



# Equity Strategy Program

WORK PLAN

Step 1: Equity Baseline

May 2013

## About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy, and sustainable transportation and living choices for people and businesses in the region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges and opportunities that affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.

**[www.oregonmetro.gov/connect](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/connect)**

### **Metro Council President**

Tom Hughes

### **Metro Councilors**

Shirley Craddick, District 1

Carlotta Collette, District 2

Craig Dirksen, District 3

Kathryn Harrington, District 4

Sam Chase, District 5

Bob Stacey, District 6

### **Auditor**

Suzanne Flynn

# Metro Equity Strategy | STEP 1 work plan

May 2013

## Contents

- Purpose and Background.....2**
- Equity Strategy | STEP 1 Work Plan and Timeline.....3**
  - 1. OVERVIEW.....3**
    - 1.1. Scope..... 3**
    - 1.2. Goals and objectives ..... 3**
    - 1.3. Outcomes ..... 4**
  - 2. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION.....6**
    - 2.1. Governance structure..... 6**
    - 2.2. Program communications ..... 8**
  - 3. MANAGEMENT PROCESS.....9**
    - 3.1. Work plan ..... 9**
    - 3.2. Program timeline and milestones ..... 12**
    - 3.3. Resource plan ..... 12**
- Appendix A: Timeline (attached) .....12**

## Purpose and Background

Metro's tagline—*Making a great place*—gives context for the agency's role in advancing equity. Metro works with communities, businesses and residents to create a vibrant and sustainable region *for all*.

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation or recreation choices for people and businesses in the Portland region. To achieve these outcomes, Metro works to preserve and enhance the region's quality of life for current and future generations.

Metro is known for its collaborative approach to regional planning by linking transportation, land use, economic development, resource and environmental conservation, and arts and culture. Despite many successes over the decades, there is growing evidence that some communities are being left behind, in spite of growth and progress. Over the past decades the region has seen growing disparities in racial and income inequality, employment, home ownership, educational achievement, and health. These conditions, if not addressed, will worsen in the face of changing demographics and population growth.

The Portland region is undergoing a demographic transformation where the racial and ethnic groups that have been most disadvantaged are now becoming a larger portion of the population. The region is also experiencing a generation gap larger than ever before – a shift that is greater than for the country as a whole. These equity issues are central to the future prosperity of our region – and addressing these issues is an opportunity to better advance the region's desired outcomes. Research throughout the country illustrates that regions that successfully reduce racial, ethnic, and income disparities are stronger economically and socially.

Because these equity issues transcend city and county boundaries, Metro's larger service district is well positioned to support the development of a common language and framework for advancing equity. Through its mission of preserving and enhancing the quality of life and environment for current and future generations, Metro can work to increase and improve opportunities for underserved communities. Bringing equity into the forefront of our work will help to secure our region's future by creating a place where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Metro can play an important role in advancing equity by partnering in the development of a shared definition and understanding of equity; providing guidance through an agency strategy; and by ensuring consistent internal efforts, capacity and knowledge. In 2010, the Metro Council adopted equity as one of the region's six desired outcomes and in 2011 initiated the development of an organizing framework to help Metro consistently incorporate equity into policy and decision-making. Metro is now launching a process to shape an agency-specific strategy for advancing equity.

The strategy will build on understanding community needs to explicitly define how the agency will work to advance equity. This

### Region's six desired outcomes

#### Vibrant communities

People live, work and play in vibrant communities where their everyday needs are easily accessible.

#### Economic prosperity

Current and future residents benefit from the region's sustained economic competitiveness and prosperity.

#### Safe and reliable transportation

People have safe and reliable transportation choices that enhance their quality of life.

#### Leadership on climate change

The region is a leader in minimizing contributions to global warming.

#### Clean air and water

Current and future generations enjoy clean air, clean water and healthy ecosystems.

#### Equity

The benefits and burdens of growth and change are distributed equitably.

will be accomplished by first understanding how communities experience the region's outcomes *today* through the development of an Equity Baseline. After better understanding how different communities and populations experience these outcomes, Metro will work to evaluate the agency's role in addressing disparities. Metro may identify inequities or disparities that are outside of the agency's authority. In some cases, these issues may fall outside the scope of this strategy. In others, Metro may look for opportunities for the agency to advance equity within the region's outcomes. This effort will also focus on the development of new partnerships with underserved communities. These partnerships are critical to ensuring that Metro's strategy addresses the needs of underserved communities across the region.

