Vital Conditions Primers

The **Vital Conditions for Community Health and Well-being** provides a framework for conceptualizing holistic well-being and the conditions that give rise to it.

Work to-date on the Vital Conditions framework has been exploratory and formative. **Early activities** have included: framework development and narrative framing; commissioned papers by subject matter experts; research and literature review; and exploratory data work.

This body of work culminated in these **Vital Conditions Primers** which offer an overview of each vital condition, summarizing influences of past legacies and major forces shaping current and future priorities.

The Primers were **developed to support of dialogue** at the Well Being Legacy Inaugural Gathering in Oakland, California in July 2018. Notes from the dialogue sessions can be accessed here.

Feedback from the Inaugural Gathering, along from insights from the Well Being Legacy planning team, will be used to update this version of the Primers. **Updates** to include: layering equity into the framework more explicitly; expanding on key concepts; clarifying specific points of confusion; and refining data points.

Updates at this phase are relatively minor and can be made expediently once an agreed upon process is in place. The revised Primers can be used to **advance digital storytelling efforts**, and will be an important input for the **future work of the Well Being Legacy**.

Vital Conditions Primers

- Basic Needs for Health + Safety
- Lifelong Learning
- Meaningful Work + Wealth
- Humane Housing
- A Healthy Environment
- Reliable Transportation
- Belonging + Civic Muscle
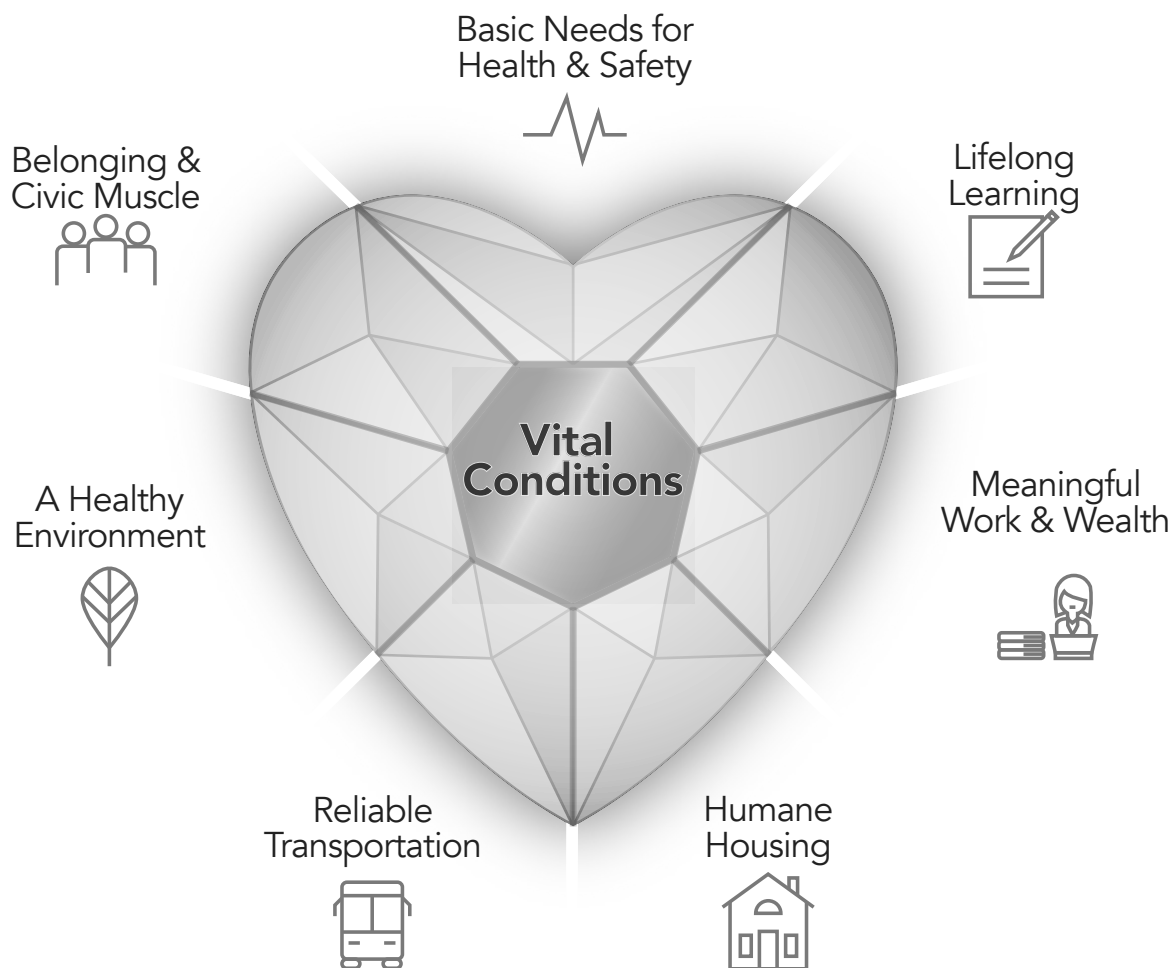
Vital Conditions for Health + Well-Being

The Well Being Legacy initiative distinguishes two related ways of viewing health and well-being:

- **Personal Health & Well-Being**: Individual perspectives and experiences that affect how we think, feel, and function, as well as how evaluate our lives as a whole.

- **Vital Conditions for Health & Well-Being**: Properties of places and institutions that we all depend on to be healthy and well.

Personal experiences may rise and fall, from birth to death. However, the vital conditions persist over generations. In fact, seven major categories of vital conditions strongly shape the exposures, choices, opportunities, and adversities that each of us encounter on day one and throughout our lives.

Vital signs like heart rate, temperature, and weight tell us what is going in our body. Likewise, the vital conditions that we inherit from our predecessors and, in turn, confer to future generations tell us about the prospects for health and well-being as a community, a country, and an extended human family.

Each vital condition is distinct and indispensable unto itself; and they work together as a system to produce our legacies of health and well-being over time. They are inseparable parts of a multi-faceted whole.

Basic Needs for Health & Safety

Belonging & Civic Muscle

Lifelong Learning

A Healthy Environment

Vital Conditions

Meaningful Work & Wealth

Reliable Transportation

Humane Housing

This is an early draft to support understanding of the Vital Conditions. We are learning and iterating. We invite feedback and corrections.

Well Being Legacy

Basic Needs for Health & Safety

The vital condition of Basic Needs for Health and Safety is about our most practical requirements for physical and mental survival. It is about having enough of the things we cannot live without. It is about feeling safe wherever we go; being free from addiction and toxic stress; and nurturing healthy babies. It is also about getting routine health care.

Basic Needs for Health and Safety is an indispensable vital condition because none of us can reach our full potential in the absence of several practical requirements for physical and mental survival. Each of us must have enough air, water, and nutritious food; a good balance of physical activity and sleep; and safe, satisfying sexuality, and healthy reproduction for those who bear children. We need to feel safe from violence, crime, and injury in our homes, schools, workplaces, and communities. Less visible, but just as important, is our need to be free from addiction, trauma, and toxic stress. And everyone depends on having routine health care to prevent and diagnose illness, and to care for inevitable afflictions when they arise.

