



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 11, 2024
110 EAST MAIN STREET
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5:00 PM

Dominic Broadhead, Commissioner
Diane Fisher, Commissioner
Varily Isaacs, Commissioner
Carmen Lo, Commissioner
Folake Phillips, Commissioner
Gordon Yamate, Commissioner
Vacant, Commissioner
Vacant, Arts and Culture Commissioner
Pradeep Khanal, Community Health and Senior Services Commissioner
Pravin Balasingham, Youth Commissioner
Ryan Idemoto, Youth Commissioner

This meeting will be held in-person at the Town Council Chambers at 110 East Main Street.

PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLIC PROCESS

The Town of Los Gatos strongly encourages your active participation in the public process. If you are interested in providing oral comments during the meeting, you must attend in-person, complete a speaker's card, and return it to the staff. If you wish to speak to an item on the agenda, please list the item number on the speaker card. The time allocated to speakers may change to better facilitate the meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting in-person, you are welcome to submit written comments via email to clerk@losgatosca.gov.

Public Comment During the Meeting:

- When called to speak, please limit your comments to three (3) minutes, or such other time as the Chair may decide, consistent with the time limit for speakers at a Town meeting.
- Speakers at public meetings may be asked to provide their name and to state whether they are a resident of the Town of Los Gatos. Providing this information is not required.

Deadlines to Submit Public Comments:

- If you are unable to participate in person, you may email clerk@losgatosca.gov with the subject line "Public Comment Item #_" (insert the item number relevant to your comment). Persons wishing to submit written comments to be included in the materials provided to the Commission must provide the comments as follows:
 - For inclusion in the regular agenda packet: by 11:00 a.m. the Wednesday before the Commission meeting.
 - For inclusion in the agenda packet supplemental materials: by 11:00 a.m. on the day of the Commission meeting.
- Persons wishing to make an audio/visual presentation on any agenda item must submit the presentation electronically, either in person or via email to clerk@losgatosca.gov by 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS *(Members of the public are welcome to address the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission on any matter that is not listed on the agenda and is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. To ensure all agenda items are heard, this portion of the agenda is limited to 30 minutes. In the event additional speakers were not able to be heard during the initial Verbal Communications portion of the agenda, an additional Verbal Communications will be opened prior to adjournment. Each speaker is limited to three minutes or such time as authorized by the Chair.)*

OTHER BUSINESS *(Up to three minutes may be allotted to each speaker on any of the following items.)*

1. Self-Introductions of Commissioners.
2. Select a Chair and Vice Chair.
3. Determine the Commission Meeting Dates and Times for 2024.
4. Receive a Report on the Purpose and Scope of the Commission.
5. Begin Discussion of a 2024 Work Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, IF YOU NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK DEPARTMENT AT (408) 354-6834. NOTIFICATION 48 HOURS BEFORE THE MEETING WILL ENABLE THE TOWN TO MAKE REASONABLE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY TO THIS MEETING [28 CFR §35.102-35.104]



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
DEI COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 01/11/2024

ITEM NO: 1

DATE: January 5, 2024
TO: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Self-Introductions of Commissioners

RECOMMENDATION:

Self-introductions of Commissioners.

REMARKS:

As a new Commission, each Commissioner is invited to introduce themselves, stating their name, affiliation, and what they would like to accomplish while serving on the Commission. The Chair may modify the last question at their discretion.

Prepared by: Town Manager



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
DEI COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 01/11/2024

ITEM NO: 2

DATE: January 5, 2024
TO: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Select a Chair and Vice Chair

RECOMMENDATION:

Select a Chair and Vice Chair.

REMARKS:

Annually, a Town Commission appoints its Chair and Vice Chair for the upcoming year.

Prepared by: Town Manager



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
DEI COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 01/11/2024

ITEM NO: 3

DATE: January 5, 2024
TO: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Determine the Commission Meeting Dates and Times for 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission determine its meeting dates and times for 2024.

REMARKS:

Every Town Commission sets a regular meeting schedule. The DEI Commission is expected to meet monthly in-person at a Town facility. Given the size of the DEI Commission, the Council Chambers is the preferred location for the meetings. The Council Chambers are available:

- First, third, or fourth Mondays,
- First, third, or fourth Wednesdays, or
- Second or fourth Thursdays.

Staff recommends that the meetings begin no earlier than 4:30 p.m. due to the work schedules of Commissioners. Meetings would typically last one and half to two hours.

With the Commission's decision on its regular meeting schedule, the Commission will be asked in February to adopt a "place and time" resolution.

Prepared by: Town Manager



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
DEI COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 01/11/2024

ITEM NO: 4

DATE: January 5, 2024
TO: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Receive a Report on the Purpose and Scope of the Commission

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a report on the purpose and scope of the Commission.

REMARKS:

In the establishment of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission, the Town Council adopted an enabling resolution that articulates the purpose and scope of the Commission (Attachment 1). This agenda item provides the Commission an opportunity to discuss its purpose and scope consistent with the resolution.

Attachment:

1. Enabling Resolution

Prepared by: Town Manager

RESOLUTION 2023-053

RESCIND RESOLUTION 2023-051 AND ADOPT A REVISED ENABLING RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS ESTABLISHING THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos does hereby formally establish the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission (DEIC).

WHEREAS, the Town is working to institutionalize Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Town's ethos, the role of DEIC is to support and foster new opportunities for marginalized groups in the Town.

WHEREAS, the DEIC will be committed to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion across all sectors within the Town of Los Gatos and the purpose of DEIC is to work to create more equitable opportunities and increase a sense of belonging for all Los Gatos community members and visitors through community engagement and collaborative activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. Resolution 2023-051 is rescinded and replaced by this Enabling Resolution.
2. The DEIC is hereby established as an advisory committee to the Los Gatos Town Council and shall operate in the manner hereinafter prescribed.
3. Membership/Organization
 - a. The Town is seeking a diversity of members that includes but is not limited to: youth; seniors; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+); those that are disabled; and religious diversity. The Commission shall consist of eleven (11) members. Membership composition shall be:
 - i. Two (2) Youth Commissioners as voting members, whose term of office shall be for one (1) year with no limitations on reappointments, appointed by the Youth Commission;
 - ii. One (1) Arts and Culture Commissioner as a voting member, whose term of office shall be for one (1) year with no limitations on reappointments, appointed by the Arts and Culture Commission;
 - iii. One (1) Community Health and Senior Services Commissioner as a voting member, whose term of office shall be for one (1) year with no limitations on reappointments, appointed by the Community Health and Senior Services Commission;
 - iv. One (1) Town of Los Gatos business owner and resident as a voting member, whose term of office shall be for three (3) years, appointed by the Town Council;

- v. One (1) Town of Los Gatos business owner or employee, who may or may not reside in Los Gatos, as a voting member, whose term of office shall be for three (3) years, appointed by the Town Council;
 - vi. One (1) Town of Los Gatos faith leader who leads a congregation in Los Gatos, who may or may not reside in Los Gatos, as a voting member, whose term of office shall be for three (3) years, appointed by the Town Council;
 - vii. One (1) Town of Los Gatos non-profit employee, who may or may not reside in Los Gatos, as a voting member, whose term of office shall be for three (3) years, appointed by the Town Council; and
 - viii. Three (3) Town of Los Gatos residents as voting members, whose term of office shall be for three (3) years, appointed by the Town Council.
- b. The three-year terms will be staggered.
 - c. Commission members is expected to report back to the Board, Committee, Commission, or organization the Commissioner represents (i.e., Arts and Culture Commission, faith community, etc.).
 - d. The Commission shall appoint a Chair and Vice Chair.
 - e. Commission members shall serve without compensation.
 - f. The Commission shall hold regular monthly meetings.
 - g. The Commission shall establish a regular time and location for its meetings and shall otherwise call and conduct its meetings in compliance with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act.
 - h. Meeting attendance requirements will conform with all current Town Resolutions and Policies.
 - i. A record of all meeting minutes and resolutions of the Commission shall be kept and shall be a public record.

4. Powers and Duties

- a. The duties of DEIC shall be to:
 - i. Act in an advisory capacity to the Town Council in matters pertaining to creating equitable opportunities and a sense of belonging within Town. The DEIC's scope of work may include the following items:

1. Community Based Programming

- a. Develop new and promote current programs/events that foster unity and diversity within the Town.
- b. Identify Equity Training opportunities for Town Council, staff, residents, business owners/employees, students, and/or Commission/community members.
- c. Incorporate community feedback into programming and training.

2. Collaborative Efforts

- a. Foster stronger collaborations between current Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees and community-based organizations to integrate equity practices and principles.
- b. Build relationships with local public and private school

systems in order to provide support and resources for Equity work.

- c. Build collaborative processes with other Town Boards, Committees, and Commissions to ensure integration of Equity practices into the Town community grant program.

3. Policy Recommendations

- a. Make policy recommendations to the Town Council regarding Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Unity issues.

4. Communications

- a. Create a communications campaign centered around equity education and promotion of Town events.
- ii. Not to affect powers of the Town Council. Nothing in this resolution shall be construed as restricting or curtailing any of the powers of the Town Council, or as a delegation to DEIC of any of the authority or discretionary powers vested and imposed by law in such Council.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos, California, held on the 3rd day of October 2023 by the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

AYES: Matthew Hudes, Rob Moore, Rob Rennie, Mayor Maria Ristow

NAYS: Mary Badame

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

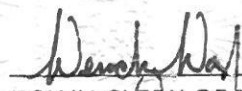
SIGNED:



MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

DATE: 10-4-23

ATTEST:



TOWN CLERK OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

DATE: 10-5-23



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
DEI COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 01/11/2024

ITEM NO: 5

DATE: January 5, 2024
TO: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Begin Discussion of a 2024 Work Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

Begin discussion of a 2024 Work Plan.

REMARKS:

At the October 17, 2023 Council meeting, the Town Council voted to accept the Town's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan (Attachment 1). The Plan was developed with community and staff engagement as described in the Plan. It identifies short, medium, and long term action items. The Plan also contains action items that are ongoing and do not have a specific conclusion.

The action items are organized in the following categories:

- Oversight: Create a process for oversight of the Town's DEI Plan;
- Safety: Create a robust and safe process for equity-focused, community-based programming;
- Collaboration: Leverage community resources to ensure equity efforts are collaborative and inclusive;
- Communication: Develop a communications campaign that highlights the Town's equity work;
- Housing: Educate the community about affordable housing to ensure that the Town meets its Housing Element Goals; and
- Town Operations: Increase equity in internal Town operations, service delivery, and customer interactions.

The creation and establishment of the DEI Commission was one of the most important action items identified by community members. The Commission provides a public forum to discuss DEI in Los Gatos and a mechanism for accountability in the implementation of the Plan.

Prepared by: Town Manager

REMARKS (Continued):

In October 2023, the Council also asked staff to prepare an Addendum (Attachment 2) summarizing the direction provided by the Council at the meeting. Given that each Councilmember had their own priorities for the DEI Plan, the direction is summarized by:

- Action Items Prioritized by More than One Councilmember
- Action Items Prioritized by One Councilmember
- Ongoing Action Items Prioritized by One or More Councilmember(s)
- Action Items that Raised Concern or were Cited as Low Priority by One or More Councilmember(s)
- Additional Items Not Contained in the Plan and Suggested by One or More Councilmember(s)

Council's direction is intended to help focus the DEI Commission in determining its priorities for the Work Plan.