## Equity Strategy | STEP 1 Work Plan and Timeline

### 1. OVERVIEW

#### 1.1. Scope

Through an evidence-based (quantitative and qualitative) decision making process that ensures meaningful engagement, the Equity Strategy Program will develop an agency-specific equity strategy for Metro. The Equity Strategy will define Metro's roles and responsibilities in advancing equity (one of the region's six desired outcomes) and will guide implementation of an actionable and measurable Equity Action Plan across the agency.

#### 1.2. Goals and objectives

##### Goals

- ✓ Establish an evidence-based decision making process that ensures meaningful engagement from communities most impacted by disproportionate burdens.
- ✓ Co-create internal and external capacity to understand Metro's role in advancing equity across the region's desired outcomes.
- ✓ Identify the institutional systems that stand in the way of equitable outcomes, as well as the institutional systems that provide opportunities to support equitable outcomes, including the tools needed to implement equitable practices throughout the agency.
- ✓ Define and implement a Metro-specific equity strategy that is actionable and measurable.

##### Objective

The objective for the Equity Strategy development process is to answer the following questions:

1. Step 1: Within the region's six desired outcomes, what are the regional inequities and where are there disparities?
2. Step 2: How do Metro's roles relate to the inequities that exist across the region's desired outcomes; what is the relationship of Metro's roles to these disparities?
3. Step 3: What is Metro's strategy to advance equity within the context of the agency's roles?

The scope of work for this effort has been organized in three steps (see figure below).

The following work plan covers Step 1 only. Specific work plans will be developed for Steps 2 and 3, following the completion of each previous step of the process.

# Equity Strategy Program Timeline



## 1.3. Outcomes

Building on direction from Metro Council and feedback from community partners, the Equity Strategy Program seeks to achieve the following outcomes.

