or imprisonment of up to 20 days.

In 2014 alone, of the 1,382 individuals charged in Milwaukee's Municipal Court for possession of 25 grams of THC or less, more than 65 percent were black, while only 16

percent were white. This disparity existed even though there are roughly the same number of white and black Milwaukeeans who use marijuana at roughly equal rates. [The Municipal Marijuana Legislation \(Code 106-38\)](#), passed in 2015, lowered the maximum fine for a first-time offense of possession of up to 25 grams of marijuana—just under one ounce—from \$500 to \$50.

**6.4 RECOMMENDATION: DIVERT BMOB FROM THE JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS, ESPECIALLY FOR STATUS AND MISDEMEANOR OFFENSES**

When police must interact with boys and men of color for minor offenses, there are several points in transition to booking that can keep them out of the justice system. City leaders have the responsibility to build, advocate and provide training for officers to leverage diversion programs that can help support boys and men of color outside of the justice system. The positive impact of implementing these recommendations can mean more boys and men of color become productive, taxpaying members of society.

**6.4.1 Diversion Options Education**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed:

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Develop diversion programs to divert boys and men of color from entering the system.

**City Spotlight:**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Eliminating [racial disparities in Minneapolis](#) was one of the first priorities established by Mayor Betsy Hodges and the City of Minneapolis in 2014. Minneapolis has the widest disparity between white people and people of color in the nation across any measure such as education, housing, employment, health and public safety. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) [studied](#) misdemeanor offenses in Minneapolis and found that significant racial disparities existed. In response to the study and other data points, Mayor Hodges joined the cohort of Juvenile Justice Reform Cities to determine how to tackle the disparities locally.

Due to previous work, the Minneapolis Police Department in 2015 identified the need to revise the eligibility criteria for its Juvenile Diversion Program to include juveniles with one prior misdemeanor. The policy revision had a positive impact on disparities at the eligibility point, but did not influence the disparities at other points of the process, such as juveniles accepting the offer of diversion and completing the diversion program. The work to improve outcomes for the process continues.

Another diversion program originates in the city attorney's office, where since 2014, adult diversion offerings have expanded to include tracks for shoplifting, interfering with a police officer, prostitution and some driving offenses. Many of the programs offered are centered in restorative justice philosophy.

**6.4.2 Diversion Options Education**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: 

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Train city law enforcement officers on existing and new diversion programs which keep boys and men of color out of the judicial system, and on the benefits for public safety. ([Models for Change](#))

**6.4.3 Implicit Bias/Mental Health Training**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: 

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Mandate training for 100 percent of city-employed law enforcement and corrections officers on adolescent development, how to recognize and address mental health crises and implicit bias. ([Philadelphia, PA](#); [San Antonio, TX](#))

**6.4.4 Pre-Arrest Screening Tool**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: 

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Implement locally validated, standardized pre-arrest screening tools to assist law enforcement in making objective, public safety-focused decisions and which promote accountability measures to track and support the tool's effective use by officers. ([MASTLE](#); [Gainesville, FL](#))

**6.5 RECOMMENDATION:**  
*ELIMINATE UNNECESSARY BARRIERS TO RE-ENTRY AND ENCOURAGE FAIR-CHANCE HIRING OPTIONS*

If a boy or man of color has been incarcerated, the chances that he will struggle to find viable employment and housing is high. Without equitable access to employment opportunities, the probability of recidivism is also high. The potential impact of recidivism on cities is an increase in government spending to adjudicate and house inmates, and the loss of tax revenue from each person. Nationally, the average cost can be more than \$50,000 a year per person. Cities have a role to play in removing as many barriers as possible that can negatively impact formerly incarcerated boys and men of color.

**6.5.1 Re-entry Resources**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: 

Leadership Action: *Advocating from the Bully Pulpit*

Advocate for services that address re-entry issues and expunge criminal records, reinstate licenses and reduce excessive fines. ([Clean Slate Clearinghouse](#))

**6.5.2 Ban the Box/Fair Hiring**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: 

Leadership Action: *Adopting/Implementing Policies, Practices and Procedures*

Cities should “ban the box” and put in place fair-hiring practices at the municipal and citywide level if possible. ([NELP](#))

**6.5.3 Re-entry Jobs**

Impact: ★★★★★

Capacity Needed: 

Leadership Action: *Advocating from the Bully Pulpit*

Leverage the bully pulpit to advocate for private-sector participation in re-entry job opportunities.

**City Spotlight:**  
Charlottesville, Virginia

In March 2014, the city removed the felony inquiry box from all municipal job applications. Due to the Dillon's Rule in Virginia, Charlottesville does not have the authority to require local businesses to “ban the box” on their job applications. Instead they are using a different strategy to engage local businesses: The mayor and councilmembers in 2015 began sending letters to local businesses asking them to remove the felony inquiry on their applications. Additionally, they have worked with local businesses to hire returning citizens who have gone through the city-led Growing Opportunities program.

In Fiscal Year 2015-16, 14 returning citizens worked in city departments. Of those, 10 were hired permanently by the city after they completed the program, and three transitioned to other job opportunities in the community. Of these, 79 percent did not re-offend within one year, which reinforces the role of employment as a key predictor of successful re-entry and reduction of recidivism.

Over the past two years, an additional 36 black men have successfully completed the Growing Opportunities program, which provides training and support for unemployed and underemployed residents. All the men remain employed in positions paying a living wage of more than \$14 per hour. Jobs include commercial driver, electrician apprentice and building trades.

**City Spotlight:**  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

As co-chair of [Milwaukee's Black Male Achievement Advisory Council](#), Mayor Tom Barrett has led development and implementation of the city's My Brother's Keeper Action Plan. Mayor Barrett has worked with local agencies to create hundreds of transitional jobs in city departments through his [Compete Milwaukee employment initiative](#). Focused on second chances, these jobs

offer a six-month, full-time position at living wage with training and certifications, such as CDL classes and testing. Participants, who must be returning citizens, get assistance with barrier reductions like driver's license recovery and child support mediation to keep them moving with dignity toward new employment prospects. Over the program's first two years, 70 percent of transitional job participants have attained unsubsidized employment after the program, earning more than \$1 million in documented gross wages.

“My dad always said, ‘It’s easier to find a job, from a job.’  
Compete Milwaukee helps get Milwaukee residents started on a path to not only jobs, but a more secure future for their families.”

MAYOR TOM BARRETT  
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN



MAYOR TOM BARRETT AND ALDERMAN RUSSELL STAMPER, MILWAUKEE, WI



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LEAGUE  
OF CITIES