In developing the Work Plan, the Council asked the Commission to consider the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) performance measure questions contained in its "Equity Action Plans: How To Manual" (Attachment 3). The questions can be found on page 22 of Attachment 3 and are:

- What is your timeline?
- How will you evaluate and report progress over time?
- How will you know the action is complete?
- Can you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability?

Council suggested that these questions might be a useful framework to accomplish "tangibility."

CONCLUSION:

As the Commission deliberates on its Work Plan, the following should be considered:

- The Commission must do its work in public at its monthly meetings,
- Staff resources for all Town Commissions is limited, and
- Currently, the Commission does not have a budget.

Attachments:

1. DEI Plan
2. DEI Plan Addendum
3. Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) "Equity Action Plans: How To Manual"



Town of Los Gatos Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan



1. PURPOSE

This Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan is intended to be an actionable plan for the Town of Los Gatos to become a more inclusive place where all community members feel welcome and a sense of belonging. It is a living and evolving document.

2. GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS

Some of the goals and action items listed below are attributed to either the Los Gatos 2040 General Plan or the American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions document. Those items without specific attribution came from input received from either Town Boards/Commissions/Committees, Town staff, or the broader community. Please see Section 3 below for more details on how this feedback was obtained.

All of the goals and action items listed below are dependent on authorization, direction, and prioritization from the Town Council.

A. **GOAL: Oversight. Create a process for oversight of the Town's DEI Plan.** ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions*](#))

1. Short Term Action Items

- a. In partnership with other Commissions, DEI Commission to review the community grants rubric for the community grant distribution process through an equity lens. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 6*](#))
- b. DEI Commission to create an annual review process and evaluation of the DEI Work Plan action items. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 6*](#))
 - i. Create standing discussion item for the DEI Commission to review progress on the DEI Plan.
 - ii. Submit annual progress update to the Council.

2. Long Term Action Items

- a. DEI Commission to recommend additional action items to the Town Council to make visible the equity issues that matter to the larger community. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 6*](#))
 - i. Utilize DEI Commission meetings to obtain community feedback, discuss and identify potential equity action items to inform the on-going JEDI Plan Implementation, and listen to other community ideas.

3. Ongoing Action Items

- a. Town staff/Commissions/Council to examine all proposed policies and ordinances in the context of promoting, facilitating, and improving equity, diversity, and inclusion in Los Gatos.

B. GOAL: Safety. Create a robust and safe process for equity-focused, community-based programming. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions*](#))

1. Short Term Action Items

- a. Town staff/DEI Commission to review the Town's four events (Spring into Green, 4th of July Symphony in the Park, Screen on the Green, and Winter Celebration) with an equity lens. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 7*](#))
 - i. Consider potential modifications to existing Town events.
 - ii. Consider adding a statement in the Town's Special Event Permit application indicating that the Town encourages events to consider our community's diversity and to support equity and inclusion.
- b. Town staff/DEI Commission to evaluate heritage/holiday celebrations and recognitions in the Holiday and Recognition Work Plan. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 7*](#))

2. Medium Term Action Items

- a. Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to create public forums and garner feedback from the community on the types of equity programming they would like to see offered in the Town, including but not limited to: community members; business owners; faith leaders; community-based organizations; and youth. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 7*](#))
- b. Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to work with other Boards, Commissions, and Committees to curate safe and engaging learning, dialogue and advocacy spaces for all community members. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 8*](#))
- c. Town staff/Commissions to explore opportunities for public art/murals that celebrate underrepresented groups.
- d. Town staff to explore the possibility of film festivals/benefit events at the Los Gatos Theatre.
- e. Town staff/Commissions to explore options for bringing diversity and incorporating equity into Town parks, open space, and the community garden.
 - i. Consider a Park Stewardship Program to develop meaningful relationships between different groups (example: seniors) and each park.

3. Long Term Action Items

- a. Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to develop a community learning opportunity focused on historical inequities and the history of the

Town of Los Gatos. Focused on but not limited to: Indigenous communities; redlining practices; and other items as identified through community partners. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 8*](#))

- b. Town staff to develop diversity, sensitivity, and awareness training courses and curriculum for residents, business owners, and local organizations to take part in. Training could include, but is not limited to, an informational column in the weekly newsletter and/or links to recommended online materials, lectures, and community engagement events. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9*](#))

4. Ongoing Action Items

- a. Town staff in the Police Department to continue to offer a Community Police Academy, or similar program, to educate community members on law enforcement policies, practices, and problem solving, as well as promoting the opportunity for one-on-one interaction with Department members in a relaxed environment. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8*](#))
- b. Town staff/Arts and Culture Commission/DEI Commission to explore ways to potentially incorporate DEI into new art projects as they arise.
- c. Town staff/Complete Streets and Transportation Commission to continue to look for ways to improve transportation accessibility, bicycle/pedestrian access, ADA access on sidewalks, and public transportation options.
- d. Town staff/Library Board/DEI Commission to make suggestions for the Library's DEI reading list(s) and share those lists with local schools.
- e. Town staff to continue to enhance awareness of DEI through expanded Library programming for both adults and children.
- f. Town staff to continue to increase technology offerings at the Library to help low-income community members who do not have access to WiFi and/or other devices.

C. GOAL: Collaboration. Leverage community resources to ensure equity efforts are collaborative and inclusive. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions*](#))

1. Short Term Action Items

- a. Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to foster collaboration between community groups and other partners engaging in equity work in order to offer joint activities. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 8*](#))
 - i. Meet with community partners to determine how they would like to manifest equity learning in the community. Focused on, but not limited to, the following local groups: local businesses; community-based organizations; nonprofits; education partners; faith-based partners; Town Departments; and other Town Commissions.
 - ii. Focus on collaborative projects that promote healing.

- iii. Evaluate Town spaces available for joint activities and projects and consider how those spaces can be best used to promote equity and belonging.

2. Medium Term Action Items

- a. Town staff/School Districts/Youth to identify needs for both community-based and school-based programming. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 9*](#))
 - i. As requested by local schools, share resources that support the schools' equity work.
 - ii. Intentionally connect school districts to community groups for joint projects, centered in art and expression.
 - iii. Host a joint session with community partners and school leaders regarding equity dialogues and in support of their joint planning efforts.
 - iv. Explore the possibility of the Town hosting or partnering on a DEI assembly or event with local schools.
- b. Town staff/Chamber of Commerce/other community organizations to organize an annual career and job fair with local employers to highlight local employment and employment training opportunities for Los Gatos residents. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8*](#))
- c. Town staff to research the viability of increasing support for the acceptance of food vouchers at local food retailers and farmers' markets. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9*](#))

3. Ongoing Action Items

- a. Town staff to continue to work with the Los Gatos Saratoga Union High School District and Los Gatos Union School District on the Positive Community Norms effort.
- b. Town staff to explore opportunities for collaborating with other municipalities on DEI work.

D. GOAL: Communication. Develop a communications campaign that highlights the Town's equity work. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions*](#))

1. Short Term Action Items

- a. Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to create a yearly communications campaign centered around equity education and promotion of community events. Include in this process: visible signage/banners, local art, and art displays. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 9*](#))

2. Medium Term Action Items

- a. Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to create a new Town tagline, in concert with the mission statement that involves the spirit of 'belonging', as

a north star for ongoing work. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 10*](#))

- i. Engage the community in the development of this work.
 - ii. Garner input from Commissions, businesses and community-based organizations.
 - iii. Present to Council for approval.
- b. Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to engage the business community as a partner in promoting the benefits of the DEI Plan and the positive attributes of the Town of Los Gatos. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 10*](#))
 - i. Develop a local business pledge about belonging and unwillingness to tolerate discrimination.
 - ii. Create a plan for outreach and support for minority-owned businesses.
 - iii. Engage the business community in supporting the development of more affordable housing as a path to support their businesses.
- c. Town staff to develop clear and inclusive outreach materials to increase and advance racial, social, and environmental justice initiatives. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8*](#))
- d. Town staff/DEI Commission to reexamine Welcome Packets sent to new Los Gatos residents for opportunities to make them more inclusive.

3. Long Term Action Items

- a. Town staff to develop mechanisms to communicate and engage members of the community who are not typically active in civic issues to foster relationships with the Town and the Police Department. This can be accomplished by leveraging technology and by focusing resources on non-enforcement interaction with the community. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9*](#))

4. Ongoing Action Items

- a. Town staff to develop clear and inclusive outreach materials, expand media campaigns, and implement other strategies to engage the public in the Town's processes. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-10*](#))
- b. Town staff to communicate actively on social media and in other forums to reinforce messages of inclusion, belonging, and welcoming.

E. GOAL: Housing. Educate the community about affordable housing to ensure that the Town meets its Housing Element goals. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions*](#))

1. Long Term Action Items

- a. Town staff to dispel the misconceptions surrounding affordable housing by providing:
 - i. Developer tours to completed affordable housing build outs.

- ii. Education about affordable housing residents and the services they receive. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 11*](#))
- b. Town staff to investigate ways to attract affordable housing developers to the Town of Los Gatos. ([*American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 11*](#))
 - i. Review the work of other jurisdictions and what policy changes they have made to incentivize the building of affordable housing.
 - ii. Publicize opportunities to build affordable housing with developers.
 - iii. Educate the community about what affordable housing brings to the Town in order to leverage and develop community support for these projects.
- c. Town staff to create a program to ensure that all rental multifamily housing is inspected on a three to five-year cycle to ensure compliance with all building, housing, and other codes for safe and sanitary housing. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-10*](#))

2. Ongoing Action Items

- a. The 2040 General Plan was adopted with its Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element on June 30, 2022. The Implementation Programs from that Element are included in this DEI Plan.
- b. The Housing Element with modifications was adopted by the Town Council on January 30, 2023. The Town is continuing to address the detailed comments from the State, engaging with the community in that process. Once certified by the State, the Town will need to implement the Housing Element programs.

F. GOAL: Increase equity in internal Town operations, service delivery, and customer interactions.

1. Short Term Action Items

- a. Town staff to enhance the Town's Tree Lighting event with other inclusive activities to transition it to an Annual Winter Celebration.
- b. Town staff to create a defined set of criteria that measures and prioritizes equitable distribution of Capital Improvement (CI) Projects Town-wide. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9*](#))

2. Medium Term Action Items

- a. Town staff to develop and facilitate a community-based budgeting process to provide the public an opportunity to identify funding priorities annually. This program could feature in-person and online engagement opportunities. ([*Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8*](#))
- b. Town staff to determine effective recruitment strategies to attract diverse candidates to Town employment opportunities. Work with educational institutions and other entities to promote local government job opportunities

with middle school, high school, technical school, and college students. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8](#))

- c. To remove any administrative barriers to increase access to healthy foods, Town staff to conduct an internal audit of and make necessary changes to Town regulations, including but not limited to the Zoning Ordinance. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9](#))
- d. Town staff to increase opportunities for DEI conversations among Town staff and Departments with guest speakers/brown bag lunches.
- e. Town staff to explore the possibility for team-building exercises for staff.

3. Long Term Action Items

- a. Town staff to develop a study to measure tree canopy distribution throughout the Town and encourage the use of native plants when increasing green space. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9](#))
- b. Town staff to implement the Town's ADA Transition Plan as funding permits.