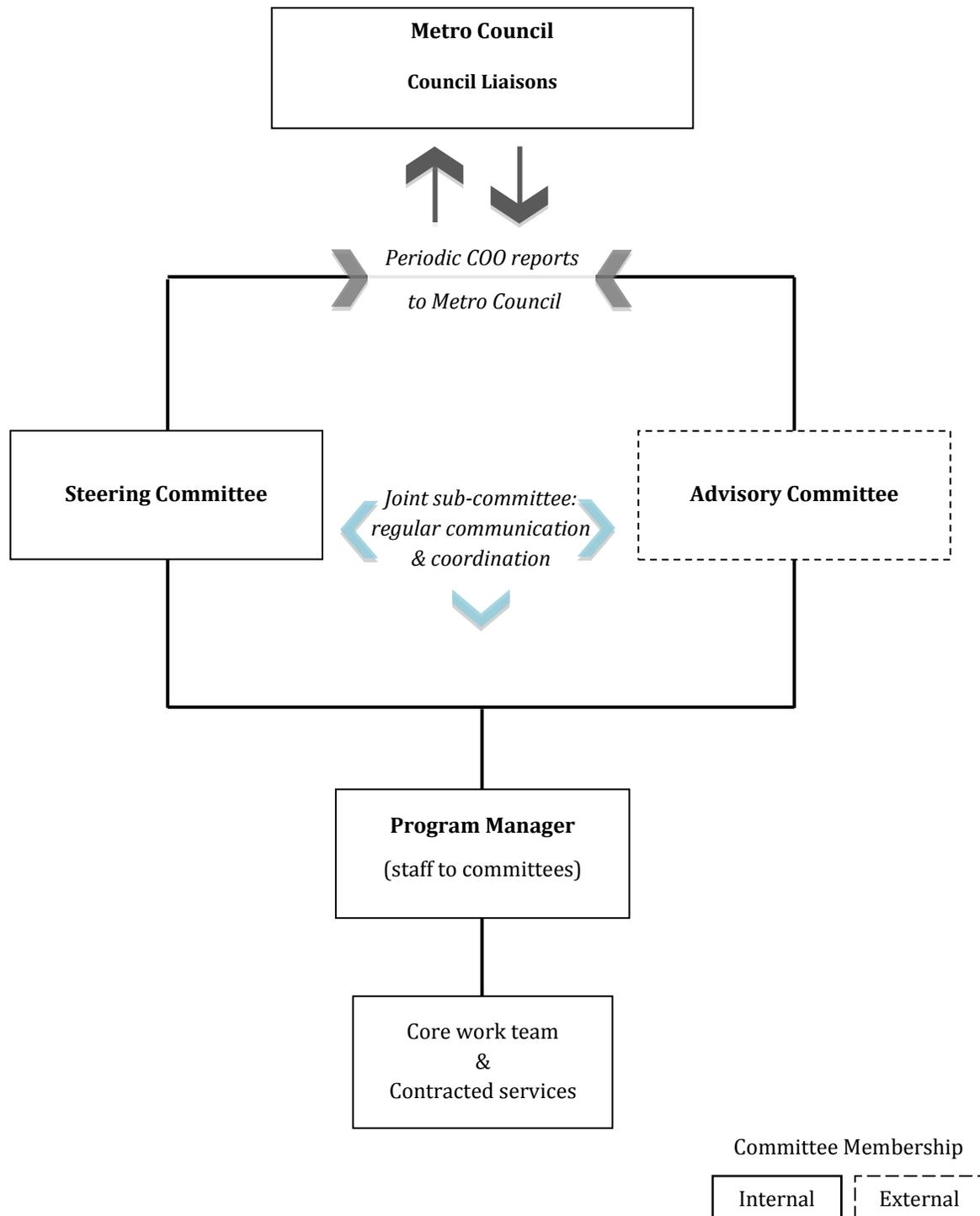
1. **Strengthen and build new and existing partnerships**
  - Use the Equity Strategy as an opportunity to develop a collaborative partnership to advance equity.
  - To move away from a one-off approach, strengthen partnerships with groups that represent populations most impacted by the inequities that challenge our region. Specifically, relationships with traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities, including communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities, and low-income communities need to be strengthened.
2. **Increase external knowledge base around Metro's roles and responsibilities and support capacity building for partners to engage with Metro**
  - Ensure community-based partners have the knowledge and relationships to examine and shape Metro's role—as an agency—in advancing equity across the region's desired outcomes (Step 2).
  - Help facilitate a regional equity dialogue among communities and across perspectives.
  - Support efforts to build the capacity of local jurisdictional and public sector partners, (including but not limited to data collection) in an effort to foster regional coordination around advancing equity.
3. **Build internal capacity around equity**
  - Learn from the breadth and depth of knowledge that regional partners have around equity by supporting staff development, training and skill building that equips Metro staff with the tools to implement Metro's Equity Strategy.

- Invest in leadership development opportunities (through Metro sponsored training events and partner sponsored engagement opportunities).
  - Ensure the long-term success of an agency-specific equity strategy by coordinating with the existing Diversity Program.
  - Ensure that the Equity Strategy Program supports and is coordinated with the agency's existing and planned activities. These include, but are not limited to the following: Title VI compliance, regional planning efforts, the Community Investment Initiative, and ongoing service delivery and research efforts.
4. **Build on existing regional and national equity measurement efforts to create a strong foundation for Metro's Equity Strategy Program**
- Draw from existing evaluation and measurement efforts within the region, including but not limited to: The Greater Portland Pulse, Opportunity Mapping and the Regional Equity Atlas.
  - Draw from the evaluation and measurement work of other regions and communities; identify indicators that will allow comparisons of our progress, relative to other communities.
  - Identify data and measurement gaps and support a regional conversation around addressing existing regional data gaps.

## 2. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

### 2.1. Governance structure

The governance structure for the Equity Strategy Program consists of the following groups. The office of the Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the implementation of the Step 1 work plan. The Chief Operating Officer is the Program Executive Sponsor.



**Metro Council** is ultimately responsible for providing final acceptance and approval (when needed) of program deliverables, as well as providing policy guidance to program staff.

The **Executive Sponsor** is to take responsibility for the feasibility, business case and the achievement of program outcomes, with input from both the Steering and Advisory Committees.

The **Steering Committee** is to provide guidance and support for the feasibility, business case and the achievement of the Equity Strategy Program outcomes.

