



# Memo

Date: January 9th, 2020  
To: Committee on Racial Equity (CORE) and Metro Council  
From: Raahi Reddy, DEI Program Manager  
Subject: Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – Progress report

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## General overview

Adopted in June 2016, the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is a major building block in Metro's goal to advance equity in the Portland metro region. The plan set forth a clear agency-wide direction while also outlining actions to advance the work forward over its five year horizon. The 77 actions outlined in the plan are foundational and will require numerous additional actions in order to reach the plan's objectives and goals.

Metro has completed year three of the Strategic Plan implementation. This report details the status of actions that were slated to be completed in the first two years of implementation but were not yet completed at the time of last year's report. In addition this report details actions that were slated to be completed in years three through five of implementation. Actions that were completed in previous years are not included in this report. In total, 63 actions expected to begin fiscal year 2018- 2019 are outlined here. In previous years 14 actions of the Plan's 77 were completed. In the past year an additional three were completed, and work towards dozens more were started or continued. Only four actions outlined in the plan remain not started.

## Highlights

Metro's Committee on Racial Equity, along with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team, have selected the following highlights among the multitude of work done towards advancing DEI at Metro in the last year:

- Metro has committed to requiring DEI trainings for incoming and current managers.
- Metro deepened its commitment to the region's Indigenous communities by hiring its first Indigenous Community Liaison, within Parks & Nature, and a Tribal Relations Specialist in Government Relations.
- Departments across Metro continue to expand, deepen and evolve their work with Community Based Organizations who serve communities of color.
- Metro saw a significant expansion of our DEI training capacity, with 24 DEI trainings attended by 430 Metro staff.
- The DEI team hosted cultural awareness months that spotlighted the stories of women, the LGBTQ+ community, indigenous communities and communities of color.
- Metro Council formally adopted the Construction Career Pathways Framework to help the region's construction industry recruit, train, and retain women and people of color.
- Communications has worked to integrate trauma-informed approaches into their work.
- Property Environmental Services and Parks & Nature created new equity-centered committees to strengthen racial equity outcomes across their department's work.
- Parks and Nature has committed to piloting a participatory grant making process for the Parks and Nature Bond.

The detailed status of each action item is shared in the following section of this memo.

cc: Andrew Scott, Chief Operating Officer  
Heidi Rahn, Deputy Chief Operating Officer

**Status of actions**

*Goal A – Metro convenes and supports regional partners to advance racial equity*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
In partnership with the community, develop and pilot regional public engagement forums to connect Community -based organizations to resources, engagement opportunities, contracting opportunities and staff at Metro and other public agencies across the region.	In progress.	In the last year Metro has held a coordinated engagement event to connect CBOs to Metro project managers in order to support the development of the regional investment strategies. Similar efforts were completed during the Regional Transportation Plan update. Metro expects to conduct similar events as opportunities arise. Broader regional public engagement forums to connect CBOs to contracts and resources not been initiated.
Use existing committees and additional new opportunities to convene and work collaboratively with regional partners to advance equity related to public engagement, affordable housing, welcoming and inclusive parks and venues, safe transportation, equitable solid waste system and economic opportunity for communities of color through local government contracts and projects.	In progress.	This action item is in progress across a variety of areas. C2P2 has established a regional table to working towards multi-government construction careers implementation, which interfaced with Metro’s established advisory committees. Also Metro has created new committees to advance equity in Parks, Housing and Solid Waste.  Additional efforts to convene and work with regional partners include the technical assistance budget note, the weaving in of best practices for community engagement into IGAs with regional governments, and Parks and Nature’s collaborative efforts with regional partners related to the Parks and Nature Bond.
Convene regional partners to discuss solutions to increase the participation of local MWESB in government contracts.	In progress.	Informal collaboration on this topic has been initiated with The City of Portland, the Port of Portland and Multnomah County. The Planning and Development Housing team has set MWESB minimum requirements for housing bond projects. Finance is also learning best practices from the Construction Pathways project. Next steps include exploring ways to grow , Metro’s capacity internally to grow more COBID firm participation in small and large scale construction projects across the agency

cc: Andrew Scott, Chief Operating Officer  
Heidi Rahn, Deputy Chief Operating Officer