4. Ongoing Action Items

- a. Form a Social and Racial Justice Commission that will serve as an advisory board to the Town Council to advance the Town's racial equity work. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8](#)) – Approved by Council September 19, 2023 with meetings beginning January 2024.
- b. Town staff to update the Town's Anti-Harassment Policy to meet current best practices, including anti-bullying.
- c. Town staff to continue to evaluate the annual proposed Capital Improvement Budget and any service expansion/contraction in the Operating Budget to ensure that all neighborhoods are treated equitably in the availability of services and infrastructure investment. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8](#))
- d. Require all Town staff to undergo ongoing DEI/implicit bias training. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8](#))
- e. Continue to offer DEI training for Councilmembers and Commissioners.
- f. Town staff to develop an annual survey which measures the successfulness of advancing social equity and diversity Town-wide. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8](#))
- g. Town staff to continuously expand access to Town records and information to further demonstrate the Town's commitment to transparency in governmental operations.
- h. Town staff to continue to provide Biannual Reports to review progress at Town Council meetings on Police Reforms, including independent investigations, mental health/homeless support, traffic stop data, and options for non-emergency calls.
- i. Town staff to continue to strengthen the Police Department relationship with County Behavioral Health and Crisis Response Teams.
- j. Town staff to work toward the Police Chief's goal for all Department personnel to exceed the minimum number of hours of training in de-escalation and crisis intervention.
- k. Town staff to continuously review and update Town policies and procedures to ensure that it is employing the best practices for hiring, training, eliminating bias, and ensuring the public's safety.

- l. Town staff to foster a more diverse work force by continuing to update job descriptions and minimum qualifications to encourage a broader set of candidates, promoting job opportunities using conventional and unconventional techniques to reach deeper into the talent pool, and encouraging professional development to expand skills and abilities.
- m. Town staff to continually reevaluate the Commission application process to facilitate more equity and inclusivity.
- n. Town Council to examine/update the Town Council Code of Conduct.
- o. Town staff to conduct staff surveys on a regular basis to assess if employees feel welcomed and included.
- p. Town staff to explore options for assisting unhoused Los Gatos residents.

Staff explored the option of including metrics for each item; however, after extensive outreach, research, and attending DEI training sessions put on by the Government Alliance of Race and Equity (GARE), the conclusion reached was that metrics/performance measures are not only extremely difficult for this work, but not advised. DEI work is long-term term and ongoing over generations of people and progress cannot adequately be measured in a shorter timeframe of a few years. Additionally, aiming for a goal of a certain demographic makeup (for example, X amount of employees of Y ethnicity/race) can be misleading because even if that goal is reached it does not necessarily mean that all feel welcome or as they belong.

3. DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE DEI PLAN

Community Advisory Group Led by American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley Insights (ALFI)

On September 6, 2022, the Town Council authorized the Town Manager to continue working with DEI Consultant ALFI on the development of a DEI Plan. To do this work, ALFI convened a Community Advisory Group to move the initial Discovery Report recommendations forward and provide concrete steps for implementation. The Community Advisory Group met on a monthly basis from February through September 2023 for two and a half hours each meeting and utilized the initial Discovery Report recommendations as a jumping off point for dialogues. The Group helped put together the American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions document and provided numerous action/implementation items included in this DEI Plan. The most significant recommendation to come out of the group was for the Town to establish an equity-focused Commission. On September 19, 2023, the Town Council approved the enabling resolution to create the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission.

Community Workshop

On April 20, 2023, the Town held a community workshop to give the broader Los Gatos community an opportunity to provide input on the Discovery Report and the potential action items for this DEI Plan. Attendees were divided into two smaller breakout group discussions to provide feedback used to shape this plan.

Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees Participation

During the months of March and April, Town staff met with each Board/Commission/Committee, and/or solicited written feedback on the potential DEI Plan action items and the recommendations in the Discovery Report. Input was also sought regarding how DEI work intersects with each Commission, how Commissions can work to increase equity and inclusivity in Los Gatos, and other ideas for how the Town can work holistically toward becoming a more inclusive place. Ideas garnered from those sessions are reflected in this DEI Plan.

Town Staff Engagement

Outreach regarding the development of this plan and other Town DEI work was also conducted with staff. In 2022, the Town Manager's Office offered the first Employee Equity Survey to all Town staff. The Town staff is much more diverse than the broader Los Gatos community. At a high level, survey results indicated 70% of respondents reported feeling welcome at work while 30% did not. Responses also indicated a need for increased education for Town staff about the DEI work being done and a desire for DEI training.

In 2023, the Town Manager's Office conducted another anonymous survey specific to input relating to the Discovery Report recommendations and potential DEI Plan action items. Discussions on these topics also occurred during the Staff Equity Team's monthly meetings. Themes from this staff feedback are also found in this Plan.

Training

Based on staff demand as illustrated in the Employee Equity Survey results, in November 2022, the Town held a mandatory staff Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training entitled "Creating Environments of Belonging" led by DEI trainer and former prosecutor Mwanaisha Sims. The topic discussed included:

- Awareness of workplace diversity issues, such as those affecting underrepresented groups, in daily interactions;
- Exploration of internal beliefs and unconscious biases;
- An understanding of what motivates (and demotivates) those around us;
- Collaboration skills to help work more effectively with people who have different qualities from your own;
- How to stand up to discrimination such as racial bias or sexual harassment; and
- Skills to foster an inclusive workplace culture.

In February 2023, the "Creating Environments of Belonging" DEI training was also offered to the Town Councilmembers and all Town Commissioners.

In May 2023, based on demand, Ms. Sims returned to offer Town staff a second training that specifically focused on learning tools for how to respond to microaggressions, bias, and uncomfortable conversations.

DEI training can help build a safe and equitable workplace for all staff and promote an environment where everyone feels comfortable being their authentic selves at work.

4. **DEFINITIONS**

Ableism. Ableism is the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. At its heart, ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people require ‘fixing’ and defines people by their disability. ([Access Living](#))

Anti-Semitism. The belief or behavior hostile toward Jews just because they are Jewish. It may take the form of religious teachings that proclaim the inferiority of Jews, for instance, or political efforts to isolate, oppress, or otherwise injure them. It may also include prejudiced or stereotyped views about Jewish peoples. ([Anti-Defamation League](#))

Belonging. Belonging is a core need of all humans and is defined as a system of values and practices where no person is left out of the circle of human concern. It is more than just access. It is having a meaningful voice and an opportunity to participate in the design of cultural structures. Belonging includes the right to contribute as well as the right to make demands and it requires shared power, access, and opportunity among all individuals within a shared system. Belonging is about being seen, heard and valued for the uniqueness that each individual brings into the circle (Source: Othering and Belonging Institute). Distinction Between Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging: You can have diversity without inclusion (e.g. tokenism, assimilation). You can’t have inclusion without diversity. Focusing on inclusion gets you further than just focusing on diversity. Belonging is a term that goes beyond the legal or HR definitions and gets to how power and meaningful inclusion can look and feel within the context of a group or network. ([Race Forward](#))

BIPOC. Acronym referring to Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Community Member. Any individual who resides, owns property, is a business owner, or is employed in the Town of Los Gatos. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Debiasing Strategies. Interventions to eliminate, mitigate or prevent bias are often focused on the individual level, rather than at the institutional level, where interventions are most needed. Debiasing strategies focused on individual change (e.g. “just be aware of your bias),” have dubious impacts and success. Debiasing strategies focused at the institutional levels can help prevent and remove opportunities for bias by instituting practices, policies, and protocols that require institutional actors to address institutional racism. ([Race Forward](#))

Disadvantaged Community. An area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) pursuant to Section 39711 of the California Health and Safety Code or a predominately low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Diversity. A variety of racial identities or characteristics (e.g. African Americans, Native Americans, Latinx) as well as people from a range of different social, racial, ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds; genders; sexual orientations; abilities; experiences; perspectives; and other personal identities. Diversity is a quantitative measure of representation. ([Race Forward](#))

Environmental Justice. The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, incomes, political and religious affiliation, and national origins with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies including climate adaptation strategies. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Equality. Is sameness; everyone gets the same thing. Equality focuses on everyone getting the same opportunity, but often ignores the realities of historic exclusion and power differentials among whites and other racialized groups. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Equity. Ensures that outcomes in the conditions of well-being are improved for marginalized groups, lifting outcomes for all. Equity is a measure of justice (Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3). Distinction Between Equality and Equity: Equality uses the same strategies for everyone, but because people are situated differently, they are not likely to get the same outcomes. Equity uses differentiated and targeted strategies to address different needs and to get to fair outcomes. Equality-focused strategies don't work for, or benefit, everyone – e.g. teaching everyone the same way does not work for different kinds of learners -- each must be taught the appropriate way for them. ([Race Forward](#))

Explicit Bias. Conscious attitudes and beliefs about a person or group, also known as overt and intentional bias. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Implicit Bias. Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, decisions, and actions in an unconscious manner. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Individual Bias. Bias by individuals. But if the individual is acting in an institutional capacity (e.g. a teacher or a police officer) their individual bias is also a manifestation of institutional bias. ([Race Forward](#))

Individual Racism. Lies within individuals. These are private beliefs and biases about race that reside inside our own minds and bodies. For White people, this can be internalized privilege, entitlement, and superiority; for people of color, this can be internalized oppression. Examples: prejudice, xenophobia, conscious and unconscious bias about race, influenced by the white normative or dominant culture. ([Race Forward](#))

Institutional Bias. Bias by institutions — such as patterns, practices, policies, or cultural norms that advantage or disadvantage people of color. ([Race Forward](#))

Institutional Racism. Occurs within institutions. It involves unjust policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes that work better for White people than people of color, whether intentional or not. Example: A school district that concentrates students of color in the most overcrowded, under-funded schools with the least experienced teachers. ([Race Forward](#))

Interpersonal Racism. Occurs between individuals. Bias, bigotry, and discrimination based on race. Once we bring our private beliefs about race into our interactions with others, we are now in the interpersonal realm. Examples: public expressions of prejudice and hate, microaggressions (common place intentional or unintentional terms or hostility), bias and bigotry between individuals. ([Race Forward](#))

Inclusion. The measure of the quality of representation, such as full access, authentic representation, empowered participation, true belonging and power-sharing. Inclusion is a qualitative measure of representation and participation. ([Race Forward](#))

Intersectionality. The concept of intersectionality describes the ways in which systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class and other forms of discrimination “intersect” to create unique dynamics and effects. All forms of inequality are mutually reinforcing and must therefore be analyzed and addressed simultaneously to prevent one form of inequality from reinforcing another. Intersectionality brings our understanding of systemic injustice and social inequality to the next level by attempting to untangle the lines that create the complex web of inequalities. It is also a practical tool that can be used to tackle intersectional discrimination through policies and laws. ([Center for Intersectional Justice](#))

LGBTQIA+ Discrimination. Being harassed, discriminated against and/or being denied access to employment, housing, access to basic goods and services and/or the ability to participate meaningfully in our society's decision making processes, based on gender identity, sexual orientation and/or gender expression. ([Gender Equity Law Center](#))

Racial Equity. A process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color. From GARE: Racial equity is realized when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and outcomes for all groups are improved. ([Race Forward](#))

Racial Justice. A vision and transformation of society to eliminate racial hierarchies and advance collective liberation, where Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, in particular, have the dignity, resources, power, and self-determination to fully thrive. Distinction Between Racial Equity and Racial Justice: Racial equity is the process for moving towards the vision of racial justice. Racial equity seeks measurable milestones and outcomes that can be achieved on the road to racial justice. Racial equity is necessary, but not sufficient, for racial justice. ([Race Forward](#))