The Steering Committee shall provide the following:

- Offer high level advice and guidance on program scope and goals
- Foster positive communication outside of the team regarding the program's progress and outcomes
- Help to identify and provide appropriate resources to the program sponsor as needed
- Review and comment on milestone outcomes
- Resolve program issues as needed
- Develop recommendations on deliverables in coordination with the Advisory Committee

The **Advisory Committee** will provide formal recommendations to Metro's Chief Operating Officer on major deliverables (identified below). These recommendations, developed in collaboration with the Steering Committee, will be delivered to Metro Council by the Chief Operating Officer.

The Advisory Committee shall report on the following:

**Step 1 Reports:**

- Recommendation on the development of an agency equity definition, used to guide development of Equity Indicators
- Recommendations on a series of community-supported equity indicators to be used in Equity Baseline
- Presentation of final Equity Baseline report, including documentation on structural nature of equity indicators

**Step 2 Reports:**

- Recommendations on Metro's roles and responsibilities relative to the Equity Baseline, including (1) areas where Metro has a clear role; (2) areas clearly outside of Metro's authority; (3) and recommendations on Metro's potential role for areas where Metro is not currently active.

**Step 3 Reports:**

- Policy recommendation on Metro's Equity Strategy
- Recommendations on Equity Strategy Action Plan including implementation and evaluation processes

Regular Advisory Committee meetings will include representatives from the Steering Committee as necessary to provide staffing support to respond to Advisory Committee questions around Metro roles and responsibilities.

May 2013

To ensure collaboration and communication between the Steering and Advisory Committees a Joint Subcommittee of members from both committees will meet on a regular schedule to provide support in the following areas:

- Provide a direct report opportunity for the Steering and Advisory Committee’s to share perspectives and/or concerns
- Coordinate and plan engagement and communication needs between the Steering and Advisory Committees
- Foster relationship building between the Steering and Advisory Committees members
- Provide guiding support to ensure program deliverables are met through a collaborative approach between the Steering and Advisory Committees

These meetings will take place every other month (alternate months from the full Advisory Committee meetings). The Advisory Committee and Steering Committee chairs will determine who from each of the committees will serve on the work group. Additional committee members may be asked to attend meetings as needed.

## 2.2. Program communications

Communications between the Executive Sponsor, Program Sponsor, Council Liaisons, Steering Committee, Advisory Committee and Program Team will be handled as described below.

Description	Frequency	Method	Audience	Owner
Core program Team weekly status meeting	Once per week	Meeting	Work Team – Communications	Program Manager
Core Program Team bi-weekly status meeting	Twice per month	Meeting	Work Team – Data Resource Center	Program Manager
Core Program Team bi-weekly coordination meeting	Twice per month	Meeting	Work Team – Diversity Program	Shared: Equity and Diversity Program Managers
Core Program Team Bi-weekly meetings	Twice per month	Meeting	Work Team – Program Sponsor	Program Manager
Program Team monthly status update	Once per month	Meeting	Work Team – Executive and program sponsors	Program Manager
Steering Committee	Monthly	Meeting	Work Team	Program Sponsor
Advisory Committee	Bi-monthly	Meeting	Work Team	Program Manager and Advisory Committee Chair
Advisory Committees’ coordination work group	Bi-monthly (off month from Advisory Committee meetings)	Meeting	Advisory Committee and Steering Committee representatives	Program Manager, Program Sponsor and Advisory Committee Chair
Council Liaisons	Quarterly liaison meetings	Meeting	Work Team	Program Manager or Program Sponsors
Internal communications	Ongoing program updates	Meeting/email	Metro staff	Employee Communications Manager Cary Stacey

### 3. MANAGEMENT PROCESS

#### 3.1. Work plan

The following summary provides an overview of the 18-month work plan for Step 1 of the Equity Strategy Program (as mentioned above, detailed work plans for Steps 2 and 3 will be developed after the successful completion of Step 1 work).

##### 3.1.1. Evidence Building: Equity Baseline

###### Activities

1. **Defining Equity:** To effectively develop an equity baseline for each of the region's desired outcomes, aside from equity, Metro must first develop an agency definition of equity. To accomplish this, Metro staff will work to identify existing definitions and frameworks from around the region and nationally. This information will be used to engage the Advisory Committee in a dialogue on how Metro should define "equity" for the agency.

