



OREGON ZOO EQUITY ACTION PLAN 2018-2022 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Advancing racial equity, diversity and inclusion at the Oregon Zoo

The Oregon Zoo helps make greater Portland a great place to call home. A community treasure since 1888, Oregon Zoo provides exceptional experiences to more than a million visitors a year to inspire them to create a better future for wildlife. From education programs to on-the-ground conservation efforts, the zoo is working to save species in the Pacific Northwest and worldwide. Through its various roles, the Oregon Zoo also seeks to eliminate barriers and generate community benefits that advance racial equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Oregon Zoo has work to do when it comes to advancing racial equity and this is a pivotal time to focus on the work. From demographic changes in the region to evolving views of zoos to increasing pressures on wildlife and their habitats, ensuring our zoo reflects our community is more important than ever.

The Oregon Zoo recognizes that due to the long history of exclusionary and discriminatory policies, our communities of color face the greatest barriers to thriving in the Portland metro region. The zoo is committed to creating conditions related to its policies, programs and services that allow for everyone to flourish. Advancing racial equity is the most effective strategy to achieve those conditions.

The Equity Action Plan is a product of the Oregon Zoo's commitment to creating these conditions. It provides strategies to guide the Oregon Zoo in actions necessary to ensure racial equity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work over the next five years.

The Oregon Zoo recognizes racial equity as the backbone of a prosperous and healthy region

Metro acknowledges that people of color across the region experience the most disparate outcomes in nearly every category of social well-being including housing, transportation, access to nature, education and health. Metro has identified racial equity as its strategic direction to eliminate the disparities that people of color experience (regardless of race or background) especially in areas related to Metro's policies, programs, services and destinations. Focusing on racial equity will result in all people in the region having the opportunity to thrive in all aspects of social well-being.

The Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion directs all Metro departments to develop equity action plans to achieve Metro's five strategic goals through the department's programs, services,

projects and plans. The Oregon Zoo's Equity Action Plan illustrates the department's commitment to Metro's racial equity strategy by creating strategies to reduce disparities in all aspects of the zoo's work.



Metro's strategic goals to achieve an equitable and prosperous region

The Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion identifies five long-term goals to direct Metro in creating specific objectives, actions and measures of evaluation and accountability as the agency works to help greater Portland reach an equitable and prosperous future.

Goal A

Metro convenes and supports regional partners to advance racial equity.

Goal B

Metro meaningfully engages communities of color.

Goal C

Metro hires, trains and promotes a racially diverse workforce.

Goal D

Metro creates safe and welcoming services, programs and destinations.

Goal E

Metro's resource allocation advances racial equity.

The Oregon Zoo's vision to advance Metro's goals

The Oregon Zoo's Equity Action Plan illustrates the department's commitment to advancing Metro's racial equity strategy by creating strategies to reduce disparities in all aspects of the zoo's work. Over the course of two years, Oregon Zoo engaged employees and held discussions with community partners to gather feedback. This feedback informed action items, which were grouped into seven strategies that will guide the zoo's work over the the next five years.

Seven strategies to advance racial equity, diversity and inclusion at the Oregon Zoo

1. Incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion into the zoo's operations on a long-term, sustainable basis.
2. Meaningfully engage and educate employees on diversity, racial equity and inclusion.
3. Meaningfully engage communities of color and partner with community-based organizations to advance racial equity.
4. Provide access to the zoo, its services and programs equitably with a priority on communities of color and ensure zoo experiences are welcoming and inclusive.
5. Identify resources, develop training and establish accountability in support of inclusive and equitable hiring practices zoo-wide.
6. Prioritize diversity and equity in contracting and procurement processes.
7. Utilize the zoo's role as a cultural institution, conservation organization and zoo and aquarium leader to advance racial equity.

Advancing racial equity, diversity and inclusion is not a new approach for the Oregon Zoo

The zoo has undertaken several initiatives over the last several years to engage diverse audiences and increase accessibility for zoo programs. This work has been important to laying the foundation for the Plan, and will continue as it is implemented.

Highlights include:

- **Community partnerships**

Staff at the zoo have built long-term relationships with community organizations that serve low-income youth and youth of color, offering the opportunity to distribute tickets and provide educational programming to the communities these organizations serve. More than 20,000 tickets were distributed in 2017, and the zoo has provided talks, tours and other programming to many of these community groups on an as-requested basis.

- **Programs for youth of color and low-income youth**

Since their inception in 2000 Zoo Animal Presenters (ZAP) and Urban Nature Overnights (UNO) have reached thousands of children in the region. ZAP educational presentations reach 8,000-10,000 children from low-income communities annually, and 6,600 youth have participated UNO. 215 ZAP teens have completed the program since it began.

“We are here to educate, inspire and empower people to create a better future for wildlife. To do this, it’s imperative our services and programs are welcoming and accessible. This plan offers us the opportunity to provide our community with a sense of belonging, ownership and inclusion when they visit and participate in our programs.”

– Don Moore,
Oregon Zoo Director





Oregon Zoo is uniquely positioned to advance racial equity in the region

Opportunities include:

- Establishing a diverse workforce that reflects our community throughout all levels of the organization, strengthening our work and ensuring our relevance
- Providing services and programs informed by consistent, thoughtful engagement with communities of color
- Growing into a zoo that reflects diversity, equity and inclusion as top priorities, integrating diversity, equity and inclusion efforts into all aspects of its mission
- Expanding the zoo's reach into the community through more consistent allocation of funds to contractors with high workforce diversity

To learn more about the Oregon Zoo's equity action plan visit:

oregonmetro.gov/equity



Arts and events
Garbage and recycling
Land and transportation
Oregon Zoo
Parks and nature

oregonmetro.gov

Hello, we're Metro.

Metro brings people together to shape the future of greater Portland and provides places, services and tools that work best at a regional scale. Led by an elected council, this unique government gives Oregonians a voice in their community.

Parks and nature

Metro protects clean water, restores fish and wildlife habitat, and connects people to nature across 17,000 acres of parks, trails and natural areas – and the Oregon Zoo.

Land and transportation

Metro plans for new homes, jobs, transportation options and access to local businesses and parks.

Garbage and recycling

Metro manages the garbage and recycling system and is a resource for information about safe disposal and ways to reduce waste.

Arts and events

Metro runs the Oregon Convention Center, Portland Expo Center and Portland's Centers for the Arts.

Zoo equity action plan contact

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