*Goal B – Metro meaningfully engages communities of color*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Create a system to better coordinate engagement with communities of color across Metro departments. This system should include the maintaining of a record of community-based organizations' involvement with Metro to support relationship continuity.	In progress.	A decision about whether or not to invest in another relationship management tool project has been presented to Support Services Directors. Project requires ongoing staff and license funding that currently is not available. Decision to fund or not must be considered in the context of overall agency needs over the next year.
Work with communities to co-create community-specific public engagement plans that work to develop long-term community relationships, as opposed to episodic engagement.	In progress.	This work is redirected to the Community Capacity Building budget note, Get Moving Partnerships and ongoing agency-wide partnerships with Momentum Alliance and Bridges graduates.
Metro departments set aside resources for contracting and partnering with CBOs or community groups for engagement. Results are included in quarterly management reports.	In progress.	This work is successful and growing, with CBO contracts for engagement happening in departments across the agency. Quarterly management reports are no longer required.
Identify and propose ways to improve youth engagement and youth involvement in Metro decision-making.	In progress.	Work is being done through the youth led equity cohort with Momentum Alliance to improve youth involved decision-making, the Oregon Zoo has targeted youth engagement opportunities, and CORE added its first youth member to the committee in 2019.
Identify and propose the creation of new opportunities within public engagement activities for emerging and established community leaders to work with decision makers to help drive plan, policy and program outcomes.	In progress.	Work is being done through the youth led equity cohort with Momentum Alliance, the Bridges graduates, CORE, project-specific partnerships like Get Moving, grant programs and more.
Develop and apply criteria to consistently partner and invest in existing community leadership programs that have greatest benefit to community.	In progress.	This work is being considered through the Community Capacity Building budget note work, the Get Moving work, and more.
Create mechanisms to involve the community in the implementation and evaluation of the Strategic Plan.	In progress.	The DEI Program will continue involving Metro's Committee on Racial Equity as we co-create a framework for evaluating progress towards the Strategic Plan's goals.
Utilize the racial equity analysis and decision support tool on four pilot projects representing each of Metro's four lines of business.	In progress.	The DEI program will be rolling out the Government Alliance for Racial Equity's racial equity toolkit in spring of 2020, and supporting widespread adoption through a train-the-trainer event in summer 2020.

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*Goal B – Metro meaningfully engages communities of color - Continued*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Develop equity performance measures to include in Metro's By the Numbers performance measurement program.	In progress.	Equity performance measures will be created during the Impact Evaluation project, which will restart in January 2020.
Provide training and support to Metro departments on the Racial Equity Analysis and Decision-Support Tool to most effectively meet specific departmental portfolio.	In progress.	The DEI program will be supporting widespread adoption of the Racial Equity Analysis and Decision-Support Tool through a train-the-trainer event in summer 2020 and subsequent trainings with Metro staff across departments.
DEI program creates, publishes and submits annual equity report to Council, for publication and broad distribution.	Completed.	The Equity Dashboard is live and DEI has established an annual equity report to Council.
With the direct support of the DEI program, expand the pilot for utilizing the racial equity analysis and decision support tool within each department.	In progress.	The DEI program will be rolling out the Government Alliance for Racial Equity's racial equity toolkit in spring of 2020, and supporting widespread adoption through a train-the-trainer event in summer 2020.
Identify barriers and propose solutions to increase participation of communities of color in Metro engagement opportunities. Such barriers may include: public meeting times, lack of food and childcare, and location of meetings.	In progress.	Many of the barriers described have been addressed when possible. The biggest improvement is agency-wide guidance on stipends for participation. Metro still needs to ensure line departments, DEI and Communications include budgets for these things.
Identify and propose the creation of new opportunities within public engagement activities for decision-makers to receive direct community input and to meaningfully consider and discuss what they've heard.	In progress.	Metro continues to evolve and increase opportunities to engage with Metro decision makers through forums, engagement activities, committees, granting and more. Additional opportunities have been implemented through the transportation task force, coalitions built for the regional investment measures, and the Local Investment Teams (LITs) as well as community partnership grants for the upcoming transportation measure.