The Advisory Committee will make a recommendation to Metro Council, through the COO, on a preferred definition of equity that will guide the indicator development process.

2. **Indicator development:** Program staff will employ Technical Assistance Contracts to support the development of a set of proposed indicators for each of the region's desired outcomes, aside from equity. Metro will seek consultation from organizations or individuals who have an understanding of existing regional indicator efforts. The focus of the contracts will be to organize existing indicators and map them to the region's six desired outcomes and also to frame these indicators within a narrative context, identifying the structural drivers of the indicators. There may also be a need to use Technical Assistance Contracts to consult with experts from outside the region, however it is anticipated this could be a smaller portion of Metro's contract needs.
  - a. Indicators will be grounded in existing indicator projects from around the region, including but not limited to, The Greater Portland Pulse, The Regional Equity Atlas, and regional opportunity mapping efforts. In using existing indicators and data sets when possible, Metro will build on those efforts when identifying how to evaluate the region's desired outcomes through an equity perspective, rather than creating a new set of regional indicators.
  - b. The indicator identification process will also include a feasibility assessment that provides information on the scale of effort needed to develop the Equity Baseline. The feasibility assessment should identify all data sources and/or gaps for each of the proposed indicators and potential data collection issues, including gaps in collection frequency, scale, extent, or other issues as defined through the process. The feasibility assessment will give decision-makers with information on the scale of effort needed to ensure that the Equity Baseline can be maintained and updated over time (not a one-off assessment). Metro staff will assist with developing the feasibility assessment for the proposed equity indicators. It is anticipated that some of the gaps identified in the feasibility assessment will not be addressed within the scope of Step 1; however, this information will help to inform the scope of the subsequent steps in this process.

- c. Along with the final proposed equity indicators there will be supporting research and narrative on the structural nature of inequities in the region. The proposed indicators should give decision-makers information on the root causes of the inequities. Identifying and highlighting the structural nature of the equity indicators may take additional research and/or a qualitative assessment. Metro will provide some research support to assist consultants with this effort. The proposed indicators, feasibility report and narrative will be presented to the Advisory and Steering Committees to inform their recommendations to the COO and Metro Council on the final Equity Baseline.
  - d. Metro staff and consultants will work with the Steering and Advisory Committees to develop proposed equity indicators and to help frame the policy options related to this effort. The Advisory Committee will make recommendations on a set of indicators for each outcome area to Metro Council, including the costs and implications of maintaining these indicators over time and any political options to consider. Metro's COO will present the final recommendation on proposed indicators to Metro Council with full transmittal of all Steering and Advisory Committee recommendations.
- 3. Baseline Analysis:** Program staff will use Technical Assistance Contracts to assist with the Equity Baseline analysis and documentation report. Specifically, Metro will use contracts to assist with the review of the Equity Baseline analysis and to help with broad community engagement to ground-truth the findings.
- a. Following Metro Council's approval of a set of equity indicators, Metro Data Resource Center staff will provide the lead on data collection (if needed) and indicator analysis for inclusion in the Equity Baseline.
  - b. Program staff will compile the quantitative analysis (indicators) and the qualitative framing research (narrative) to develop a draft Equity Baseline Report.
  - c. Program staff will use consultant support to provide quality assurance that the findings in the report are consistent with other regional equity indicator and experiential findings within the region. Consultants will assist Metro with the design of culturally responsive engagement approaches to "ground-truthing" the findings of the Equity Baseline.
  - d. Metro staff and consultants will work with the Steering and Advisory Committees to develop a final Equity Baseline report to be presented to Metro Council and other regional stakeholders. Metro's COO will present the final Equity Baseline to Metro Council with full transmittal of all Steering and Advisory Committee recommendations.

Deliverables:

- ✓ An agency definition of "equity" as it relates to Metro's implementation efforts in support of the region's desired outcomes
- ✓ A series of community supported equity indicators that can inform decision-making at Metro
- ✓ An organizing framework that will define how to evaluate progress in advancing equity across the region and across issues over time

**3.1.2. Capacity Building: Internal and external knowledge sharing**

For Metro’s Equity Strategy program to succeed, the agency must increase internal awareness and sensitivity to equity issues, as well as increase external awareness of Metro’s current roles and responsibilities. These different capacity-building needs should be designed and implemented using coordinated and collaborative approaches that bridge the needs of both internal and external stakeholders. Work plan elements must be developed collaboratively and afford relationship building opportunities. Throughout the process, the capacity-building aspects of the work plan should provide an opportunity to improve our collective skills around advancing equity while also investing in relationship building.