Resident. Any individual who resides in the Town of Los Gatos. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Social Capital. A concept in social science that involves the potential of individuals to secure benefits and invent solutions to problems through membership in social networks. Social capital revolves around three dimensions: interconnected networks of relationships between individuals and groups (social ties or social participation); levels of trust that characterize these ties; and resources or benefits that are both gained and transferred by virtue of social ties and social participation. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Socially Disadvantaged Individuals and Groups. Socially disadvantaged individuals and groups who have been subjected to prejudice or some form of discrimination or bias because of their perceived identity as a member of a particular group (i.e., race, ethnicity, culture, sex, political or religious affiliation, sexual orientation, age, immigration status) without regard to their individuality and/or merit. ([Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-3](#))

Structural Racism. Racial inequities across institutions, policies, social structures, history, and culture. Structural racism highlights how racism operates as a system of power with multiple interconnected,

reinforcing, and self-perpetuating components which result in racial inequities across all indicators for success. Structural racism is the racial inequity that is deeply rooted and embedded in our history and culture and our economic, political, and legal systems. Examples: The “racial wealth gap,” where Whites have many times the wealth of people of color, resulting from the history and current reality of institutional racism in multiple systems. ([Race Forward](#))

5. RESOURCES/APPENDICES

American Leadership Forum Insights Discovery Report (2022):

<https://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/31460/Final-Discovery-Report>

American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions (2023):

<https://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/36518/ALFI-Implementation-Actions>

Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element of the Los Gatos 2040 General Plan (2022):

www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/31980/2-LGGP_2040_Racial-Social-and-Environmental-Justice-Element

Town of Los Gatos Becoming an Inclusive Community Website:

<https://www.losgatosca.gov/2604/Becoming-an-Inclusive-Community>

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) PLAN ADDENDUM

At the October 17, 2023 Town Council meeting, the Council voted to accept the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan.

The Council asked staff to consider the GARE [“How To Manual for Action Plans”](#) five work plan questions as a suggested framework to accomplish tangibility and prepare an addendum summarizing the direction provided by the Council at the meeting. This addendum includes both items.

GARE “How To Manual for Action Plans” Questions

The GARE “How To Manual for Action Plans” recommends considering the following questions when developing a completion date and performance measures for action plan items:

- What is your timeline?
- How will you evaluate and report progress over time?
- How will you know the action is complete?
- Can you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability?

Summary of Council Direction Provided at the October 17, 2023 Town Council Meeting

Action Items Prioritized by More than One Councilmember

- **Goal A, Item 1a:** In partnership with other Commissions, DEI Commission to review the community grants rubric for the community grant distribution process through an equity lens. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 6)
- **Goal A, Item 2a:** DEI Commission to recommend additional action items to the Town Council to make visible the equity issues that matter to the larger community. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 6)
- **Goal B, Item 1a:** Town staff/DEI Commission to review the Town’s four events (Spring into Green, 4th of July Symphony in the Park, Screen on the Green, and Winter Celebration) with an equity lens. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 7)
- **Goal B, Item 2d:** Town staff to explore the possibility of film festivals/benefit events at the Los Gatos Theatre.
- **Goal C, Item 1a:** Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to foster collaboration between community groups and other partners engaging in equity work in order to offer joint activities. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 8)
 - Meet with community partners to determine how they would like to manifest equity learning in the community. Focused on, but not limited to, the following local groups: local businesses; community-based organizations; nonprofits; education partners; faith-based partners; Town Departments; and other Town Commissions.
 - Focus on collaborative projects that promote healing.
- **Goal D, Item 1a:** Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to create a yearly communications campaign centered around equity education and promotion of community

events. Include in this process: visible signage/banners, local art, and art displays. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 9)

- **Goal E, Item 1b:** Town staff to investigate ways to attract affordable housing developers to the Town of Los Gatos. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 11)
- **Goal F, Item 1b:** Town staff to create a defined set of criteria that measures and prioritizes equitable distribution of Capital Improvement (CI) Projects Town-wide. (Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9)

Action Items Prioritized by One Councilmember

- **Goal A, Item 1b:** DEI Commission to create an annual review process and evaluation of the DEI Work Plan action items. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 6)
- **Goal B, Item 2e:** Town staff/Commissions to explore options for bringing diversity and incorporating equity into Town parks, open space, and the community garden. (*with emphasis on the community garden*)
- **Goal B, Item 3a:** Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to develop a community learning opportunity focused on historical inequities and the history of the Town of Los Gatos. Focused on but not limited to: Indigenous communities; redlining practices; and other items as identified through community partners. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 8)
- **Goal C, Item 2a:** Town staff/School Districts/Youth to identify needs for both community-based and school-based programming. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 9)
- **Goal D, Item 2a:** Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to create a new Town tagline, in concert with the mission statement that involves the spirit of ‘belonging’, as a north star for ongoing work. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 10)

Ongoing Action Items Prioritized by One or More Councilmember(s)

- **Goal B, Item 4a:** Town staff in the Police Department to continue to offer a Community Police Academy, or similar program, to educate community members on law enforcement policies, practices, and problem solving, as well as promoting the opportunity for one-on-one interaction with Department members in a relaxed environment. (Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8)
- **Goal B, Item 4b:** Town staff/Arts and Culture Commission/DEI Commission to explore ways to potentially incorporate DEI into new art projects as they arise.
- **Goal B, Item 4e:** Town staff to continue to enhance awareness of DEI through expanded Library programming for both adults and children.
- **Goal B, Item 4f:** Town staff to continue to increase technology offerings at the Library to help low-income community members who do not have access to WiFi and/or other devices.
- **Goal C, Item 3b:** Town staff to explore opportunities for collaborating with other municipalities on DEI work.
- **Goal F, Item 4b:** Town staff to update the Town’s Anti-Harassment Policy to meet current best practices, including anti-bullying.

- **Goal F, Item 4c:** Town staff to continue to evaluate the annual proposed Capital Improvement Budget and any service expansion/contraction in the Operating Budget to ensure that all neighborhoods are treated equitably in the availability of services and infrastructure investment. (Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-8)
- **Goal F, Item 4h:** Town staff to continue to provide Biannual Reports to review progress at Town Council meetings on Police Reforms, including independent investigations, mental health/homeless support, traffic stop data, and options for non-emergency calls.
- **Goal F, Item 4i:** Town staff to continue to strengthen the Police Department relationship with County Behavioral Health and Crisis Response Teams.
- **Goal F, Item 4j:** Town staff to work toward the Police Chief's goal for all Department personnel to exceed the minimum number of hours of training in de-escalation and crisis intervention.
- **Goal F, Item 4k:** Town staff to continuously review and update Town policies and procedures to ensure that it is employing the best practices for hiring, training, eliminating bias, and ensuring the public's safety.

Action Items that Raised Concern or were Cited as Low Priority by One or More Councilmember(s)

- **Goal B, Item 1b:** Town staff/DEI Commission to evaluate heritage/holiday celebrations and recognitions in the Holiday and Recognition Work Plan. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 7)
- **Goal B, Item 2b:** Town staff/DEI Commission/Community Partners to work with other Boards, Commissions, and Committees to curate safe and engaging learning, dialogue and advocacy spaces for all community members. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 8)
- **Goal B, Item 2e.i:** Consider a Park Stewardship Program to develop meaningful relationships between different groups (example: seniors) and each park.
- **Goal B, Item 3b:** Town staff to develop diversity, sensitivity, and awareness training courses and curriculum for residents, business owners, and local organizations to take part in. Training could include, but is not limited to, an informational column in the weekly newsletter and/or links to recommended online materials, lectures, and community engagement events. (Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-9)
- **Goal C, Item 2a:** Town staff/School Districts/Youth to identify needs for both community-based and school-based programming. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions, p. 9)
- **Goal D, Item 2b.i:** Develop a local business pledge about belonging and unwillingness to tolerate discrimination.
- **Goal E:** Housing. Educate the community about affordable housing to ensure that the Town meets its Housing Element goals. (American Leadership Forum Insights Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Implementation Actions)
- **Goal E, Item 1c:** Town staff to create a program to ensure that all rental multifamily housing is inspected on a three to five-year cycle to ensure compliance with all building, housing, and other codes for safe and sanitary housing. (Los Gatos 2040 General Plan, p. 2-10)

Additional Items Not Contained in the Plan and Suggested by One or More Councilmember(s)

- Multicultural Food Festival (can be added to **Goal B, Item 1a**)

- Language and music classes (can be added to **Goal C, Item 1a**)
- Ask the DEI Commission to discuss whether they prefer a different name (can be added to **Goal D, Item 2a**)
- Pursue regional/state funding opportunities for affordable housing (can be added to **Goal E**)



LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY

Racial Equity Action Plans

A How-to Manual

by Ryan Curren, Julie Nelson, Dwayne S. Marsh, Simran Noor, and Nora Liu

RACIALEQUITYALLIANCE.ORG



LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY

**This toolkit is published by the
Government Alliance on Race and Equity,
a national network of government working to achieve
racial equity and advance opportunities for all.**

AUTHORS

Ryan Curren, Julie Nelson, Dwayne S. Marsh, Simran Noor, and Nora Liu

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*The authors would like to thank the following individuals
who contributed to this guide by participating in interviews and editing:*

Rachelle Galloway-Popotas, Ebonye Gussine Wilkins

REPORT CITATION

Curren R., Nelson, J., Marsh, D.S., Noor, S., Liu, N.
"Racial Equity Action Plans, A How-to Manual."
Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society,
University of California, Berkeley, 2016

GARE is a joint project of



haas institute
FOR A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY



CENTER FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Achieving Local Government's Vision of Racial Equity	6
Articulating a Theory of Change for the Jurisdiction	6
Action Planning Process	9
Preparation	10
Staffing Leads and Racial Equity Action Teams	10
Organizational Structure and Scale	12
Community Engagement	12
Resources	13
Research and Organizational Assessment	14
Research Findings	18
The Plan	19
Review and Finalizing the Plan	24
Roll Out and Implementation	25
Annual Progress Reporting	26
Conclusion	27
Appendix I	28
Racial Equity Plan Template	28

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While local governments may consider themselves fair and just, people of color fare worse than their white counterparts in every area: housing, employment, education, justice, and health. Current day disparities are just as bad and sometimes worse than they were before the Civil Rights era. Since then, most governments have not made significant changes in outcomes for employees or residents of color, even with years of effort.

Because local governments have a unique responsibility to all residents, these racial inequities can and must be addressed. The public sector must be for the public good; current racial inequities are destructive. We must go beyond individual, intentional discrimination or acts of bigotry, and examine the systems in which we all live. We must investigate—honestly—how our longstanding systems, policies, and practices, unintentionally or not, have created and continue to maintain racial inequity, and we must change them.

Racial Equity Action Plans can put a theory of change into action to achieve a collective vision of racial equity. Plans can drive institutional and structural change. However, the goal we seek is not a plan. The goal is institutional and structural change, which requires resources to implement: time, money, skills, and effort. It requires local governments' will and expertise to change our policies, the way we do business, our habits, and cultures.