Meeting many of these basic needs has a direct benefit by avoiding hunger, exhaustion, or injury. Others have less conspicuous impacts, in part, because they support our bodies' ability to withstand adversity, fight infection, maintain a healthy weight, and nurture a healthy pregnancy. If any of these basic needs are not met, the effects can be immediate, or the consequences can take decades to unfold. While children are particularly vulnerable, adults are as well. Among the forces that stand in the way of meeting these basic needs are poverty, racism, and other forms of discrimination or isolation.

Continuing influence of past legacies

The era of chronic illness, injury, and addiction: In the wake of phenomenally successful efforts to control infectious disease, a new era marked by the rise of chronic physical and mental illness, injury, and addiction has become a growing challenge in America since the mid-20th Century.

Intergenerational violence and ACEs: Abuse, violence, and traumatic stress travel from one generation to the next, in part, because those who witness or endure violence as children are more likely to perpetrate it as adults. Childhood abuse, neglect, and other traumatic stressors, termed adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), are alarmingly common across America. Higher exposure to ACEs puts individuals at higher risk for future health problems such as alcoholism, depression, drug use, intimate partner violence, and suicide attempts. The impact of ACEs is cumulative and long term: survivors often remain at higher risk for behaving violently and living shorter lives.

Racism: Racism affects health and well-being on multiple levels extending over generations. For example, the effects are evident both in who has access to healthcare services, as well as the quality of those services; it is apparent in systematic differences in public safety and unfair treatment in the justice system; and the accumulated stress of living in America's race-conscious, discriminatory culture is one of the most likely reasons why preterm birth and infant mortality are so much worse among women of color, irrespective of their wealth or other personal characteristics.

Intergenerational poverty: Persistent obstacles to economic mobility create cycles of poverty from one generation to the next. Those who bear the greatest burden are most likely to encounter multiple threats when their basic needs for health and safety are not met, especially hunger, malnutrition, substance misuse, crime, violence, air and water pollution, trauma, and more.

War on Drugs and mass incarceration: For nearly 50 years, America has waged an overt "war on drugs" characterized by a controversial and costly set of tactics intended to stop drug production, distribution, and consumption. One result has been the mass incarceration of low-level, nonviolent drug offenders - disproportionately low income and Black men. Today, the U.S. prison population remains at a worldwide high.

Current conditions

Seven of the top 10 causes of death are from chronic diseases; two of which–heart disease and cancer– together account for nearly half (46%) of all deaths.[1]

Tobacco alone kills **more than 480,000** Americans each year. Even though smoking has declined in the last decade from 21% to 16%, tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of death and disease - followed by poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and drinking too much alcohol.[2]

Tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use costs about **$740 billion annually**.[3]

80% of Americans don't get the recommended amount of physical activity.[4]

42 million people lack consistent access to enough food--**13 million** of them are children.[5]

Nearly half (45%) of Americans have sleep problems that interfere with daily activities.[6]

20% of children have witnessed one family member assault another; and 37% have been assaulted themselves in the previous year.[7]

About half (45%) of all U.S. children have experienced at least one adverse childhood experience; the lowest prevalence is among Asian children (40%) and the highest is among Black/African American children (61%).[8]

More than twice as many Black/African American babies die in infancy as White infants.[9]

75% of adults experienced at least one negative symptom of stress in the last month, including anxiety, anger, and fatigue.[10]

28.7 million Americans (or 10.6% under age 65) do not have health insurance; many more (17.3% of adults) have no usual source of care.[11]

[1]U.S. CDC; [2]U.S. CDC; [3]National Institute of Drug Abuse; [4]U.S. CDC; [5]USDA [6]National Sleep Foundation; [7,8]Child Trends; [9]U.S. CDC; [10]American Psychological Association; [11]U.S.CDC

Community design: Many American communities are not designed to provide what residents need to maintain their health and well-being. Too many neighborhoods lack adequate access to healthcare services, healthy foods, active transportation, safe places to play, and other basic necessities. Conversely, junk food, alcohol, and tobacco are often placed within easy reach and cleverly advertised, even to children. Harmful community design disproportionately affects those with low incomes and people of color. Disinvestment in those places perpetuates harmful and inequitable conditions over generations.

Healthcare: The U.S. healthcare industry evolved primarily to treat acute illness and injury; it is not currently built to deliver high-quality preventive and chronic care, nor to promote health and well-being. As a result most healthcare providers have little experience in addressing the social determinants that produce equitable health and well-being across populations. Yet, it is clear that the current system is insufficient to the task given that the U.S. spends 50% more on healthcare, with lower levels of coverage and worse outcomes than other developed countries.

Health insurance: Americans rely on health insurance to afford the high cost of healthcare services. Coverage is highly variable between plans and providers, both governmental and commercial. Medicare and Medicaid (governmental programs) are instrumental in insuring older adults, people with disabilities, and low income children and adults. Most people with commercial insurance get it through their employers. The employer-based system emerged as a marketing ploy by hospitals that proliferated during World War II when employers needed to attract workers. IRS rulings in the 1940s and 1950s created massive tax benefits for employer-plans, and by the 1960s, 70% of the U.S. population was covered by a voluntary health insurance plan. Covering the entire population has been a chief policy objective for almost a century, one that remains elusive even today.

Major forces shaping current and future priorities

Aging: By 2035, adults over 65 will outnumber young people for the first time in American history. As we age, we require more healthcare: pressure to meet our impending needs for routine preventive and chronic care, as well as humane end-of-life care will profoundly challenge families, communities, and healthcare institutions.

Affordable Care Act: The Affordable Care Act (2010) sought to make health insurance more affordable to more people, expand Medicaid, and support innovations that lower the cost of care overall. Since being enacted, the ACA has helped about 20 million people get insurance. It is also an important funding stream for public health and prevention work. Despite these gains, the ACA remains a politically divisive policy and its long-term future is unknown.

Deaths of despair and the Opioid Epidemic: The United States is facing a crisis of despair: More than 1 million Americans have died in the past decade (2006 to 2015) from drug overdoses, alcohol and suicides. In 2016, U.S. life expectancy decreased for the first time in two decades, and these three intertwined crises have been major contributors. A deadly epidemic of opioid misuse is rising rapidly due in part to over-prescribing legal opioids; increasing demand, availability, and fatality of illegal opioids; and distressed economic conditions.

Justice reforms: Public attention and dialogue is increasing around racial discrimination in the justice system, due in part to highly visible incidents of police violence, the Black Lives Matter movement, as well as decriminalization of marijuana and pardoning of nonviolent drug offenses. Policing is becoming more community-centered and conscious of racial disparities. Despite progress, these changes are nascent and much more must be done to reform a system that is notorious for injustices and mass incarceration.

Gender identity and sexuality: Many Americans are thinking differently about gender identity and sexuality. Decoupling gender identity from sexuality is challenging gender norms and creating space for people to express their genders and sexualities in authentic and new ways. These shifts provoke many reactions ranging from celebration to hostility, with significant implications for many strong drivers of depression, stress, violence, substance misuse, healthcare utilization, mistreatment in the justice system, and more.