Activities:

1. **Combined Equity & Diversity Leadership Training:** To establish an active dialogue regarding equity at Metro, leadership, management and staff need training to improve cultural awareness around equity issues. To ensure that the Equity Strategy program supports and is coordinated with the agency’s existing Diversity Program, a combined Equity and Diversity training series will be developed and rolled out to all staff in stages, starting with Metro leadership.

Program staff will use Technical Assistance Contracts to help design and implement various aspects of the joint equity and diversity training series. Given the diversity of skills needed to develop and implement Metro’s Equity and Diversity training series, some contracts will focus on developing training modules for more of a classroom setting, while others will focus on engaging community partners to design and implement experiential opportunities.

The training will provide:

- An understanding of the history and theory behind the equity and diversity fields;
  - The ways in which diversity and equity practices support one another;
  - The differences between diversity, equity, equality, environmental justice and other related fields;
  - Knowledge around the structural interplay of policies and institutions that leads to the perpetuation of inequities;
  - Experiential opportunities to better understand the structural nature of inequities across the region.
2. **Partner capacity building:** For stakeholders to actively engage as partners in this process, it is critical to ensure that partners have the knowledge and relationships to examine and shape Metro’s role – as an agency – in advancing equity across the region’s desired outcomes.

Metro staff will use Technical Assistance Contracts to develop culturally responsive materials and engagement methods to build partners’ understanding of Metro’s roles and responsibilities. This effort will take considerable time to implement and it is not anticipated that this aspect of the scope of work will be completed within 18 months. However, this effort can be initiated during step 1, with the intent of continuing to develop relevant ways of engaging around Metro’s roles and responsibilities with diverse audiences. Given the diversity of stakeholders to this process, a one-size-fits-all approach to partner capacity-building will not suffice; some partners have voiced an interest in receiving a “Metro 101” training, while other partners want to work more collaboratively to identify how to build capacity around specific areas or topics. Given the time and resources needed to support the diversity of stakeholder needs, the initial

focus will be on developing culturally appropriate methods of communicating Metro’s current roles and responsibilities and identifying shorter-term collaborative efforts to build stakeholder capacity. While these efforts may be project-based, the intent is to identify ongoing and more centralized engagement methods to be implemented through Metro’s Equity Action Plan.

While not a formal work plan element, equity practitioners and experts will also strengthen their knowledge base around Metro through the formal engagement opportunities between the Steering and Advisory Committees and through the technical assistance contracts that will be employed for the development of the equity baseline and capacity building.

**Deliverables:**

- ✓ Joint Diversity and Equity Leadership Training Program
- ✓ Capacity- and knowledge-building materials and training opportunities for Metro partners, including the initial development of culturally responsive engagement approaches with community partners.

**3.2. Program timeline and milestones**

See timeline, including milestones and deliverables in Appendix A.

**3.3. Resource plan**

The 18-month timeline will require dedicated in-house support and consultants. The use of in-house staff will provide continuity and ensure that Metro has a core team of staff to support the program. In general, the program will be supported through the prioritization and allocation of existing staff resources and through the use of Technical Assistance Contracts with equity and diversity practitioners and experts. The following table provides an estimate of the Technical Assistance Contract resources available to support the implementation of the Step 1 work plan. The table below does not reflect the total program budget, including personal services (Metro staff), overhead or other funds allocated to support work plan implementation (e.g. event expenses, staff development, sponsorships). Funding availability for contracted services in FY 2013-14 will be included in the final adopted Metro budget (June 2013) and are not known at this time.