Our theory of change requires normalizing conversations about race, making sure we have a shared understanding of commonly held definitions of implicit bias and institutional and structural racism. Normalizing and prioritizing our efforts creates greater urgency and allows change to take place more expeditiously. We must also operationalize racial equity, integrating racial equity into our routine decision-making processes, often via use of a **Racial Equity Tool** and development and implementation of measurable actions. Operationalizing a vision for racial equity means implementation of new tools for decision-making, measurement, and accountability. We also organize, both inside our institutions and in partnership with others, to effect change together. Organizing involves building staff and organizational capacity through training for new skills and competencies while also building internal infrastructure to advance racial equity.

This manual provides guidance for local governments to develop their own Racial Equity Action Plans after a period of research and information gathering. This manual also provides guidance and tools to conduct this research. GARE created a Racial Equity Action Plan template after a national scan of promising practices from cities and counties that have developed plans for racial equity and the structures that supported successful planning processes. We are also appreciative of the **Results Based Accountability** framework as a disciplined way of thinking and taking action that communities and government can use to achieve meaningful improvements, eliminate racial inequities and lift up outcomes for all.

Racial Equity Plans are both a process and a product. A successful process will build staff capacity which can be valuable during implementation. A process can also serve to familiarize more staff with the jurisdiction's racial equity vision and its theory of change.

Preparing leadership support, forming a skilled planning team, designing community engagement structures upfront, and securing resources to support all participants are key preparatory steps key to set the process on the right path. Your research must not only influence the content of your plan but also how it is framed. The methodology should include

WHAT IS RACIAL EQUITY?

Racial equity is realized when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and outcomes for all groups are improved.

both quantitative and qualitative data collected through community engagement. A clear set of findings can provide a solid foundation to inform your plan. Areas to analyze include:

- workforce demographics, hiring, retention, and promotion;
- contracting practices;
- jurisdiction commitment, leadership, and management;
- community access and partnership; and
- data, metrics, and on-going focus on improvement.

Figure 1: The Racial Equity Action Plan Process



A strong Racial Equity Action Plan is guided by a clear vision of racial equity and structured to achieve meaningful and measurable results. A simple plan structure provided by GARE includes the following components:

- **Results:** Community level conditions we are aiming to impact.
- **Community Indicator:** Community indicators are the means by which we can measure impact in the community. Community indicators should be disaggregated by race.
- **Outcome:** A future state of being resulting from a change at the jurisdiction, department, or program level. Strong outcomes articulate a clear improvement or define how much improvement will take place.
- **Action:** They are the specific things your jurisdiction will do to achieve the outcomes.
- **Performance Measure:** A quantifiable measure of how well an action is working. Different types of measures include 1) Quantity—How much did we do? 2) Quality—How well did we do it? 3) Impact—Is anyone better off?

Successfully implementing a plan will require well-resourced stewardship, strong accountability structures, and clear communications with all partners during the rollout and beyond. An organizational body, with authority to remove barriers during implementation and monitor progress, is critical infrastructure over the life of the plan. Regular tracking of performance and reporting on progress provides a level of accountability to follow through on the jurisdiction's commitment to action. Using data and the opportunity to reflect develops a culture of learning and innovation to improve upon commitments in the plan over its lifetime. The quality and consistency of communication about the plan both within the government and with community will be a major indicator of whether the plan is another exercise in maintaining the status quo or whether it is truly the harbinger of your jurisdiction's commitment to advancing racial equity.

ACHIEVING LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S VISION OF RACIAL EQUITY

A jurisdiction's clear and bold vision for racial equity is important for the success of a Ra-

cial Equity Action Plan. The vision should be heavily informed by communities of color impacted by institutional and structural racism—those with the real expertise. Your jurisdiction may already have made a formal commitment to achieving racial equity and expressed this through adoption of legislation, a general plan, or executive proclamation. If so, then Racial Equity Action Plans can layout the approach to operationalizing this commitment. If not, then Racial Equity Action Plans are an excellent opportunity to make such a commitment paired with the change necessary to achieve it. Figure 2 shows the City of Portland’s Citywide Racial Equity Goals and Strategies, adopted unanimously by City Council as binding policy in 2015.

By embarking on a planning process you are undergoing a reprioritization of your work and changing long-standing systems and structures. You are creating a shared practice and forming relationships across the jurisdiction’s structure. Creating a culture of learning and reflection to improve upon the work as you go is essential. You are expanding a field of practice, building off of the experiences of local governments directly addressing racial inequities, and have the opportunity to break relatively new ground. Your planning process is an opportunity to take a step back and ask engaging questions, knowing that you may not have the answers, and set an actionable course toward achieving racial equity. GARE, your peers, and our network of national partners are all here to help you, and to share resources and promising practices.

ARTICULATING A THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE JURISDICTION

The ultimate goal of a jurisdiction’s racial equity work should be to eliminate racial inequities and improve outcomes for all racial groups. Government played a primary role in the creation of racial inequities, including laws, policies, and practices that created racial inequities. Our ideas of “equality and justice” have shifted over time, and we now have collective values for a more inclusive democracy. To achieve our aspirations and to get to different outcomes, we will need to fundamentally transform government. This requires high level leadership, committed action teams, supportive community leaders, and effective structures and practices. But what guides this change?

A new theory of change to achieve racial equity should guide your jurisdiction and its plan to make transformative change. GARE’s recommended theory of change does the following¹:

1. **Normalize**—Establish racial equity as a key value by developing a shared understanding of key concepts across the entire jurisdiction and create a sense of urgency to make changes.
2. **Organize**—Build staff and organizational capacity, skills, and competencies through training while also building infrastructure to support the work, like internal organizational change teams and external partnerships with other institutions and community.
3. **Operationalize**—Put theory into action by implementing new tools for decision-making, measurement, and accountability like a Racial Equity Tool and developing a Racial Equity Action Plan.

WHAT IS MY JURISDICTION ISN'T READY BUT MY DEPARTMENT IS?

The framework and approach to creating Racial Equity Action Plans presented in the manual is also applicable to departments within a jurisdiction. Most often jurisdictions beginning to focus on racial equity have only a small number of departments with any emphasis on racial equity or the infrastructure to support the work. A department with some foundation to build a Racial Equity Action Plan upon is a good place to start. A strong director with capable staff and good community partnerships can develop a plan to serve as a model or proof of concept for the entire jurisdiction.

This theory of change can be measured over time to track progress and impacts, both within the organization and in the community. Activities can be quantified like the number of employees trained, number of departments with Racial Equity Action Plans, number of times a Racial Equity Tool is used to address institutional and structural barriers, or number of community members partnering with the jurisdiction to advance racial equity. Outcomes can also be quantified by measuring the improved knowledge of racial equity

Figure 2: City of Portland Citywide Racial Equity Goals and Strategies

CITYWIDE RACIAL EQUITY GOALS & STRATEGIES	
	  OFFICE of EQUITY and HUMAN RIGHTS CITY OF PORTLAND
EQUITY GOAL #1	OVERALL STRATEGIES
We will end racial disparities within city government, so there is fairness in hiring and promotions, greater opportunities in contracting, and equitable services to all residents.	1 Use a racial equity framework: Use a racial equity framework that clearly articulates racial equity; implicit and explicit bias; and individual, institutional, and structural racism.
EQUITY GOAL #2	2 Build organizational capacity: Commit to the breadth and depth of institutional transformation so that impacts are sustainable. While the leadership of electeds and officials is critical, changes take place on the ground, through building infrastructure that creates racial equity experts and teams throughout the city government.
We will strengthen outreach, public engagement, and access to City services for communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities, and support or change existing services using racial equity best practices.	3 Implement a racial equity lens: Racial inequities are not random; they have been created and sustained over time. Inequities will not disappear on their own. It is essential to use a racial equity lens when changing the policies, programs, and practices that perpetuate inequities, and when developing new policies and programs.
EQUITY GOAL #3	4 Be data driven: Measurement must take place at two levels—first, to measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes; and second, to develop baselines, set goals, and measure progress. Using data in this manner is necessary for accountability.
We will collaborate with communities and institutions to eliminate racial inequity in all areas of government, including education, criminal justice, environmental justice, health, housing, transportation, and economic success.	5 Partner with other institutions and communities: Government work on racial equity is necessary, but insufficient. To achieve racial equity in the community, government needs to work in partnership with communities and institutions to achieve meaningful results.
	6 Operate with urgency and accountability: When change is a priority, urgency is felt and change is embraced. Building in institutional accountability mechanisms using a clear plan of action will allow accountability. Collectively, we must create greater urgency and public commitment to achieve racial equity.

concepts among employees, increased skills to work on and communicate about racial equity, and the changes made due to racial equity considerations being integrated into decision-making structures. We must also focus on our desired results in the community, those conditions we are aiming to impact. Community indicators are the means by which we can measure impact in the community, with clear focus on closing racial disparities, and lift up success for all groups.

This higher level strategic thinking is helpful in advance of developing Racial Equity Action Plans but does not need to be exhaustive and should not impede your process. Some simple exercises can help you stay focused on racial equity and the above framework. Ask the following effective questions:

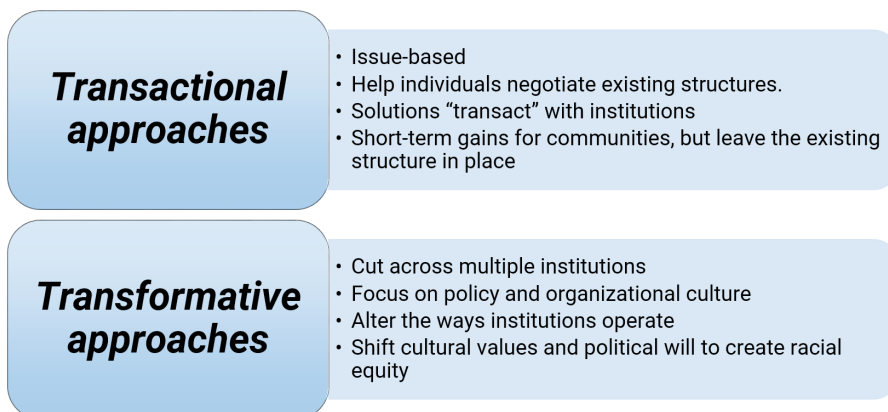
- What conditions of well-being do we want for our community?
- Why do these conditions exist differently for people of color? Ask your self “Why else?” 3–5 times to get deeper into the institutional and structural issues at play.
- What would these conditions look like if we achieved them?
- What measures can we use to quantify these conditions?
- Who are the partners with a role to play?
- What works to “turn the curve” of the baseline inequities?
- What do we propose to do?

A jurisdiction’s racial equity work needs to be transformative. This means work should cut across multiple institutions and practices, and the focus should be on changing policy and organizational culture. Work will alter the ways institutions operate. It will shift cultural values and create greater political will to advance racial equity.

Transactional changes are those that help individuals negotiate existing the structures but leave those structures in place. They may result in short-term gains for communities and/or employees of color but do little to ensure those gains will be lasting.

With a clear vision for racial equity, transactional approaches can help position a jurisdiction for more transformational work. To do this effectively requires an on-going focus on organizing, operationalizing, and normalizing.

Figure 3: Transactional Approaches vs Transformative Approaches



ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

Recommended steps for developing and implementing a Racial Equity Action Plan are outlined below. The details in each of the steps may vary between jurisdictions, depending on the size, structure, and resources you have available. It is much better to be pragmatic and focused so that the plan you develop sets your jurisdiction on the path to achieving racial equity.

We recommend designing your work plan to produce three products for broader communication:

- Research Findings
- Racial Equity Action Plan
- Annual Updates



Racial Equity Action Teams can work with their leadership to develop agreed-upon decision making protocols and processes for vetting each of these products internally. We'll share more about these products in the next sections of this guide.