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*Goal B – Metro meaningfully engages communities of color – Continued*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Create financially supported volunteer seats on advisory boards and committees for youth of color, community members, and community-based organization representatives.	In progress.	Three advisory committees, including the CORE, the Regional Waste Advisory Committee, and the Parks and Nature Equity Advisory Committee provide stipends for volunteer seats for community members and community-based organization representatives.
Conduct user testing to inform improvements to the accessibility and usability of digital tools for communities of color to get involved. Invest in outreach and promotion strategies to raise awareness of individual opportunities and online tools.	In progress.	Metro video, brochures, recruitment, Ask Metro and other promotional materials used more robust input from communities of color. The web upgrade work will include user testing. Our Big Back Yard and other parks content is in the process of being evaluated with an emphasis on younger people of color. PES content too was tested with a focus on communities of color. Comms is working to develop a more robust support system for translation and trans-creation. A Spanish trans-creation contract is in place.
Create a framework to track and measure equity actions and investments across the agency.	In progress.	The DEI team will continue to track and measure through the Impact Evaluation process, the Regional Barometer project and with Metro's Committee on Racial Equity. Expected evaluation measures developed by Fall of 2020 -which will set standard metrics to track racial equity outcomes across Metro's work.

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*Goal C – Metro hires, trains and promotes a racially diverse workforce*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Create a pilot employee resource group for staff of color. Explore possibility to expand this format to other employee communities.	Completed.	The People of Color and the LGTBQ+ ERGs began in 2018 and continues to meet monthly.
Staff and management from every department are actively involved in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and DAP through a clear and representative process.	In progress.	Staff and management primarily advance the Strategic Plan by implementing their department-level DEI plans. The Zoo, P&D, P&N, and PES completed their plans in 2018. OCC, Expo and P5 have begun work on their own plans, and Communications, IS, HR, FRS and the Research Center are slated to start their planning process in 2020.
Create opportunities for staff across the entire organizational structure to discuss how to improve the organizational equity structures at Metro.	In progress.	Metro's two employee resource groups provide spaces for staff from across the agency to discuss ways to improve organizational equity. The DEI team is also exploring the creation of an agency-wide DEI steering committee in 2020.
Adopt policy that Metro management positions must attend required DEI related trainings.	In progress.	Metro plans to establish mandatory DEI trainings for incoming and established managers in 2020.
Develop an internal and external communication strategy to convey Metro's leadership commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.	In progress.	Metro has developed an internal Communications plan, has hired additional communications capacity to support DEI efforts, and will begin work on an external plan in 2020.
Diversify hiring committees by department including considering gender, age and cultural group. Include community members where appropriate.	In progress.	HR recently hired a new recruitment manager who will be responsible for drafting an SOP on Metro's overall recruitment practices. HR will also report on department demographic data with respect to race and compare that data with the available workforce in our market. Census data is currently being collected and draft metrics reports are being developed. These efforts will be completed by the summer of 2020.
Department leadership work with DEI program staff to determine how equity, diversity and inclusion can be addressed as part of staff's work duties.	In progress.	Informal meetings with department leadership around this issue are already occurring. HR and DEI are planning to assemble a workgroup to meet quarterly to discuss formalizing this process and assessing options to achieve this goal.

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*Goal C – Metro hires, trains and promotes a racially diverse workforce – continued*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Provide support and training for hiring managers to assess job requirements, create accessible job announcements and understand the value of diverse hiring.	In progress.	The HR recruitment team will be conducting a recruitment road show training hiring managers on recruitment best practices, which incorporate a DEI lens.
Review and adjust recruitment processes and the criteria for job descriptions using accessible language so that more value is placed on applicant’s skills and abilities beyond the purely technical.	In progress.	Starting in March of 2020, with each new recruitment, recruiters will work with classification staff to assess job description and job postings to ensure they are accessible and looking at overall skills and abilities. DEI and HR have also developed standard job application questions to highlight an applicant’s relevant lived experience, volunteer work and other non-professional experiences.
Identify and propose ways to connect existing community leadership programs with career opportunities as Metro.	In progress.	The agency-wide partnership program resulted in a number of youth of color and others getting employment at Metro. The work with Bridges graduates on recruitment will build on that success. Partnership projects (Get Moving, Parks, PES, etc. also are increasing the number of diverse applicants.
Reassess Metro values to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion are equally recognized as guiding principles.	In progress.	Communications has led an update of Metro's mission, vision and values that integrates DEI values. They have begun rolling out this update which will continue through 2020.
Incorporate equity discussions into all Metro advisory committees to ensure that these bodies uphold the same commitment to equity.	In progress	Metro piloted DEI trainings for our advisory committees and are setting up additional work and developing a strategy for sustained engagement and training.
Identify and propose new opportunities for staff across Metro to develop and deepen relationships in formal and informal settings.	In progress.	Metro Employee Engagement Program (MEEP) is providing opportunities for staff to collaborate (For example- all-staff, reuse fairs)
Identify and propose new ways to increase accessibility of DEI trainings for venue staff and temporary/seasonal/part-time/graveyard staff.	In progress.	Many departments have collaborated with DEI training to provide specific trainings for their team’s needs.
Identify and propose a variety of new learning methods and trainings to reach all regular status staff.	In progress.	Getting new online learning management system in Spring/Summer 2020. DEI training has discussed implementing more online training offerings among the suite of classroom offerings.