<b>Contracted Services</b>	<b>12 months (adopted) FY 2013-14 TOTAL</b>	<b>6 months (proposed) FY 2013-14 TOTAL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicator design;</li> <li>• Baseline analysis and review;</li> <li>• Baseline roll-out and engagement;</li> <li>• Diversity &amp; Equity leadership training series;</li> <li>• Partner capacity-building</li> </ul>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>TBD</b>

**Appendix A: Timeline (attached)**

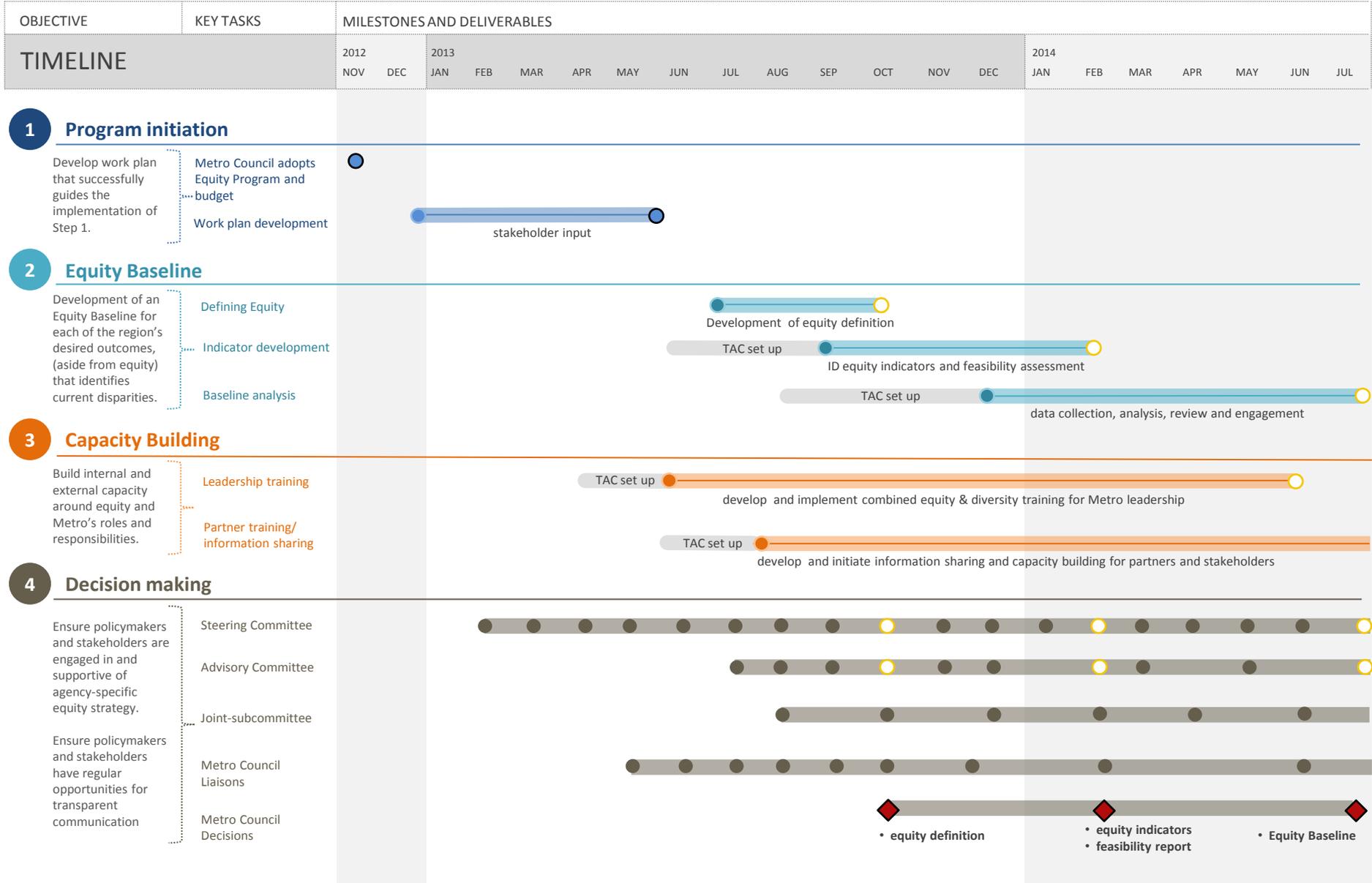
# Equity Strategy Program

## STEP 1 Work plan

May 7, 2013

Legend

- TAC** Technical Assistance Contracts
- Milestone
- ◆ Deliverable



- ◆ equity definition
- ◆ equity indicators
- ◆ feasibility report
- ◆ Equity Baseline