Note, some jurisdictions have the advantage of existing strategic plans with committed goals, objectives, strategies, and actions, some of which may be related to diversity, inclusion or racial equity. You can use those as a foundation from which to build upon. Additional content can then be added to your Racial Equity Action Plan to round out your jurisdiction's racial equity work if needed. Also, some jurisdictions have existing or planned processes to create broader strategic plans. You can use those processes to create your Racial Equity Action Plan rather than duplicating efforts which may otherwise lead to staff and community confusion and fatigue.

PREPARATION



Successfully developing a Racial Equity Action Plan will require preparation.

THE JURISDICTION

Your executive and leadership team should communicate the purpose and importance of this work, how it relates to the jurisdiction's work overall, and how it fits into any other work on racial equity. This context is especially important for those staff with little or no exposure to racial equity work.

"Leadership" may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In some cases, a city or county manager may be the most appropriate top leadership providing direction for the development of the Racial Equity Action Plan. In other cases, it might be elected officials.

In Seattle in 2009, Mayor Greg Nickels established the Race and Social Justice Initiative as one of his early priorities. With a strong-mayor form of government, Mayor Nickels set clear expectations of his department directors for developing Racial Equity Action Plans on an annual basis and he held his department directors accountable for implementation of actions. After losing his re-election bid, Seattle's City Council further institutionalized racial equity as a priority by the unanimous passage of **Resolution 31164—A Resolution Directing Race and Social Justice Work to Continue**, including development of annual Racial Equity Action Plans and support for Racial Equity Action Teams.

Fairfax County, Virginia launched a process to develop a racial equity strategy with joint **legislation** adopted by Fairfax Board of Supervisors and School Board. The resolution directed the development of a racial and social equity policy and strategic actions that include "intentional collective leadership, community engagement, equity tools, and infrastructure to support and sustain systemic change, and shared accountability."

At a minimum, we recommend that the executive send out a jurisdiction-wide email introducing the staff leading the planning process, giving them authority to oversee the process, and explaining what to expect. An accompanying **FAQ** is recommended. Another preparatory step is to present an overview of the context and process at meetings where staff from all divisions and programs are represented, such as an all-staff meeting or managers' meeting. Jurisdictional newsletters are also a good tool to communicate the context and importance of this work.

We recommend sending a clear message about the reality of this change work and the type of change that staff can expect. Do not shy away from the reality that the planning process and the plan itself will require jurisdiction resources to implement: time, money, skills, and effort.

STAFFING LEADS AND RACIAL EQUITY ACTION TEAMS

Leadership at the executive level should identify a lead or two co-leads who will oversee an development project. Co-leads should work with their executive and/or leadership

team to recruit staff to form a Racial Equity Action Team, a small group who will shepherd the jurisdiction through the entire process. The form and composition of your Racial Equity Action Team will depend on the size and structure of your jurisdiction. However, the function of your team should include the following:

- **Racial equity focus**—Maintaining a clear focus on racial equity throughout all stages of the process, working with any resistance that arises, and providing racial equity resources for participants who lack the skills needed to meaningfully participate.
- **Project Design**—Designing the scope, structure, and timeline of the process.
- **Project Management**—Coordinating the meetings and communications, producing materials and deliverables.
- **Research and Systems Change Analysis**—Designing information-gathering instruments and facilitating discussions to solicit qualitative information. Analyzing your jurisdiction's systems, including policies, practices and procedures, how they are working, and opportunities for change that will advance racial equity. Synthesizing information gathered to identify gaps in racial equity, promising practices, and report on findings and recommendations.
- **Strategic Planning**—Designing exercises and facilitating discussions to develop the content for the Plan (outcomes, actions, and performance measures).
- **Communications**—Communicating with leadership, staff, and community about the purpose of this process, updates on the process, results of the process, and being a point of contact for anyone with questions. Some considerations as you compose the Racial Equity Action Team include:

- **Authority**—The Racial Equity Action Team will need to ask staff in different divisions, programs, and departments to provide information and to take various actions. They need to have sufficient authority to make these requests. This could be done by either having upper management staff as members of the team or by explicit and clear authorization from the executive or director to oversee the project.
- **Expertise**—Team members will need to collectively possess a robust set of skills to fulfill the functions listed above. People with lived experiences bring important expertise. People with a strong racial equity analysis, some experience with strategic planning, and a good project manager are especially important.
- **Familiarity**—All team members should be familiar with the jurisdiction's racial equity terminology. They also need familiarity with the jurisdiction's decision-making structure and processes.
- **Time**—The Racial Equity Action Team should be given dedicated time for this project. The time commitment will vary dramatically depending on the capacity of the Team, the size of the jurisdiction, and the scale and depth of the process.
- **Composition**—Each Racial Equity Action Team will look different and be a different size. Ideally, team members represent the demographic diversity of the jurisdiction. Racial diversity is especially important. Ideally, team members also represent the different divisions or programs across the jurisdiction. Representation from up and down the jurisdiction's hierarchy is also ideal, though if leadership is represented then it is important to be sensitive to power dynamics so all members feel empowered to meaningfully participate. Tenure and union representation are also important consider-

ations. Representativeness is something to strive for but should be balanced with the need to recruit members with the skills sets listed above.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND SCALE

The Racial Equity Action Team should develop an appropriately scaled organizing structure for this process. Not every staff person in the jurisdiction needs to or has to be involved at every stage of the process. The size and complexity of the jurisdiction is one factor shaping this project's scope. The racial equity expertise within the jurisdiction is another.

Engaging a jurisdiction's leadership team is critical regardless of their racial equity expertise. They will need to be engaged in both managing the process and providing substantive input in all phases. Engaging the top-level managers could be done as a group and/or with each manager participating in the engagement of their division or program staff. Managers of color and/or with racial equity expertise could also be considered for individual interviews to provide candid feedback.

Engaging entire divisions or large programs may prove challenging. We recommend the Racial Equity Action Team work with managers of larger divisions or programs to recruit a small team of staff to represent. These staff should have the most familiarity and experience with the concepts of racial equity in addition to being familiar with the work of the division or program.

The Racial Equity Action Team should consider creating a graphic of the agreed upon jurisdictional structure to use as a communications tool.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Communities of color have borne the burdens of inequitable policies, practices, and investments, and they hold deep expertise on those impacts. Their expertise and ownership of this plan is critical to success. Engaging residents of color—along with employees of color—as subject matter experts in the process can improve the process and the final product in myriad ways; from more accurate analysis of institutional barriers to identification of more effective strategies and greater community buy-in during implementation. Robust community engagement throughout your process will be critical to your success.

Jurisdictions willing to examine their own institutional racism are opening themselves up to criticism which may feel vulnerable. Their tendency may be to conduct an internally focused planning process. Overcoming this tendency is important. At a minimum, jurisdictions should engage people of color most impacted by racial inequities to establish the jurisdiction's broader vision for racial equity and theory of change to achieve it. This foundation can serve as the touchstone for your planning process. The other critical point of community accountability is an opportunity to review your draft plan and take an active role in implementation and regular reporting on progress.

Community engagement during the planning process can take many forms, not all of which are discussed here. Community bodies formed with decision-making authority and specific planning responsibilities are most effective. The volunteer nature of these bodies makes it difficult to recruit community members from outside the jurisdiction's institutional partners who are already paid to do this work. People of color in the community with different lived experiences of institutional racism should be compensated for their expertise similar to how jurisdictions value technically-skilled professionals like architects and

engineers. Portland Metro's **Equity Strategy Advisory Committee** is a good example of a body that advised Metro through the creation of their racial equity strategy. Its members represented leaders from philanthropy, nonprofit, government, and business sectors.

Another strategy is contracting with community based organizations (CBOs) already working on issues of racial equity to host community events at different points in the process. Research methods conducted by CBOs such as focus groups, surveys, and interviews can solicit information government could not, and it also builds the capacity of CBOs to do future work.

Another way to access community expertise and identify priorities without fatiguing the community is to use existing community-produced reports as research material. Reports cataloguing disparities, their causes, and associated solutions are often available². In some cases, these reports are even the impetus for local government to institute a racial equity initiative. However, these reports are resource intensive to produce so community groups should be sufficiently resourced. Jurisdictions should also value this work by providing decision making authority during the implementation phase to maintain trust, ensuring that community-sourced strategies are not co-opted or made ineffective.

RESOURCES

It is important to have a central point of contact for questions, training, and support during the process.

Resources provided could include a project webpage with background and training materials, sample materials, frequently asked questions, a glossary defining common terms, and contact information for specific technical assistance. You can also hold open office hours to provide tailored technical assistance through the process.

Some foundational training is a critical pre-requisite for meaningful participation in this project. The Racial Equity Action Team and leadership groups should take a basic racial equity training as a foundation for building a shared analysis and definitions for racial equity work. Additional training on strategic planning for racial equity is also recommended for co-leads and Racial Equity Action Team members. However, do not hesitate due to a fear of not being totally ready. Inaction is itself a decision to continue the status quo. Your leadership and Racial Equity Action Team simply need to be ready enough to begin.

RESEARCH AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT



This guide is primarily about a planning process to create the actual Racial Equity Action Plans. However, some form of research or basic information gathering is recommended to assess the jurisdiction's culture, structure, and practices.

The Racial Equity Action Team can first develop a research methodology and oversee the process to collect and analyze information. This will help assess key areas where a jurisdiction can improve racial equity and solicit ideas for making improvements. If information and/or data is lacking in some areas, you can include data development actions as a part of your Racial Equity Action Plan.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

Start by first taking an inventory of what racial equity information you already track and how useful or reliable it is. Then you can ask what information is not being tracked and what are the possible methods for collecting it.

Some jurisdictions are using a structured racial equity assessment to develop a baseline evaluation of gaps within an jurisdiction³. These assessments look at the jurisdiction's operations, practices, workforce, culture, policies, and programs. The City of Portland's Racial Equity Assessment⁴ was used by all 26 bureaus to assess themselves before developing their five-year Racial Equity Plans.

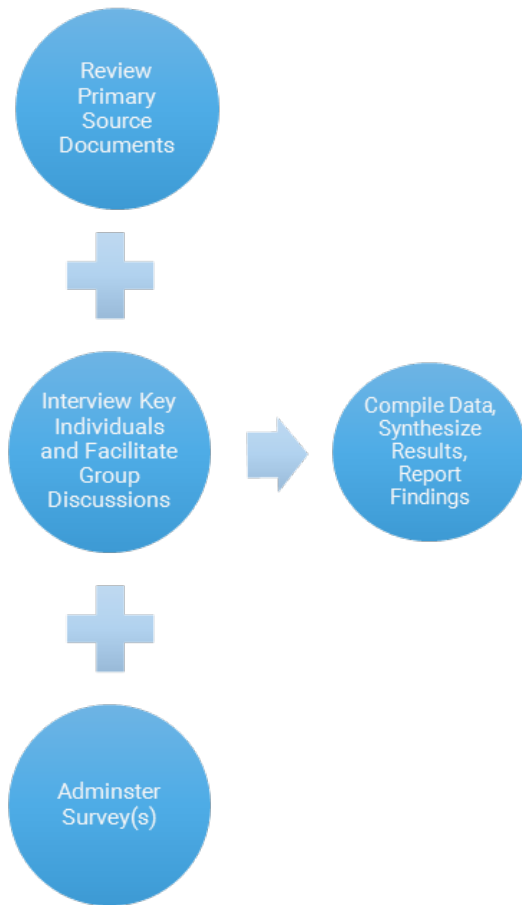
Other research instruments and methodology can be used. Methodology used can range from reviewing source documents (ex. strategic plans, program materials, communication materials, etc.), individual interviews, administering a simple online **survey**⁵ to facilitating in-person focus groups (ex. leadership team, managers, division/program teams, etc.). Research can be conducted by staff or outside consultants. The City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative alternates conducting employee surveys and community surveys (**information** on both of these surveys). The data collected through these surveys provides important feedback into their planning processes. To get the most candid feedback possible, it is important for the survey to be conducted anonymously.