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*Goal C – Metro hires, trains and promotes a racially diverse workforce – continued*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Create agency-wide policies regarding intern diversity and compensation.	In progress.	Work has been done to include compensation guidelines in Metro’s internship policy, though the pay equity study has put this work on pause.
Further the job market preparation of interns by providing skill building opportunities	In progress.	Work is being done with hiring managers at intake meetings to make sure they are providing good learning opportunities, not just busy work.
Develop a succession plan for all levels in the organization.	Not started.	This will be incorporated into HR’s broader retention planning efforts in 2020.
Expand hiring interview format option for increased cultural sensitivity	In progress.	HR recently hired a new recruitment manager who has begun drafting a standard operating procedure (SOP) on Metro's overall recruitment practices. The SOP will be done by the summer of 2020.
Identify and propose new opportunities for potential applicants to learn more about job positions.	In progress.	HR recently hired a new recruitment manager who has begun drafting an SOP on Metro's overall recruitment practices. This will be done by the summer of 2020.
Create a pilot professional mentorship program to cultivate front-line staff of color for leadership positions.	Not started.	The POC Employee Resource Group has identified this item as an important need for staff of color. DEI will continue to explore the establishment of this program with HR.
Identify and propose ways to increase pathways for Metro staff to gain skills for career advancement.	In progress.	HR Training is implementing a new Learning Management System, rolling out a new Supervisor Boot Camp Program, and is looking to expand overall learning and development opportunities.
Communicate job announcements using culturally specific languages, channels and organizations.	In progress.	HR recently hired a new recruitment manager who has begun drafting an SOP on Metro's overall recruitment practices. This will be done by the summer of 2020.
Determine diversity, equity and inclusion criteria so that they can be clearly incorporated as part of the performance management review (PACe) for all staff.	Not started.	Some departments and venues have begun this work, but there is still a need to establish standard practice across the agency. HR will update the PACe program in the next year with the goal of more strongly integrating equity into the process. HR will be provide guidance to managers on how to better integrate equity considerations into their ongoing PACe goals.
Partner with and invest in local communities of color and CBOs to attract more diverse applicant pools.	In progress.	HR recently hired a new recruitment manager who has begun drafting an SOP on Metro's overall recruitment practices. This will be done by the summer of 2020.
Create a plan to address space limitations for interns	In progress.	MRC Campus Operations has been undertaking a MRC Space Planning Project to accommodate the growth in Metro staff. The planned MRC layout outlined in this project will include additional workstations for temporary employees and interns.

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*Goal D – Metro creates safe and welcoming services, programs and destinations*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
With the direct support of the DEI program, expand the pilot for developing a specific plan of action to advance equity within the programs, services, plans, and policies of each department within 18 months.	In progress.	Racial equity planning is underway with Communications, EXPO, the Oregon Convention Center and Portland 5.
Communicate program and service announcements using culturally specific language and channels (e.g. tribal newspapers and Russian radio stations)	In progress.	It is not standard practice to translate formal notices into multiple languages, however, it is now standard to include an offer for translation in multiple languages with every formal notice. Outreach opportunities targeted to specific communities are always translated accordingly. Specific departments use culturally specific language and channels on a project specific basis. For example, the Ask Metro program has transcended culturally specific programming for Latinx, Russian and African American communities and communicated through culturally specific channels.
Use newly standardized demographic questions across the agency and establish methods for disaggregating results for agency-wide public engagement efforts.	In progress.	Standardized demographic questions were established in summer of 2019 and rollout will continue into 2020.
Identify and propose ways to increase community cultural events held at all Metro properties.	Not started.	Will be incorporated into the community engagement discussions for racial equity planning for OCC, Expo, and P5
Identify and propose new opportunities for communities of color to learn about Metro programs and services.	In progress.	Work is happening at the department level. For example, Property Environmental Services has an ongoing partnership with North by Northeast and workforce development partners to promote programs and services to communities of color.
Recognize the connection of Metro destinations to specific communities of color and visibly acknowledge how these connections are foundational to guiding Metro’s work.	In progress.	In 2019 Parks and Nature hired an Indigenous Community Liaison aiming to strengthen our recognition and acknowledgement of these connections; the DEI team and Communications is also working on standard territory acknowledgements for Metro public meetings and spaces; the Expo Center continues to honor the history of its site in relation to the Vanport Flood and Japanese Internment.
Reassess the guidelines for availability and usage of Metro properties for community-based organizations, and create awareness of those guidelines among communities of color.	In progress.	Metro currently provides space in the Metro Regional Center for community-based organizations, though a staff sponsor is required. OCC, Expo and P5 will be exploring this issue as part of their racial equity planning process.

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*Goal E – Metro’s resource allocation advances racial equity*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Require project managers to attend procurement training on developing RFPs.	In progress.	Finance and the Procurement Services division offer trainings throughout the year about increasing COBID (Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity) certified business participation. Following an equity project with NAMC, FRS is working on recommendations of required trainings for supervisors about COBID utilization.
Develop and implement agency-wide equity criteria for grants, investments and sponsorships to increase impact and investment consistency.	In progress.	Continuing to assess the usage of the Racial Equity Assessment Tool through GARE.
Research and choose method to identify the contracting needs for firms in the region. These preparations include the identification of financial resources and coordination with jurisdictional partners, Metro’s attorney and procurement office.	In progress.	Collaboration with NAMC Oregon is complete and implementing with feedback from the report. This focused on construction only. Donaldson Enterprises completed an initial needs assessment based on COBID firm and Metro project manager feedback about working on contract with Metro. There are currently no staff resources to continue working on this goal.
If applicable, establish a process that requires an explanation as to why a COBID contractor was not utilized.	In progress.	Procurement is exploring options in regard to this work. Each contract is currently held by each individual department. More exploration is needed about how to resolve this issue. Explanation of choice is not enough to increase utilization.
Increase Metro staff participation in professional networking opportunities for communities of color.	In progress.	The DEI team currently communicates professional networking opportunities to staff of color through the POC ERG. The team will set up a dedicated webpage to advertise these opportunities in 2020.
Involve the COBID contractors in the development of RFPs and grants to increase accessibility, as long as they do not bid.	In progress.	Several COBID firms are interested in this opportunity. Need to establish compensation standard for participation. Next step is to convene a larger group of firms to educate about the opportunity. Internal education at Metro about working with these firms during proposal evaluation.

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*Goal E – Metro’s resource allocation advances racial equity – continued*

<b>Action title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>More information</b>
Develop and implement a budget tool to assist in making resource allocation decisions, including discretionary budget allocation, investments, contracts, grants and sponsorships using a racial equity lens.	In progress.	Parks and Nature is piloting a participatory grant making model in a portion of their bond-funded projects.
Create an equity tool to legally determine waivers for contract requirements, such as insurance.	Completed.	Waivers are in place as an option. Determinations are made through Metro's Risk Manager within the requirements of our Insurance Policy. Finance is using this option for COBID firms.
Increase intentional outreach to communities and community-based organizations regarding contracting opportunities, working through business partners.	In progress.	Significantly expanded outreach to business community, community partners, and individual businesses. Also, implementing recommendation from NAMC Oregon report to have project managers also attend outreach events.
Conduct user testing to improve access to and awareness of digital tools to communicate all financial opportunities at Metro to communities of color.	In progress.	We currently produce reports on who we are currently reaching. Remaining challenges include finding best ways to reach firms that are owned by People of Color but are not registered within COBID system. Currently are utilizing tool called Procurement Search. Next steps are to continue to improve user access and awareness.

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