What are important priorities or ways to ensure a positive legacy?

There are infinite opportunities to make progress, across every sphere of influence.
Here are just a few that could yield great benefits:

1. Eliminate hunger and food insecurity
2. Break the cycles of intergenerational poverty, violence, and racism
3. Become a tobacco-free society that enables physical activity, healthy diet, moderate alcohol use, and nonviolent conflict
4. Transform the healthcare industry to insure everyone and deliver better routine care, with a deep understanding of people's socioeconomic circumstances and traumatic experiences
5. Embrace the art and science of placemaking to design communities that meet people's basic needs for health and safety, as well as other vital conditions
6. Resolve disputes about the war on drugs in a way that reverses mass incarceration and frees people from addiction
7. Establish place-based policy and investment agendas crafted by resident leaders and professionals from multiple sectors to shape local priorities and build the strength necessary to enact laws, regulations, and administrative policies that support health and well-being in an entire geographic area

Lifelong Learning

The vital condition of Lifelong Learning is about a good education for all. An education that ensures young people, regardless of background or ability, are set up for success, and have the opportunities to reach their full potential. An education that launches them into meaningful careers in which they can continue learning and growing.

Lifelong Learning is an indispensable, vital condition that we all depend on for our health and well-being. From birth, we are developing and learning. Supportive learning environments from early childhood set children on a path that maximizes their capacity to learn, and positively shapes their social and behavioral development. Exposure to high quality education that is supportive and adaptive to students' needs is requisite for all students to reach important educational milestones, and achieve their full potential. A solid preK-12 education launches young people into productive futures wherein they may pursue higher education, trades, ongoing and community-based education and advance their lives and livelihoods through the power of learning.

Education is an engine of social mobility with implications for health and well-being that extend across the life-course. Higher income, better health, and increased opportunity tracks with higher levels of education. Disparities in access to education and educational attainment persist, and are perpetuated across generations.

Continuing influence of past legacies

Achievement gap: More students are graduating high school, and a greater proportion of Millennials are entering the workforce with college degrees than previous generations. Despite gains in recent decades, gaps persist in educational achievement that disadvantage students from low income backgrounds and communities of color.

Education standards: The Elementary and Secondary Education Action (ESEA) of 1965, the Nation's omnibus education law, seeks to ensure equal access to quality education for all. Its highly controversial reauthorization in 2002 as the No Child Left Behind Act set a goal that all students would perform at grade level on state tests, and brought test-based school accountability to scale across the United States. Evidence suggests that NCLB brought about improvements to mathematics achievement of younger students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, but has not affected student achievement in reading. Replacing NCLB in 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act rolled back much of the federal government's big footprint in education policy, and gave more flexibility to states in designing school accountability systems, and teacher certification and evaluation.

Early childhood: Since its founding in 1965, Head Start (and later Early Head Start) has played a critical role in providing early education to disadvantaged 3- to 5-year-old children across the United States. Growing evidence demonstrates the importance of early learning in helping to narrow learning and achievement gaps.

Segregation: For much of American history, schools were segregated by race. Segregation led to gross disparities in funding, and quality of schools. Although Brown v. the Board of Education outlawed segregation in schools in 1954, and progress to desegregate was made, segregation persists and by many measures is worsening. Racial and economic segregation in schools perpetuates achievement gaps and disparate access to opportunities.

Discrimination: Several civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability and age. Although these laws brought about significant progress, discrimination in education persists, and effects of ongoing, intergenerational discrimination continue to harm and profoundly disadvantage certain communities.

Current conditions

In 2016, **4 in 10 Millennials** had at least a Bachelor's degree, and nearly **50% of Millennial women** had a Bachelor's degree.[1]

In the 1970s, about half of high school graduates went on to college where grants covered about 80% of costs. Now about **two-thirds of high school graduates** go to college, and only **40% of tuition costs** are covered by grants.[2]

32 million adults in the U.S. cannot read, and half can't read a book written at an eighth-grade level.[3]

About **two-thirds** of U.S. children are not proficient readers by the end of third grade, the majority of whom (80%) come from low income families.[4]

About **1 in 6 public schools** do not meet state standards for student achievement.[5]

Per pupil spending varies widely between states – for instance children in Vermont receive nearly **three times the funds** as children in Utah even when adjusted for cost differences.[6]

3 million students are kept out of school with Out of School Suspensions each year – disproportionately male students of color, and students with disabilities.[7]

[1]Current Population Survey; [2,4]Best Colleges Online; [3]National Institute of Literacy; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development; [4]National Institute of Drug Abuse; [5]The Campaign for Grade-level Reading; [8]National Center for Education Statistics

Education funding: In the United States, a large proportion of funding for public K-12 education is provided through local taxes, generating gross disparities in education funding between well and less well-off communities. While states and the federal government have increased contributions to offset this regressive effect, many states decreased their education spending during the Great Recession and continue to operate with inadequate funding levels.

Federal aid for students: Federal aid for students through mechanisms like Pell Grants, the G.I. Bill, and the Higher Education Act have been instrumental in helping millions of students attend college. However, with more students going to college than ever before there is less financial aid to go around – one of the factors in skyrocketing tuition costs.

Discipline: Students of color, especially male students, and students with learning disabilities are vulnerable to disproportionate and discriminatory applications of discipline, including suspensions, expulsions and criminalization of minor infractions or behaviors that should be handled by schools. Disciplinary actions that push students out of school prevent learning, heighten disconnection, accelerate drop out, and feed the school-to-prison pipeline.

Major forces shaping current and future priorities

Healthy schools: Schools and school districts are stepping up to address health equity. They are expanding: food and feeding programs; health, dental, mental health, counseling and social services; and policies, programs, practices and infrastructure that increase physical activity.

Safe and supportive school environments: Alarming trends including student injuries and deaths in mass school shootings, and online harassment and cyber bullying are bringing increased public attention to issues of school safety.

Disability accommodations: Students with disabilities have the right to a free and appropriate public education and are assured special education and related services under U.S. law. Accommodations and supports, such as Individualized Education Programs, continue to be important tools to ensure a good education for all.

Personalized learning: Personalized learning is a major movement in education that tailors and aligns instruction and supports to student needs and learning profiles, often through technologies. Project-based learning, blended learning, and community-based learning are other emergent strategies to engage students through authentic, personalized learning experiences.

Technology: Technology is reshaping the future of education. It is revolutionizing instruction and learning inside and outside of classrooms. Federal and state governments have sought to increase high speed internet access to schools, and provide online resources for students and teachers. Online schooling at all levels has become more commonplace. Technology is increasing access to information, learning opportunities, and tools for learners of all ages. Despite its promise to advance teaching and learning, questions about efficacy of education technologies and challenges to their equitable implementation loom.

Shaping the workforce of tomorrow: Today's students are tomorrow's workforce, and that workforce should have the capacity, and be equipped to meet society's needs for overall well-being. Strategic investments in education can be channeled to shape the workforce, helping to adapt to the changing nature of work, and address professional and skills shortages.

Teaching workforce: Employment practices in the education sector affect the quality of education students receive. Educators at all levels, from early childhood to university, face issues of inadequate compensation, employment instability, and other poor practices that devalue our educators, and deprive students of their best educations.

Rising costs of higher education: Since the 1970s, college tuition costs have increased at a faster rate than inflation. In recent years, soaring costs have accompanied rising enrollment, reductions in financial aid, and mounting student debt.

What are important priorities or ways to ensure a positive legacy?

There are infinite opportunities to make progress, across every sphere of influence.
Here are just a few that could yield great benefits:

1. Fund schools at levels sufficient for them to provide good education for all students and a healthy school environment

2. Advance Schools as places where students can get things they need for success in their educations – including free/reduced price breakfast and lunch, Summer Food, mental health counseling, medical and dental services

3. Rethink discipline in schools in order to reduce disproportionate impacts to young men of color and students with disabilities

4. Dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline and end the mass incarceration of youth

5. Turn the tide of the student debt crisis by finding solutions for those with student debt

Meaningful Work & Wealth

The vital condition of Meaningful Work & Wealth is about personal, family, and community wealth that provides the means for healthy, secure lives. It is about good-paying, fulfilling jobs and careers, and and financial security that extends across the lifespan.

Meaningful Work and Wealth is an indispensable vital condition that we all depend on for our health and well-being. People's lives and self-worth flourish when doing productive, rewarding work. The income one earns prevents material deprivation; and the experience of productive work itself converts dependency into a dignified sense of purpose. Even beyond the immediate importance of earning a paycheck, meaningful work lifts up entire families and communities, creating a vibrant and interdependent commonwealth. The promise of America's democracy is best fulfilled when we work with others, across differences, to create things of lasting value. Likewise, the ability to accumulate adequate wealth shapes the living standards not only for individual families and communities, but for generations to come. Being able to afford assets like a home or a computer opens avenues to participate more fully in work, school, and community life. Also, the chance to build financial equity, for example through a retirement account or by owning shares in a company, enables people to invest in education or to start a business of their own.

Continuing influence of past legacies

Myth of mobility: Many Americans believe that wealth reflects merit or divine right (i.e., "you deserve it") and they see poverty as a sign either of personal failure or destiny (i.e., "you either jumped, or were meant to fall."). But there is more to the story. This partial view gets in the way of understanding how the political and economic structures that we create tend to push a small fraction of families into exorbitant prosperity and the vast majority into extreme adversity. Deepening socioeconomic divides since the 1970s further limit opportunities for mobility, forcing a large fraction of children and families to endure intergenerational hardship.

Stagnant wages: Even though the national economy and job market have rebounded since the end of the Great Recession, wages for most people have remained stagnant for decades, causing millions to work two or more jobs just to survive, with the heaviest burdens borne by those most historically disadvantaged.

Segregation and discrimination: Lasting effects, over multiple generations, of redlining and other race-based restrictions on real estate first deny African Americans and other people of color the opportunity to own a home, and then undercut their potential to build wealth that typically comes from home ownership. Residential segregation also cuts off networking opportunities that are often critical to access jobs and other resources.

Employment practices: In the 20th Century, organized labor unions and occupational safety and health institutions helped to bring about many changes, including better pay, reasonable hours, safer and fairer working conditions, and worker rights and benefits. Nevertheless, hazardous working conditions and exploitive employment practices still persist in many sectors and occupations, particularly in the informal sector.

Retirement security: Many Americans are not saving enough for retirement, if they are saving anything at all. Only about half of all Americans are offered retirement plans through their employer, and the vast majority of those without employer-offered plans don't save for retirement. Over the last few decades there has been a shift from defined-benefit plans to defined-contribution plans which has had real impact on retirement security. Saving for retirement is highly disparate, with high-income earners and those in union jobs experiencing greater retirement security.

Regulation: Regulations play an essential role in market economies - establishing the rules of competition, and protecting consumers, workers, and the environment. Yet, burdensome, inconsistent, and outdated regulations can cause economic distortions, and undermine business reinvestment and entrepreneurship.

Current conditions

Unemployment is **3.8%** overall, but much worse in certain places (such as Alaska and the District of Columbia), and among certain sub-groups (such as Blacks/African Americans and American Indians).[1]

About twice as many people - **7.6%** - are underemployed as unemployed, including part-time workers who want to work full-time, those who have given up searching, and those officially considered unemployed.[2]

Approximately **7.4 million people** hold multiple jobs, including military families and employees in the some of the largest, most profitable companies in the world.[3]

The correlation between pay and job satisfaction is almost **zero**. That is why underpaid professionals like teachers or artists are often more satisfied with their jobs than overpaid bankers or lawyers. Only **13%** of those who work full-time are actually excited by what they do.[4]

Automation could eliminate as many as **73 million** U.S. jobs by 2030.[5]

Nearly **half** of all Americans (47%) are not able to cover a $400 unexpected expense.[6]

Children's prospects of earning more than their parents have **fallen by 40%** over the past half century, from 90% to 50%.[7]

The dream of economic mobility is a myth for millions. Among Black/African American children, **63%** who start out at the bottom of the income scale remain there as adults, compared to 32% of white children.[8]

[1,2]Bureau of Labor Statistics; [3]FastCompany; [4]Gallup and FastCompany; [5]McKinsey Global Institute; [6]American Federal Reserve; [7]The Equality of Opportunity Project; [8]Economic Policy Institute; [9]HHS, Brookings Institution ; [10,11]Institute for Policy Studies; [12]Urban Institute; [13]National Center for Employee Ownership

Major forces shaping current and future priorities

Economic inequity: America is in the midst of an unprecedented shift of wealth from what once was a large middle class to the top 0.1% of the population. Such stark economic inequity is greater in America than every other developed nation. Many see this as the defining challenge of our time.

Well-being economy: Strong incentives tend to separate--and then prioritize--corporate profit over value for people and planet, even though there are many situations where both are possible. For instance, economists largely agree that our measure of Gross Domestic Product instills perverse incentives by counting very bad things (like crime or environmental catastrophes) as economically good. Instead, a worldwide movement is emerging to use measures of "genuine progress" or "gross domestic happiness" as the focus for a well-being economy.

Service-based economy: Major sectors for employment in the U.S. have shifted away from agriculture and manufacturing, toward healthcare, education, professional services, trade, and more.

Retail apocalypse: Dramatic shifts in the retail market threaten to disrupt both the economic and physical landscape of American communities: For example, nearly a quarter of all shopping malls in the United States are at high risk of losing an anchor tenant, which could trigger a multi-decade downward spiral for mall owners and surrounding communities.

Globalization: Global supply chains and new technologies are changing both the nature and location of work (e.g., offshoring, teleworking, automation).

Gig economy: The archetype of a secure, dignified, good-paying job is gone. Many formerly reliable jobs have vanished. New kinds of work are emerging in certain places, albeit too slowly and unevenly, and perhaps not at all. The modern U.S. economy is now marked by a chaotic--and frightening--mix of layoffs, career transitions, underemployment, unpaid internships, and temp jobs in what many call a "gig economy".

Aging: An aging population will likely create labor shortages and pressure to honor social security commitments.

Social responsibility: Changing attitudes toward corporate social responsibility and impact investing are reworking organizational priorities and partnerships. Businesses are less able to shift costs onto society (through externalities); metrics focused on environmental, social, and corporate governance are becoming routine; and companies must care more about social responsibility because their customers do and because it is necessary to attract and retain talent.

Women: Despite gains over the last several decades that have increased women's participation in the labor force, gender imbalances, discrimination, exploitation and disparities persist. In many workplaces and professions, women still earn less than men, struggle to advance, and experience sexual harassment and assault at heightened rates. Many workplaces also don't offer supports for women to fulfill family and care-taking roles, like family leave. There has been increased attention to gender inequities in the workplace recently; however, significant advances are needed to address structural issues that limit and devalue women.

Commons transition: In response to stagnant wages and economic inequity, employers are increasingly turning workers into owners through Employee Stock Ownership Plans and worker cooperatives. This is one part of a wider "commons transition" that could counter some of the most extractive and inequitable dynamics of the current economy by placing greater value on things that we hold in common.

Poverty is growing across America, with more people (**46.7 million**) and a larger fraction (**14.8%**) in poverty in 2015 than in 2000. Suburbs saw the number of poor residents living in distressed neighborhoods **grow by 188%**. Residents living in distressed neighborhoods increased by **172%** in small metro areas, **103%** in rural communities, and **80%** of cities.[9]

Total household debt reached a new peak in 2018, rising to **$13.21 trillion**.[10]

The three richest billionaires own more wealth than the **bottom 50%** of all Americans combined.[11]

White family wealth is **seven times** greater than black families and **five times** that of Hispanic families, due in part to a 25% difference in home ownership.[12]

Among companies that offer stock, about **36%** of employees actually own stock or options in their companies.[13]

What are important priorities or ways to ensure a positive legacy?

There are infinite opportunities to make progress, across every sphere of influence.
Here are just a few that could yield great benefits:

1. Provide a job guarantee and unconditional basic income

2. Strengthen organized labor unions

3. Catalyze inclusive economic development and promote entrepreneurism, partcularly among women and people of color

4. Create opportunities for cooperative and employee ownership

5. Reduce student debt through free or subsidized college tuition

6. Advance sustainable business practices by greening sectors and industries, and promoting B- and S-corps

7. Establish automatic savings in retirement plans and universal children's savings accounts

8. Reform safety net program asset tests, which can act as barriers to saving among low-income families

Humane Housing

The vital condition of Humane Housing is about stable, safe places to live, and living in diverse, vibrant communities that provide what we need to live full, productive lives.

Humane Housing is an indispensible vital condition that we all depend on for our health and well-being. We are able to thrive when we have secure, consistent places to life; when our homes and neighborhoods are safe from hazards; and when our neighborhoods provide what we need for our lives and livelihoods. Housing is the biggest expense for most Americans, and thus housing affordability is a significant factor in financial well-being. Homeownership has long been at the center of the American Dream helping build family wealth, and stable diverse communities.

Continuing influence of past legacies

Segregation: Throughout American history, neighborhoods have been segregated by race, and along economic lines. Segregation amounts to systematic disinvestment made possible through inequitable policies and practices, including urban renewal, exclusionary zoning, and predatory lending.

Urban decline: During the second half of the 20th Century, white and middle-class flight to the suburbs accelerated the emptying out and decline of inner cities and downtown cores. Many poorer, communities of color remained in cities, increasingly isolated from opportunities. White flight left a steadily declining tax base from which to support schools, social services, infrastructure and public safety. In the 1950s and 1960s, Federal urban renewal projects to address blight resulted in displacing more than 300,000 people.

Discrimination: Housing discrimination occurs when people are discriminated against when buying or renting housing on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, sexual orientation and gender identity, marital status, or veteran status. The Fair Housing Act (1968) prohibits such discrimination; yet, housing discrimination persists and the legacy of housing discrimination in the United States follows us. Redlining describes a number of practices that deprived, and in some cases continue to deprive, Blacks and African Americans of home ownership opportunities and the wealth building traditionally associated with it. These practices include covenants against selling real estate to Blacks and African American, neighborhood steering by real estate agents, and public and private home ownership financing programs explicitly forbidding Blacks and African American participation. Redlining and other tactics exacerbated concentrated poverty and community disinvestment.

Home mortgage interest: The home mortgage interest deduction is a tax deduction for homeowners meant to encourage wealth- and asset-building. Termed "a public housing policy for the rich", the home mortgage interest deduction has provided billions of dollars annually in subsidies to wealthier home owners, exacerbating economic inequality. In 2015, the mortgage interest deduction amounted to $71 billion, 90% of which was claimed by households earning more than $100,000.

Land use tools: Provided for under the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, land use tools are leveraged to protect the welfare, safety and health of the public by allowing for the separation and regulation of land uses. Although land use tools like zoning can be used to implement a development agenda that puts human well-being at its center, they have also been used to enact agendas that oppress immigrant, low income and communities of color. Zoning and other development regulations can prohibit the production of housing types that are less expensive (e.g., multifamily, higher density, accessory dwelling units). Public processes have also been weaponized to block the construction of these housing types, exacerbating income and racial segregation in many communities and housing shortages in expensive markets.

Current conditions

One third of the population, or **39.8 million** households, spend more than 30% of their income on housing.[1]

16.5 million households spend 50% of their income on housing.[2]

Home ownership has **declined from 69%** in 2004 to **64%** in 2018.[3]

Only **1 in 4** renters who are eligible for public assistance receive it.[4]

24.6 million Americans have asthma. About **40%** of childhood asthma is attributed to exposures in the home. Black and African American children have asthma at nearly **twice the rate** of White children.[5]

[1,2]American Community Survey; [3]U.S. Census Bureau; [4]Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University; [5]U.S. EPA

Suburbanization: Following World War II, the United States adopted housing and transportation practices that fueled suburban development and white flight. The process of suburbanization made vehicles the only viable means of transportation, and relocated jobs away from urban cores and lower income, less mobile populations. Subdivision greenfield development remains a dominant housing development pattern across the United States despite growing awareness that the practice produces negative externalities.

Housing bubble: The U.S. housing bubble peaked mid-2000s, and then burst leading to: a decline in home prices, mortgage delinquencies, foreclosures, and the devaluation of housing-related securities. These factors triggered the subprime mortgage crisis, a nationwide banking emergency that is described alongside housing speculation as proximate causes of the Great Recession.

Deinstitutionalization: Social and health reforms in the 1960s and 1970s led to the mass deinstitutionalization of persons in State care for mental health issues. A lack of planning for structured living arrangements and adequate services resulted in people with mental illness experiencing homelessness - and having substance misuse problems and becoming justice-system involved - at high rates. In the intervening decades the nation's mental health care system has not kept pace with needs. Today, about a quarter of people experiencing homelessness have a severe mental illness.

Major forces shaping current and future priorities

Healthy, supportive housing: The health sector is increasingly concerned with the social determinants of health, and the role of housing and neighborhoods in determining health outcomes. Efforts in recent years have focused on creating a continuum of housing and supportive housing, recognizing that housing is healthcare for so many.

Complete neighborhoods: Complete neighborhoods have what residents need to live healthy, productive lives, and are accessible with or without a vehicle. "Twenty minute neighborhoods," "walkable neighborhoods," and similar concepts are of increasing priority and use as communities look for ways to build more vibrant communities and address social determinants of health.

Housing affordability crisis: Soaring rents and home prices in major American cities are a bellwether of an urban housing affordability crisis that's been on the horizon for quite some time. An urbanization movement has been underway across the United States for more than a decade. Urban renaissance has happened rapidly in some places, and without pre-planning to secure a permanent land supply for affordable housing or put safeguards in place to protect communities from negative externalities of development. In many urban communities, low income and communities of color are at greater risk of getting pushed out or displaced due to gentrification, fraying the social fabric of affected communities and exacerbating inequities.

Aging population: The American population is aging, and with that comes increased demand for senior living, accessible housing, and affordable, flexible options for multi-generational families. Older adults increasingly choose to continue living in their homes (i.e., "aging in place"), and many are choosing to relocate to urban centers where they can more easily walk or take transit to the places they need to go.

Resilience: Sea level rise and increased flooding associated with climate change threatens a significant portion of the nation's housing stock and value. Before there was publicly subsidized housing, poor people lived on land that was cheap, often because it flooded. Much of the housing stock that is subsidized today is on that same cheap land and at ever-growing risk. Those who are poor stand to be disproportionately affected by repeated flooding and, ultimately, displacement as our uncertain climate futures unfold.

What are important priorities or ways to ensure a positive legacy?

There are infinite opportunities to make progress, across every sphere of influence.
Here are just a few that could yield great benefits:

1. Promote community design that is human-centered, multimodal and connects neighborhoods with resources

2. Seek permanent solutions to affodable housing shortages

3. Eliminate homelessness

4. Look to scale programs that provide paths to homeownership

5. Limit the mortgage interest tax deduction and use the revenues to provide a credit for first-time homebuyers

6. Explore community-based approaches like the Community Health Worker model to air pollution in the home

7. Implement buy-back programs in high-risk flooding areas

8. Double-down on efforts to expand accessible housing and support that enable aging in place

VITAL CONDITIONS
A Healthy Environment

The vital condition of A Healthy Environment is about having a clean, healthy environment for all, one that is free from environmental hazards, one that is resilient to future changes and threats, and one that fulfills our needs to connect with nature.

A Healthy Environment is an indispensable vital condition that we all depend on for our health and well-being. Healthy environments provide clean air, clean water, clean land, and well-functioning ecosystems. A bad environment can lead to acute and chronic health problems ranging from premature death from air pollution, cancer from land and water contamination, developmental disabilities from mercury and lead, and a range of other detrimental outcomes. Where direct health impacts are not a concern, environmental degradation can still threaten the natural systems upon which humans rely. Pesticides can break links in the food chain, polluted runoff can destroy productive estuarine systems, and climate change can cause severe weather events, flooding, and change growing conditions in food producing areas.

Continuing influence of past legacies

Intensive development: Large-scale systems in our economy - food, energy, transportation, healthcare, water, and land development - have significant negative environmental impacts, such as pollution, land conversion and climate impacts. Strategy thus far has focused on reducing impacts rather than redesigning or engineering systems that prevent harms or are regenerative.

Environmental protection: The United States began addressing environmental issues seriously in the 1970s in response to dangerously high levels of smog, rivers so polluted they caught fire, and communities with high rates of cancer linked to dumping of toxic chemicals. Progress has been substantial with improvements nationwide in air quality, significant reductions in pollution from factories, power plants, cars and sewage treatment facilities, removal of lead from gasoline and paint, and improved management and disposal of hazardous chemicals and waste. In spite of this progress, serious and in many ways more complex challenges remain.

Pollution: Attempts to address pollution have focused on addressing particular pollutants, mitigating pollution once it has happened, and reducing major sources of pollution. Individually small but cumulatively large sources of pollution, like runoff from urban and agricultural lands, have received comparatively little attention even as their overall impact has increased in importance.

Climate impacts: Industrialization and our carbon-intensive economy has increased atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases to the point that significant weather and climate impacts are evident. These impacts are global in scale, and promise disruptions to basic systems upon which humans and the natural world rely.

Environmental racism: Poor and/or dangerous environmental conditions are not distributed evenly. Due to the concentration of industries, weather patterns, past dumping, and upstream pollution, some areas bear disproportionate impacts to environmental hazards. Communities of color and low income communities are disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards, termed environmental racism.

Current conditions

133.9 million people live in communities with unhealthy levels of ozone or particulate matter putting them at risk for premature death and other serious health effects such as lung cancer, asthma attacks, cardiovascular damage, and developmental and reproductive harm.[1]

81% of energy is derived from fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, coal), down from **91%** since 1949. Per capita energy use has remained steady since the 1970s.[2]

The United States emits approximately **15.1 trillion pounds** of greenhouse gases each year, an **increase of 7%** since 1990.[3]

Atmospheric CO2 concentrations have **increased 42%** since the 1700s.[4]

8 out of 10 of the warmest years on record in the U.S. have occurred since 1998.[5]

300 billion gallons of freshwater are extracted daily from surface and groundwater sources.[6]

1 in 10 drinking water systems in the U.S. had health-based violations in 2016.[7]

Between 2001 and 2010, developed land increased in size equal to the size of the **State of Idaho**.[8]

[1]American Lung Association; [2]U.S. Energy Information Administration; [3,4,5]U.S. EPA; [6]USGS; [7,8]U.S. EPA

Major forces shaping current and future priorities

Sustainability: Sustainability is a major movement that is driving disruptive innovations- forcing changes to sectoral practices, market economies and development patterns around the world. Sustainable development is the principle that meeting human development goals is possible while sustaining - or restoring - the ability of natural systems to provide natural resources and ecosystem services. Various sectors - from energy to healthcare - increasingly recognize their contributions to environmental degradation and challenge the status quo. Sustainability thinking is shifting paradigms; however, questions of how much and how quickly loom large.

Climate change: Climate change has been called the greatest public health challenge of the 21st Century. It presents significant threats to the health and well-being of communities around the United States and the world. Impacts of climate change vary between communities, with certain places facing more significant problems or challenges, and all communities needing to prepare for change. Despite wide consensus in the scientific community about the nature of environmental problems that face society, political institutions remain a barrier to transformational change. In a vacuum of federal leadership, communities are recognizing how to make a difference at the local level.

Local action: Communities are increasingly aware of their vulnerabilities to environmental stressors. They are recognizing the need to act locally in order to mitigate threats and prepare for future challenges. At the local level, climate action planning, community resilience strategies and similar efforts are ways that communities are beginning to change the status quo.

Environmental justice: The environmental justice movement refers to the movement primarily championed by people of color to address the disproportionate environmental impacts and exposure to hazards borne by their communities. Since the 1980s, the environmental justice movement has advanced public awareness and has helped re-organize national environmental priorities.

What are important priorities or ways to ensure a positive legacy?

There are infinite opportunities to make progress, across every sphere of influence.
Here are just a few that could yield great benefits:

1. Advance aims of environmental and climate justice
2. Engage in meaningful, coordinated actions and problem-solving to address climate-related issues at local, state, national and international levels
3. Transition to a green economy
4. Emphasize mass transit systems
5. Mainstream development patterns that are compact
6. Create an economic case for an ecosystem approach that treats monetary and social factors equally
7. Deploy regenerative agriculture practices that increase biodiversity, enrich soils, improve watersheds, and enhance ecosystem services

Reliable Transportation

The vital condition of Reliable Transportation is about compact, walkable, accessible communities, in which mobility is ensured no matter a person's means, mode or ability. Where streets are safe, and transportation systems are sustainable.

Reliable transportation is an indispensable vital condition that we all depend on for our health and well-being. Everyone needs transportation to move consistently and safely between the many places we must be - home, work, school, stores and more. In the United States, personal vehicles are the predominant transportation mode, yet they produce many negative externalities from pollution to traffic to sprawl. Many people can't or don't drive, and rely on public transit and other means to get around. Transportation options have a strong influence on access to jobs and social mobility. Transportation also plays a role in our activity levels, with active transportation - walking, biking and transit use - helping us to incorporate physical activity into our day-to-day lives.

Continuing influence of past legacies

Rise of the automobile: Henry Ford introduced the Model T, an affordable car for regular consumers, in 1908, and by 1927 Ford Motor Company had sold 15 million and cars had become an icon of American life. During the 20th Century, the personal automobile would rise to predominance, transforming transportation patterns and communities forever. In the 1940s and 1950s automakers led efforts to dismantle the nation's then-extensive public transit systems.

Interstate highways: The vision for a network of highways that stretched across the country began to take shape in the 1930s, but the vision wasn't realized until the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 authorized and funded the construction of a 41,000 mile interstate highway system. Since the 1950s, transportation priorities have focused on providing critical transportation access almost exclusively through the automobile. In 1966, the U.S. Department of Transportation was established to ensure a safe, modern, transportation system that improves the quality of life for all while increasing productivity and competitiveness of American workers and businesses; yet, the federal agency has focused primarily on building freeways and large roads. The result has been an unprecedented level of auto mobility which has benefits, as well as unintended consequences.

Disconnection and displacement: During the 1950s and 1960s urban neighborhoods were cleared to site freeways and roads as part of a process known as urban renewal. People from low income communities and communities of color were disproportionately disrupted and displaced by urban renewal which exacerbated spatial and economic inequities.

Land use: A national mindset suggesting that suburban-style land use and transportation were ideal - driven by racism, crime, schools, and pollution - has produced sprawl and a pattern of land development that provides few choices but the automobile.

Vehicle emissions: Automobiles are a major source of environmental air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Despite improvements to fuel efficiency standards and a growing variety of hybrid and electric vehicles, gains are undermined with: more vehicles on the road, older vehicles on the road, and people are driving more.

Current conditions

221 million people have a driver's license (68% of the population).[1]

45% of Americans have no access to public transportation. **86%** of people living in rural communities don't have access to public transportation.[2]

Americans spend an average **$9,000 per year** on transportation- more than food ($7,200) and nearly as much as healthcare ($10,300).[3]

About **5,000 people** are killed by cars while walking each year.[4]

21% of roads in the U.S. are classified as in poor condition.[5]

Around a **quarter of a million** (130-340K) premature deaths are attributed to ground level ozone and PM 2.5 exposures.[6]

[1]University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute; [2]American Public Transportation System; [3]Bureau of Labor Statistics; [4]Fatality Analysis Reporting System; [5]Infrastructure Report Card

Accessibility: Many Americans can't or don't drive, and many don't own or have access to private vehicles. Many who don't drive rely on alternative and public transportation options. Mass transit systems provide critical services that are affordable and accessible to people of all ages, abilities and income levels. Across regions, mass transit systems can help to reduce air pollution, and can be leveraged for economic and community development. Although mass public transit systems are critical to assure reliable transportation for all, they have been underfunded and deprioritized for decades, resulting in a system that continues to fail too many people.

Major forces shaping current and future priorities

Infrastructure: Transportation infrastructure is aging and woefully inadequate. Our aging infrastructure presents a safety issue, creates economic inefficiencies, and lacks capacity for the growing population. Transportation needs far outstrip available funding. And, while innovative approaches like public-private partnerships are emergent, they remain insufficient to address the problem at-scale.

Active transportation: In recent years, active transportation - walking, biking and transit use - has emerged as a powerful strategy to increase mobility for all, while encouraging physical activity, and building safer, more complete communities.

Travel Demand Management: Travel Demand Management refers to the application of strategies that reduce and redistribute travel demand as a means to control vehicle traffic and its externalities. TDM has emerged with the growing realization that the old paradigm of faster, wider, and straighter highways does not work because we can't build our way out of congestion.

New technologies: Travel habits and market preferences are changing alongside technologies. Conventional travel markets are being disrupted by autonomous vehicles, ride-sharing, and TNCs or Transportation Network Companies (i.e., Uber, Lyft), as a growing number of transportation options emerge.

Streets for all: Communities increasingly recognize streets as public places- not just roads that aid the movement of vehicles from Point A to Point B. They are places for socializing, entertainment, commerce and civic expression. "Complete streets" is an important movement seeking solutions to accommodate all kinds of users - pedestrians, cyclists, transit and cars - and create human-centered places. The notion of reclaiming our streets extends to highways as well, with several communities undertaking highway removals in order to reconnect neighborhoods and regain valuable land.

Transit Oriented Development: Transit Oriented Development has emerged as an important strategy that links housing, land and economic development with transit systems to build community wealth and assets while reducing reliance on private vehicles.

What are important priorities or ways to ensure a positive legacy?

There are infinite opportunities to make progress, across every sphere of influence.
Here are just a few that could yield great benefits:

1. Capitalize on changing preferences: more and more people want to live in walkable, transit-served communities

2. Implement complete streets policies and projects

3. Pursue safe routes to school, safe routes to parks and safe routes for seniors strategies

4. Invest in smart public transportation systems that increase mobility, accessibility and opportunity for people, and contribute to local and regional economic growth

5. Use disruption in the transportation field (i.e., ride hailing, autonomous vehicles) as an opportunity to proactively and intentionally reshape the transportation system in ways that increase population well-being

6. Adopt new measures of success–multimodal measures and correlated co-benefits related to quality of life, health, safety and equity

Belonging & Civic Muscle

The vital condition of Belonging & Civic Muscle is about having fulfilling relationships and the social support people need to thrive. It's about being part of a community, contributing to its vibrancy, and developing the power to co-create a common world.

Belonging and Civic Muscle is an indispensable vital condition that we all depend on for our health and well-being. Social support through friends, family, and other networks contributes to our practical and emotional needs, enhances mental well-being, helps us navigate the challenges of life and reinforces healthy behaviors. People with a stronger sense of efficacy, belonging and social connectedness tend to live healthier, happier lives.

At the community and neighborhood level, social cohesion strengthens social ties and engenders collective attachment. Higher levels of social cohesion are associated with higher levels of trust, cooperation and social capital, providing the necessary foundations for creating healthy patterns for working together across groups and sectors, building the "civic infrastructure" for community members to co-create a shared future. These patterns can create a virtuous cycle – working together supports building stronger communication, develops a sense of connectedness and mutual obligation. As sense of being valued and cared for within community grows, people become more confident and willing to participate in community, contributing to its vibrancy and affecting change.

Continuing influence of past legacies

Concentrated poverty: Concentrated poverty has increased dramatically since the 1970s. Many low income communities experience ongoing trauma, disempowerment, and disinvestment. Increasing concentrations of wealth combined with persistent structural racism act to reinforce the wealth gaps between white households and households of color.

Polarization: Americans have increasingly sorted themselves into communities that mirror and reinforce their existing viewpoints, interests, and beliefs; as neighborhoods become more politically and economically segregated, there is an increase in political and cultural polarization.

Voting: Voting participation in the United States trails most other developed countries. Lack of agreement on structural and legal reforms to increase participation in the political process undermines the representativeness and health of our electoral democracy.

Social movements: Social movements have been instrumental in bringing about social and political changes throughout the history of the United States, such as the Women's Rights Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, Marriage Equality and transgender rights movements.

Culture: Cultural oppression throughout the history of the United States has devastated many communities. Cultures have been erased, traditions and languages lost, and communities continue to be oppressed and fractured by persistent bigotry, racism and hate. The impacts of these deep inequities are evident across every dimension of measure of well-being. Yet, communities remain resilient and efforts to preserve cultural identities have expanded in recent years. Expression of culture builds community, cohesion and social capital.

Civil society: "Civil society" has evolved into a diverse set of 1.5 million organizations – ranging from local volunteer-led initiatives to (inter)national multibillion-dollar enterprises. At the community level, the presence of social associations says something about a community's social capital, and social isolation in that community. Social support networks, and places with high levels of social trust correlate with better health. Disinvested in communities have weaker social support networks.

Current conditions

Only **a third** of people believe that "most people can be trusted," **down from 50%** in the 1970s.[1]

1 in 5 people report regularly spending time with neighbors.[2]

Loneliness has **doubled to 40%** since the 1980s.[3]

The number of people who say they have no one to turn to during difficult times **tripled** between 1985 and 2004.[4]

62.5 million adults volunteer.[5]

Fewer than **3 in 10** Americans belong to a community organization or group. Membership in groups has decreased by more than 13% between 1974 and 2004.[6]

4.6 million youth are not in school or working (i.e., "disconnected"). Rates of disconnection are significantly higher for Native American (**26%**), Black/African American (**17%**) and Latino (**14%**) youth.[7]

55% of voting-age people voted in the 2016 election. Voting participation is lowest among younger people and people of Hispanic/Latino background.[8]

Fewer than **3 in 10** Millennials believe that politics is an effective means for changing society.[9]

More than 20% of tribal communities have no access to broadband access, seven times the proportion of non-tribal communities.[10]

The number of identifiable hate groups has **doubled** since 1999.[11]

[1]Center for Active Design; [2]Project for Public Spaces; [3]AARP; [4]American Psychological Review; [5]Nonprofit Quarterly; [6]Civic Enterprise; [7]Social Science Research Council; [8]United States Election Project; [9]Center for Active Design; [10]U.S FCC; [11]Southern Poverty Law Center

Disconnected young people: Impacts of persistent disconnection among young people accrue at individual and community levels. Vulnerable youth are cut off from people, institutions, and experiences through which they develop the knowledge, and build skills and a sense of purpose for productive adulthoods. Social isolation precipitates loneliness, self-doubt, depression, anxiety about the future, and adoption of unhealthy behaviors. As they grow, disconnected young people are less socially mobile, less engaged in civic life, more likely to become justice-involved, more reliant on public assistance, and generally experience lower levels of physical and mental health.

Major forces shaping current and future priorities

Despair: Social isolation, disconnection and loneliness among people of all ages is growing.

Technology: Communication and information technology is changing the way we engage and connect, and is redefining community, extending our sense of community well beyond physical place and expanding the potential scale of civic action.

Civic life: "Civic Deserts" or communities without opportunity for engagement are increasingly common in the United States. A robust civic life is associated with a range of well-being outcomes, including: lower mortality rates and better physical and mental health; positive relations with others, personal growth, sense of purpose, and feelings of autonomy and independence; lower crime rates; and less inequality, higher per-capita incomes, and better long-term economic prospects.

Open government: Open government and open data movements of recent decades have increased transparency and accountability. Technological innovations are changing community engagement and the ways in which local governments work.

Local action: Given increasing gridlock at national and state levels, the local level has emerged as the most effective locus of change for addressing public issues. Localities increasingly work individually and as collectives to catalyze transformational change.

Multi-sector collaboration: Collaboration across sectors is transforming health and how we work together to co-create and maintain it. Multi-sector partnerships have grown in number and impact in recent years, and other collaborative efforts, like Health in All Policies, are becoming more common too. Health in All Policies incorporates health considerations into decision-making across sectors. Fundamentally collaborative, health in all policies offers a powerful lens to assure vital conditions are met.

Community space: Community spaces are open, free, gathering places like parks, libraries and community centers. They have the power to strengthen social bonds and social capital; they encourage diversity and encounter, create a sense of place, and cultivate belonging. Efforts to reclaim, expand, and create new public spaces are blossoming.

Racial generation gap: Demographic shifts are underway as the United States simultaneously ages and becomes increasingly diverse. Older adults are predominantly white, while young people are less white than previous generations. By 2020, kids of color will be the majority, and by 2040 the majority of people in the United States will be non-white. This phenomenon known as the "racial generation gap" has major implications for equity and well-being across political and social life.

What are important priorities or ways to ensure a positive legacy?

There are infinite opportunities to make progress, across every sphere of influence.
Here are just a few that could yield great benefits:

1. Create opportunities for acknowledging and acting collectively to address historical and structural racism (and other forms of institutionalized privilege)

2. Resist the rise of organized hate groups

3. Invest in the "civic infrastructure" of our communities, including the institutional capacity to support community organizing, resident participation and collaboration across sectors

4. Proliferate best practices around community-engaged decision-making, participatory budgeting and governance, and open government, and explore how innovations in civic technology can facilitate broader and more equitable engagement

5. Support and expand collaborative efforts to create public spaces

6. Identify and address barriers to voting for all eligible community members; and develop civic education programs to ensure all community members are aware of their rights and opportunities for engaging in public decision-making processes

7. Adopt whole-system thinking, collaborative approaches and long-term investments for "re-connecting" youth; and create community infrastructure around youth well-being, with particular attention to actions addressing inequitable conditions and outcomes