³ City of Seattle and City of Portland racial equity assessments

⁴ We would like to offer special thanks to the All Hands Raised project and the Racial Equity Strategy Guide developed by the Urban League of Portland, in concert with City of Portland staff, especially its Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

⁵ Portland Bureau of Transportation racial equity assessment survey

Figure 4: Sample Process for Research and Development of Recommendations



For survey analysis, conduct sub-group analysis, including comparisons between managers and non-managers, by race, between departments, and tenure. In the case of small numbers of people in some categories, to maintain confidentiality, you may want to combine racial data into whites and people of color and only highlight departmental differences for the largest departments.

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Regardless of which approach you choose, it is important to create opportunities for group dialogue and analysis. Many of the most important and complex questions may not be suitable for an online survey and should be considered for facilitated discussions. The richest information gleaned from a survey will not be the quantifiable answers but the respondent's reasoning (always provide a comment box). Facilitated discussion provides participants the opportunity to clarify the questions, listen to each other's analysis, and also begin to identify solutions which can be mined later in the Plan development phase.

For group discussions, use your Racial Equity Action Team to staff the process, as experienced facilitators, to create facilitation guides, distribute questions ahead of time to participants, as note takers, and for on-going communication.

RECOMMENDED AREAS OF ASSESSMENT

Jurisdiction Workforce Demographics, Hiring, Retention, and Promotion

We recommend collecting the current workforce demographic information. Try to disaggregate data by race, gender, management, line staff, represented staff, and tenure. This can help identify disparities and determine if the workforce or parts of the workforce are representative of the diversity of the jurisdiction's population.

Further research can then be done to assess how racial equity goals and practices are embedded in workforce development and hiring. The jurisdiction's human resources department can be helpful in determining whether racial equity considerations inform the hiring processes, professional development, performance evaluations, and promotions to name a few important workforce processes.

GARE's issue paper, **"Public Sector Jobs: Opportunities for Advancing Racial Equity,"** has useful resources both for assessment of current conditions and practices, as well as development of actions to advance racial equity as an employer. When it comes to workforce equity, your goal should be for your workforce to reflect the diversity of the communities you serve across the breadth (functions) and depth (hierarchy) of your jurisdiction. Based on your analysis of workforce data, review of institutional policies and practices, and engagement of key stakeholders, you will be able to integrate specific workforce equity actions into your Racial Equity Action Plan.

Contracting Practices

Your jurisdiction may participate in a program to increase contracting with people of color and other underutilized contractors. It is wise to collect data on your contracting performance, and specifically identify to what extent your jurisdiction conducts business with contractors of color.

You can then inquire further about the specific contracting practices. A contract manager can help provide information on the outreach practices to contractors of color, whether minimum requirements of contractors are excluding some contractors disproportionately, or the procurement process has any unintended bias.

GARE's issue paper, **"Contracting for Racial Equity: Best Local Government Practices that Advance Racial Equity in Government Contracting and Procurement"** has useful resources both for assessment of current conditions and practices, as well as development of actions to advance racial equity in your contracting and procurement. When it comes to contracting and procurement, your goal should be for your contracting and procurement dollars to benefit the full diversity of the communities you serve. Based on your analysis of contracting and procurement data—with a special focus on those departments with the largest budgets, review of institutional policies and practices, and engagement of key stakeholders—you will be able to integrate specific contracting and procurement equity actions into your Racial Equity Action Plan.

Jurisdictional Commitment, Leadership, and Management

Your Racial Equity Action Team can assess your jurisdiction's commitment to racial equity at the policy, planning, and budget levels. Whether racial equity is embedded into key guiding documents or decision-making processes can give an indication of jurisdictional commitment. Important information can be gathered about the general workplace envi-

ronment for staff; whether there are broadly agreed upon definitions of racial equity terms or even opportunities to discuss racism and racial equity.

Exploring the way leadership and management level practices affect your jurisdiction's ability to advance racial equity can provide useful insights. Ask how leadership supports racial equity in the jurisdiction, and among the employees. Ask about networking at the leadership level—to help support management and leadership staff in the pragmatic work of racial equity.

You should be cognizant of the fact that some staff may be hesitant to provide honest feedback, especially if there are any sorts of concerns about lack of management receptivity. If you have anecdotal evidence that suggests such concerns might exist, conduct focus groups and interviews with confidentiality.

Community Access and Partnership

It is important to understand how the jurisdiction engages with people and communities of color. Some areas of focus include looking at the racial diversity of advisory bodies, availability and access of translation and interpretation services, culturally relevant communication practices, and the frequency of staff interaction or partnership with communities of color during planning and implementation processes.

Data, Metrics, and On-going Improvement

Community-level data disaggregated by race in housing, jobs, education, criminal justice, health and others will capture various areas of disproportionality. In reality, local government touches each of these areas, but ultimately, does not control the entire system. Therefore, it is important to supplement your data analysis with assessment conversations to determine the key leverage points and opportunities for your jurisdiction to influence each area of inequity.

You should also review how your jurisdiction collects information and tracks the results of its actions to improve racial equity. We recommend looking closely at how data is disaggregated by race or not, whether a racial equity toolkit is used on programs and policies, and whether data collected by communities of color is valued and used by the jurisdiction. A deeper examination is needed to look at how service-level demographic data and data documenting disparities is used to prioritize and develop criteria for decision-making. This will provide valuable insight into whether investments and resource distribution are likely serving to achieve the jurisdiction's racial equity goals.

Jurisdictional practices in this area may help later in the process when developing a Racial Equity Action Plan's methods for tracking progress.

RESEARCH FINDINGS



A summary of research findings is a helpful way to synthesize a large amount of information into a useful format. This may require sorting through data to find themes, anomalies, and discrepancies, all with the ultimate goal of identifying your “headline” findings. A Racial Equity Action Team is best suited for this work but may need supplemental support from data analysts or content experts.

Communicating your findings is an opportunity to raise awareness and give leadership an opportunity to convey the importance of advancing racial equity. Your executive or director is well positioned to communicate the findings and next steps. In-person meetings of staff and leadership to share the findings are good opportunities to answer questions and garner support for your plan.

A summary can help answer the following questions:

- What research methodology was used?
- Who participated? How did leadership participate? How did community participate?
- What are the high level summary findings (headlines)? Are there themes or trends identified?
- Where are the gaps in the jurisdiction's use of promising practices of racial equity? You may want to provide brief explanation for gaps.
- Were there any discrepancies between some findings and the Racial Equity Action Team's opinion? Why do they exist and is there a recommended response?
- Where are the strengths in the jurisdiction's use of promising practices of racial equity?
- What opportunities for change does your research suggest? What are some initial recommendations for the Plan?

THE PLAN



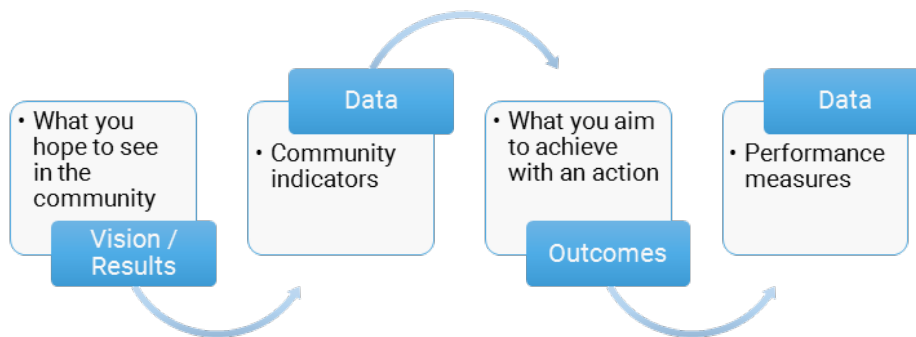
Racial Equity Action Plans should be ambitious documents to bring about institutional change in order to eliminate racial disparities, both inside government and in the community. Plans will have clear outcomes and measurable actions to achieve them. Effective actions should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely. Be sure your plan includes sufficient funding, staffing, accountability mechanisms, and evaluation.

Racial Equity Action Plans should create opportunities for reflection and learning. No one has all the right answers. Making some mistakes is highly likely but do not let the fear of mistakes stall your process or the implementation of your Plan. The Racial Equity Action Team can provide a model of reflection and learning for the whole jurisdiction to emulate.

The terminology for Racial Equity Action Plans is informed by Results Based Accountability. This approach clearly delineates between community conditions/results and performance accountability/outcomes. These levels share a systematic approach to measurement. This approach emphasizes the importance of beginning with a focus on the desired end condition.

We encourage you to be clear about the desired end conditions in the community and to emphasize those areas where you have the most direct influence. When you align community indicators, government strategies, and performance measures, you maximize the likelihood for impact. Recognize also that to ultimately impact community conditions, you will need to partner with other institutions, across sectors, always putting community in the center of your efforts.

Figure 5: Results Based Accountability Flow



We have provided a sample template (see appendix 1) that uses the following definitions of key terms:

- **Results:** Community level conditions you are aiming to achieve.
- **Community Indicator:** The means by which you can measure community condi-

tions, disaggregated by race.

- **Outcome:** A future state of being resulting from a change at the jurisdiction, department, or program level. Strong outcomes articulate a clear improvement or define how much improvement will take place. Beginning outcomes with the words “increase” or “decrease” help with the latter.
- **Action:** Specific things your jurisdiction will do to achieve the outcomes. Strong actions start with verbs.
- **Performance Measure:** A quantifiable measure of how well an action is working. Different types of measures include
 - Quantity—How much did you do?
 - Quality—How well did you do it?
 - Impact—Is anyone better off?
- **Timeline:** The month, quarter, and/or year an action will be accomplished.
- **Accountability:** The position or body that is responsible for the action and/or is accountable for its completion.

1. CREATE A RACIAL EQUITY GUIDING STATEMENT FOR YOUR JURISDICTION

A simple statement can help guide your jurisdiction throughout a plan’s development and implementation. Questions to consider when developing this statement:

- How does your jurisdiction’s existing mission statement relate to racial equity?
- (For departments) What is your unique role in the jurisdiction-wide effort to achieve racial equity?
- What principles or shared values are reflected in this guiding statement?

The racial equity guiding statements below are some examples:

- Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability: Develop planning and sustainability solutions that eliminate racial disparities thereby creating prosperous, resilient, healthy, and affordable communities for all Portlanders.
- Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative: Eliminate institutional racism and achieve racial equity in Seattle.

2. IDENTIFY RESULTS AND COMMUNITY INDICATORS THEN CREATE OUTCOMES

Identify a result and its associated community indicator(s) and then commit to an outcome stating the change your jurisdiction will make in order to improve the indicator. Indicators should measure a specific racial disparity. Outcomes articulate the change that strengthens the jurisdiction’s position to reduce that disparity.

Again, this is an opportunity to engage leadership and secure buy-in to the necessary change. The Racial Equity Action Team can draft results/indicators and outcome language for leadership to process and finalize through a facilitated work session. Use this precious time wisely by coming with prepared materials and a facilitator’s guide.

Questions to consider as you select community indicators and outcomes are:

- What needs or opportunities were identified during the research and assessment phase of this process?
- What needs to be different in our jurisdiction’s culture, workforce, policies, practices, and procedures? What change do we ideally want (not just for what we would

settle)?

- What does our jurisdiction define as the most important racially equitable outcomes?
- What are some known racial inequities in your jurisdiction? What are the root causes or factors creating these racial inequities?
- How does your jurisdiction's relationship with communities of color need to change? How can those most adversely affected by an issue be actively involved in solving it?
- How will proposed outcomes address root causes of racial disparities and advance institutional and/or systemic change?

Examples of community indicators in Racial Equity Action Plans (disaggregated by race):

- Dane County, WI: Unemployment rates
- City of Seattle: Severe housing cost burden for renters

Examples of outcomes include:

- Dane County, WI: Dane County is a model employer advancing racial equity.
- Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability: Shared project management approach that integrates equity at all phases (scoping, design, implementation, evaluation).
- Seattle Public Utilities: Position service equity as one of the primary filters for decision making by Q1 2018.

3. CREATE ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE EACH OUTCOME

Develop a clear action or set of actions to achieve each outcome. Facilitated action planning sessions with departments or divisions are a good way to source potential actions. Bring the relevant indicators and outcomes to these sessions and facilitate a conversation about what steps are necessary to achieve them.

Questions to consider when developing actions include the following:

- Were any actionable solutions identified during the information gathering phase of this process? Are there actions prioritized by communities of color?
- What is a specific change in policy, practice, or procedure that could help produce more equitable outcomes?
- How will an action decrease racial disparities?
- Are there any unintended consequences? Can they be mitigated?
- What capacity is needed to successfully implement the action?
- How will an action be implemented and by whom?
- Is the action achievable within the lifetime of the plan?
- Is the action measurable and how will it be measured?

Similar to the sorting and summarizing of your research findings, there will need to be a process to refine all the proposed actions solicited through your work sessions. Again, the Racial Equity Action Team is best suited for this role.

TIPS FOR WRITING AN EASILY UNDERSTOOD PLAN

To ensure the public can understand the Plan, use the follow writing tips:

- Use plain language to describe your indicators, outcomes, actions, and measures.
- Spell out acronyms.
- Double-check for spelling errors.
- Have a communications expert review the Plan for clarity and cultural competency.

Examples of actions include the following:

- Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS): Develop a customized BPS project management approach that integrates transformational values framework, equity tools, and community engagement.
- Seattle Public Utilities: Implement an ongoing, sequential community engagement training and coaching process for all project managers.
- Seattle, WA: Develop and implement a Racial Equity Fund—provide funding to support institutional/community collaborations aimed at eliminating structural racism.

4. CREATE PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR EACH ACTION AND COMMIT TO A COMPLETION DATE

Each action should have a completion date (month/quarter/year) and performance measure(s). You may consider these questions as you develop a date and measures:

- What is your timeline?
- How will you evaluate and report progress over time?
- How will you know the action is complete?
- Can you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability?

Examples of tangible results to measure include the following:

- Seattle Department of Human Services:
 - 900 youth/young adults of color participating in the Youth & Young Adults Program made academic progress by achieving at least one of the following: GED completion, grade progression, credit retrieval, passing HSPE scores, on-time graduation.
 - By Q4 100 percent of our Human Resources policies will have been evaluated and corrected as filtered through the racial equity toolkit.
- Dane County Racial Equity Framework: 75 percent of Dane County employees believe their department seeks input and assistance on decision making from communities of color.

5. IDENTIFY THE LEAD POSITION OR BODY THAT HOLDS THE POSITION ACCOUNTABLE FOR COMPLETION OF EACH ACTION

The responsibility for completing actions should be delegated to a position or body. Any community oversight body should also be identified.

Recommend a Stewardship Plan

The ultimate goal of this work is not a Racial Equity Action Plan. The goal is institutional and structural change. Thus, GARE recommends the Racial Equity Action Team also provide recommendations on Plan stewardship and accountability. This includes responsible parties, resources committed, and accountability structures.

Recommendations could include a proposal for an ongoing coordinating body to track and support implementation of the Plan. Your accountability and stewardship structure is another opportunity to partner with the community.

Stewardship provides the opportunity to obtain broad buy-in—including from leadership—for any shifting of existing resources and/or any new staffing and resources required to implement actions. Also, some actions may be flagged for prioritization due to required immediate or near-term action.

Questions concerning limited resources for this work will undoubtedly arise. Remember, we are paying the cost already for past inaction to reduce disparities. There is a continued and growing cost to inaction. Your leadership should be reminded of this cost when they are considering how much to invest in the plan.

REVIEW AND FINALIZING THE PLAN



Each jurisdiction's process for reviewing a draft plan will be different. The Racial Equity Action Team may want to circulate a draft to all or some participants, similar to the process for sharing the research findings. A public review process and/or comment period is recommended.

After receiving feedback, the Racial Equity Action Team can collectively and individually review the plan using questions like these below. Again, this is an excellent opportunity to engage the community in this process.

- Does the Plan reflect the research findings?
- Are the community indicators of racial disparities explicitly named?
- Are the outcomes and actions likely to make institutional or structural changes?
- Are the actions measurable and realistic?
- Do the actions reflect relevant promising practices in racial equity work?
- Are there positions responsible for the actions?
- Is the Plan implementable and well resourced?
- Are there any multi-department trends?
- Are there opportunities for different departments to work together?
- Are there opportunities for the community to work with departments on an action or the Plan as a whole?

ROLL OUT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the plan is perhaps the most critical step to create positive, meaningful change over time. The rollout of the plan should launch its implementation. The plan is a public document so the rollout should occur externally as well as internally. Each rollout will look different for each jurisdiction depending on their structure and their communications capabilities.

Once the plan is finalized, you will want to work with your leadership to distribute the plan at multiple staff levels and in multiple venues. Your communications staff could be good resources. The initial internal process may use similar communication strategies that were used when announcing the planning process; director sends all-staff email, presentation at all-staff meetings, summary materials distributed, etc.

The release of the plan will be a highly visible statement of the jurisdiction's intent and commitment to racial equity. GARE recommends using this opportune moment to raise awareness about racial inequities, government's role in eliminating inequities, and leaders' commitment to eliminating inequities. Achieving these objectives during the rollout of the plan will likely support many of the plan's actions.

At a minimum the executive should publicly release the plan with a press release, social media, and unique webpage. If possible or needed, a legislative body can provide additional legitimacy by adopting the Racial Equity Action Plan through a legislative action. This action could also include budgetary authority for implementation.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTING

Your stewardship body can help track and report on the progress of the Racial Equity Action Plan. They can compile the reports received from responsible parties and synthesize the results. At a minimum these should document challenges faced and plans for addressing challenges or how the outcome or action might be refined in the future. Also, be sure to document and celebrate successes that have been achieved.

By tracking challenges, the stewardship body will be able to see what obstacles are affecting progress towards racial equity and attempt to resolve those issues. They can also share jurisdiction successes with others who are looking for promising practices.

Some things to consider when reviewing progress on the plans:

- Are there outcomes and actions that are receiving less attention than others?
- Is there a need to change the plan?
- Have plan actions been implemented or in progress? What do the results indicate as to how to improve?
- If there are unmet or blocked actions, is there an explanation and/or proposal for resolving the issue?
- Are there racially diverse staff working on the plan over the year(s)?
- Are residents of color engaged in the implementation of the plan over the year(s)?
- Are measures being recorded and updated as actions change or are completed?
- Is the jurisdiction reporting on challenges and successes?

CONCLUSION

By developing a Racial Equity Action Plan, you are moving from theory into action, recognizing the potential for government transformation—a public sector for “the public good.” You are creating a shared practice and forming new relationships across the jurisdiction’s structure and in partnership with community. You are also creating a culture of learning and reflection to improve upon the work as you go. GARE, your peers, and our network of national partners are all here to help you.

In closing, we encourage you to be driven by:

- **Justice**—Be clear-eyed about the past and rigorously committed to a new way of governing, one that intentionally creates racial equity rather than reinforces historic injustice. Government itself created and continues to maintain inequity. City governments are uniquely suited and responsible for creating and sustaining equitable outcomes.
- **Community**—Adhere to the principle “nothing about us without us” as a core tenet of your approach. People of color and communities most affected by inequity are supported to lead efforts toward equity in cities, counties, and states across the country. Build capacity with leaders at all levels—from formal positions of authority and community leaders in cities to peer leaders elsewhere in our movement.
- **Momentum**—Aim for nothing less than complete transformation, but be both pragmatic and urgent in your approach, seeking not perfection but progress. Starting from what exists, build solutions, constantly evolve and adapt to accelerate the pace of progress.

You are joining a growing movement of people within government, normalizing conversations about race, operationalizing new behaviors and policies, and organizing to achieve racial equity. GARE is seeing more and more jurisdictions that are making a commitment to achieving racial equity, focusing on the power and influence of their own institutions, and working in partnership across sectors and with the community to maximize impact. There is an increasingly strong field of practice. We are organizing in government with the belief that the transformation of government is essential for us to advance racial equity and is critical to our success as a nation.

APPENDIX I

Racial Equity Plan Template

(Template that can be customized depending on your jurisdiction's self-assessment and priorities; add your actions, timeline, accountability and performance measures, along with any additional results, indicators and outcomes)

1. Jurisdiction's residents understand and are committed to achieving racial equity.					
Community Indicator	Outcomes and Actions	Timeline	Accountability	Performance Measure	Progress Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Percent of population who believe advancing racial equity should be a priority of government •Percent of population who understand the jurisdiction's commitment to racial equity 	A. Jurisdiction's employees understand, are committed to, and have the infrastructure needed to advance racial equity.				

2. Jurisdiction's residents view the jurisdiction as an effective and inclusive government that engages community.					
Community Indicator	Outcomes and Actions	Timeline	Accountability	Performance Measure	Progress Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of population who believe the jurisdiction values community participation and engagement • Jurisdiction services are well received by community members • voter turnout 	A. Jurisdiction's employees have outreach and engagement skills and competencies to advance racially inclusive outreach and engagement.				

Racial Equity Plan Template

3. Jurisdiction's communities of color share in the economic prosperity.					
Community Indicator	Outcomes and Actions	Timeline	Accountability	Performance Measure	Progress Report
•Unemployment rates •Household income •Number of businesses developed	A. Jurisdiction is a model employer advancing racial equity. B. Investments in contracting and procurement benefit the diversity of jurisdiction's communities.				

4. Others					
Community Indicator	Outcomes and Actions	Timeline	Accountability	Performance Measure	Progress Report
•Criminal justice •Education •Housing •Health					

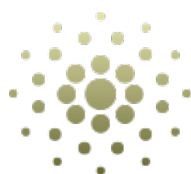
Across the country, governmental jurisdictions are:

Making a
commitment
to achieving
racial equity

Focusing on
the power
and influence
of their own
institutions

Working in
partnership
with others

**When this occurs, significant leverage
and expansion opportunities emerge,
setting the stage for the achievement of
racial equity in our communities.**



LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY