

City of Sacramento

Legislation Text

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Title:

Citywide Racial Equity Initiative: Draft Council Resolution and Community Engagement

File ID: 2021-00022

Location: Citywide

Recommendation:

1) Consider and provide direction on a draft resolution which: a) acknowledges historic and recent systemic harms and racism; b) affirms a sustained commitment to racial equity citywide; and c) focuses on the City's role in developing credibility, trust, and accountability with communities of color; and 2) provide direction to the City Manager on outreach and resources to create a community driven and owned approach to build proactive and meaningful community partnerships in developing this initiative.

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Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-Draft Racial Equity Resolution

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: This year, the City Council will lead a series of actions to begin to address longstanding racial inequities and move toward becoming an anti-racist city -in its internal and external structure, policies, and actions.

Based on events, public conversations, and a need for the City and its leaders to acknowledge and address historic and systemic racism and respond to the impacts of such longstanding inequities on our local community, members of the Law and Legislation Committee requested an update from staff on the status of current efforts to advance racial equity in the City of Sacramento (City). The City

Council in December 2020 unanimously agreed to develop and implement an approach to address racial equity citywide, with quarterly actions moving forward. This report addresses two of these components:

- A draft resolution for Council and community discussion that outlines the following:
 - Acknowledge historic and systemic harms and racism;
 - Affirm a sustained commitment to a citywide racial equity initiative; and
 - Commitment to train staff and build capacity to address systemic racism and advance racial equity.
- A community driven and owned approach to develop credibility, trust, and accountability with communities of color that results in proactive and purposeful community partnerships.

Draft Resolution for Council and Community Discussion (Attachment 2)

As a result of the Council's affirmation and discussion in December 2020, the attached draft resolution is being presented for ongoing discussion and direction. This draft resolution establishes a racial equity mandate that prioritizes and calls for adoption of a racial equity framework in Council work as a decision-making support tool and analysis; and centers the community in shared and owned decision making and all elements of the development of the racial equity framework.

The draft resolution recognizes historic and recent systemic harms and racism such as, but not limited to:

- Historic systems of racism and slavery in United States of America.
- Discriminatory laws like the enslavement, displacement, and discrimination of indigenous people.
- Anti-Chinese xenophobia that led to creation of The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.
- Racially based policy intended to over-police and over-criminalize Black and Latino communities resulting in the overpopulation of Black and Brown people in the prison population such as the government led initiative known as the War on Drugs.
- Discriminatory policies and practices such as redlining that led to creation of and underinvestment in communities of color.
- Other events that caused racial and economic disparities felt decades later in our local communities, as well as more recent events and activities which continues to impact our residents and businesses.

The draft resolution also affirms a sustained commitment to racial equity citywide such as, but not limited to:

- Progress as an equity and justice-oriented organization, with the Mayor, Councilmembers, and staff leadership continuing to determine specific activities to further promote diversity, racial

- equity, and to ensure anti-racism principles across the City in partnership with community.
- Promote and consider equity across policies and decisions approved by the City Council, and enhance educational efforts aimed at understanding, addressing and dismantling racism and how it impacts the delivery of human and social services, economic development, and public safety, among other areas.
- Support local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism and continue to advocate at all levels of governance for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color.
- Outline a community driven and owned approach to develop credibility, trust, and accountability with communities of color that result in proactive and purposeful community partnerships.
- Developing and adopting a shared (with community) definition of racial equity and vision for the work.
- Identifying and committing to the resources and infrastructure needed to support this goal.
- Establish benchmarks and outcomes to measure success and impact of actions and strategies intended to advance racial equity.

Even prior to our current shelter-in-place status, the City has had limited capacity to conduct deep and meaningful community engagement. However, throughout the City, conversations with the community are even more important, especially as we look to identify and address equitable and systemic changes in the City's decision-making, policies, practices, and programs.

The Council's goal for racial equity, their vision for a racially equitable city, cannot be done without community involvement - residents, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), and businesses must be part of the effort. Strategic communications must be considered an activity in service of community and partnership engagement for racial equity. To successfully develop and implement our city's racial equity framework, this work must be done with sufficient resources and infrastructure to properly engage community and provide ways for the City to establish credibility, trust, and accountability in this effort and support our racial equity community leaders, in particular Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, reflecting what is being voiced in the broader community, and who have already been doing this type of racial equity and racial justice work in our City. Such a communications strategy should strive to treat all residents equitably and be intentionally inclusive of BIPOC communities of color who experience the consequences of racial inequity on a daily basis.

The following are recommended essential components of Council's planning, outcomes, actions, and benchmarks of the City's work, co-created and owned with the community:

- Draft Racial Equity Resolution and/or ordinance.
- Develop a purpose statement that commits to understanding how our past efforts to address

racism via strategies centered in diversity, inclusion, and more recently, equity (sans the articulation of race) may be maintaining inequities.

- Develop a Racial Equity Vision Statement to guide the process, the work, and decisions to serve as a check if work strays off course.
- Develop and identify components of a Racial Equity Action Work Plan to include a purpose statement, racial equity vision, racial equity history, authentic partnerships with communities of color, racial equity tool for policy and budget decisions, internal infrastructure to drive racial equity, technical assistance support, capacity building and training needs, and data and results driven outcomes.
- A detailed proposal of community engagement and collaboration with communities of color that is a process co-developed in partnership with key organizations, thought leaders, and cross sector leadership, while leveraging existing networks internal and external to Council.
- Develop and identify principles and best practices to operationalize sustained and supported community engagement that includes shared space and shared power.
- Developing and adopting a shared definition of racial equity and vision for the work.
- Establish in shared space and power with communities of color benchmarks and outcomes to measure success and impact.

Policy Considerations: The draft resolution provides guiding principles to future initiatives. Recommendations on, and ultimate approval of, a resolution will establish a mechanism to assist the City to establish benchmarks for transparency and accountability around racial equity as well as lead to metrics for measuring progress and resources required to do this work in a meaningful way.

This initiative has led to many conversations about the need for intentional and sustained council commitment to work with the community to develop a shared understanding of definitions and goals of what race equity means to our City. These engagement efforts build trust and relationships that will not only support this initiative, but many others currently being developed around our City's policies, processes, and financial decisions.

Economic Impacts: Unknown.

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): This action is not subject to CEQA because it is an administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment, and it relates to government fiscal activities that do not involve any commitment to any specific project that may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines § 15378(a), (b)(2), (b)(4) and (b)(5)).

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: This item was brought forward to the Law and Legislation Committee on September 15, 2020 and November 17, 2020 and to the City Council on December 8, 2020.

Rationale for Recommendation: Discussion and action on this item can solidify a long-term commitment by Council to center racial equity and the racial equity analysis process, including normalizing and centering racial equity and related definitions, the application of the core concepts and racial equity tool. This approach is co-developed alongside community members to strengthen and in some cases could strengthen and re-establish the City's relationship with racial equity leaders and the community.

These community discussions and other engagement opportunities should co-create a framework for discussion, input and recommendations alongside around options for future efforts to support structural change around race and equity.

Financial Considerations: As presented in December, the City has initiated several efforts to address inequities in our policies, programs, and resource allocation. Although the City is addressing racial equity economic development investments, policies related to affordable housing, equity in the arts, and many other conversations, there is a need for resources to support an overarching effort to better facilitate these conversations and partnerships with community. While some of these efforts are supported through existing resources, the larger community engagement portion of this initiative is unfunded. Funding may need to be identified to provide the resources necessary to support this initiative.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

Background: The Law and Legislation Committee members and staff worked to develop a possible framework to address racial equity and inequitable policies, practices, and decisions. The following information and recommendations were discussed at the December 8, 2020 Council meeting for consideration and implementation in 2021:

1. Direction to bring back a draft Council resolution in January 2021 which:
 - a. Acknowledges historic and recent systemic harms and racism; and
 - b. Affirms a sustained commitment to a citywide racial equity initiative.
2. Initial draft outline for Council development of Citywide Racial Equity Initiative in 2021:
 - a. Develop and adopt a shared definition of racial equity and vision with the community for the work.
 - b. Consider recommended outcomes, actions, and benchmarks for establishing a citywide

racial equity initiative and identify the resources needed to support this goal such as data and staff.

- c. Outline a community driven and owned approach to build proactive and meaningful community partnerships, leveraging existing efforts and identifying best practices both internally and externally.
- d. Develop a data-driven Racial Equity Action Plan which is shared in space and power community voice and implementable actions to include: purpose statement, racial equity vision, racial equity history, authentic partnerships with Communities of Color, racial equity tool for policy and budget decisions, internal infrastructure to drive racial equity, technical assistance support, capacity building and training needs, and desired outcomes that are data and results driven,
- e. Establish in shared space and power with communities of color, data-driven benchmarks and outcomes to measure success and impact including the development of a Racial Equity Impact Assessment.

3. Update on current City equity initiatives.

Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Initiative Timeline

While the outcomes and deliverables for the Citywide Racial Equity Initiative have not been determined, we recommend that the City take meaningful steps with a proposed timeline for moving forward. A suggested action benchmark and timeline could be structured as follows:

1st Quarter 2021

- January:
 - Affirm Council commitment to creating a citywide racial equity initiative.
 - Affirm Council commitment to train staff and build capacity to address systemic racism and advance racial equity.
 - Staff to identify resource needs to implement meaningful community discussions and long-lasting trust.
 - Bring forward draft resolution for initial input.
 - Initiate community discussions on draft resolution.
 - Begin efforts to establish City Council Racial Equity Committee/Workgroup that represents local racial equity leaders, who be collectively determined by communities of color to co-develop and identify the vision, goals, and solutions for racial justice and equity as well as develop a transparent process with clearly defined workplan, roles, responsibilities, and authority.
- February: Council identifies the pilot project and focus for Racial Equity in Council decision-making support tool.
- March: Racial equity training for City and community leadership.

2nd Quarter 2021

- April: Racial equity training debrief for City leadership.
- May: Kick off racial equity community engagement initiative with press conference and work with community to co-host listening sessions.
- Spring/Summer 2021:
 - Community listening sessions/conversations.
 - Release of baseline report describing disparities by race and ethnicity in education, employment, housing, health, criminal justice, and other measures of opportunity.
 - Council starts work on developing racial equity legislation.

3rd Quarter 2021

- June: Launch Community and Racial Equity Matters Survey and schedule deep listening sessions with community.
- July: Forum on racial equity and government decision-making.
- August: Council update on progress of Citywide Racial Equity Initiative
- Spring/Summer 2021
 - Community listening sessions/conversations.
 - Release of baseline report describing disparities by race and ethnicity in education, employment, housing, health, criminal justice, and other measures of opportunity.
 - Council continues work on developing racial equity legislation.

3rd - 4th Quarter 2021

- Public hearing/Council report on proposed Racial Equity Survey
- Identify resources, infrastructure, and adopt report for year 2 priorities.

Overall, the above recommended elements can be reported at different times throughout the year to Council so that work could continue to evolve without waiting for all items to come together in one report.

City's Current Internal Efforts Related to Racial Equity

Based on events which compelled public conversations and raised consciousness around systemic racism and racial injustice, members of the Law and Legislation Committee requested an update from staff on the status of current efforts to advance racial equity in the City of Sacramento.

In response to the Council's direction on the City's 2017 Annual Diversity Report, two strategic actions were implemented to respond to a specific need: the diversity of our City workforce. The City Manager's Office: 1) hired the City's first Diversity and Equity Manager in 2018; and 2) became a member and full participant in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) which resulted in the development and current implementation of the Citywide Race, Gender, Equity Action Plan (<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/CMO/RGEAP-20202025-Overview->

v710012020.pdf).

Working Definitions

Although used informally, our City Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) cohort found that developing working definitions improved outcomes. The internal working definitions below are foundational, aspirational, and operational, in establishing a shared meaning in capacity building that guide City efforts, resources, and investments that cultivate an environment of full representation, equity, and inclusion in all City workplaces. They are:

Diversity: refers to the variety of similarities and differences among people, including but not limited to gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socio-economic difference, appearance, language and accent, disability, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role and function, thinking style, and personality type.

Equity: regardless of one's identities, equity is when all people have fair, just treatment, access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential, while identifying and eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Inclusion: is a dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued, for who they are and for their contributions toward organizational and societal goals.

Racial Equity: The City of Sacramento affirms racial equity as a core value - where race does not affect life outcomes. We acknowledge historical racial inequities and are committed to transparent, deliberate, and actionable solutions that will remedy those inequities in serving all our diverse communities.

Workforce Equity: is when the workforce is inclusive of people of color and other marginalized or underrepresented groups at a rate representative of the {greater Sacramento} area at all levels of City employment; where institutional and structural barriers impacting employee attraction, selection, participation, and retention have been eliminated, enabling opportunity for employment success and career growth.

Implementation of the Citywide Race, Gender, Equity Action Plan (RGEAP) for our City Workforce
GARE is a national network of local and regional governments working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. GARE draws on the success of the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI), the first initiative of its kind in the nation to center racial equity across all

aspects of local government. As part of the GARE cohort, local jurisdiction members:

- 1) Build capacity to understand how local government plays a role in creating and maintaining racial inequity through laws and policies that impacted voting rights, housing rights, educational equity, and other sectors of rights, and
- 2) Learn and apply GARE's racial equity tool and Theory of Change designed to integrate explicit and deliberate consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets.
- 3) Receive ongoing workforce and community input while simultaneously planning, implementing, and learning.

In December 2018, the City of Sacramento initiated the six-month cohort focused on capacity building and training with GARE, and the twelve-member cohort with City staff working to eliminate institutional and structural barriers related to City hiring, training, leadership, and employment practices. This is being achieved by increasing the capacity of staff to address and advance racial equity, and by developing meaningful policies and procedures to ensure opportunities for a racially diverse City workforce reflective of Sacramento.

Prioritization of the City's racial equity on its workforce - as the first major component to racial equity - provides the following benefits and opportunities, among others:

- Diverse experiences to problem-solve and adapt to changes
- Fosters innovation
- Creates an inclusive work culture
- Encourages fairness and respect in the workplace
- Builds reputational capital - becoming an employer of choice
- Attracts and retains diverse talent
- Fulfills legal obligations and requirements
- Inspires community confidence
- Attracts contract opportunities
- Results in higher level of productivity
- Supports effective service delivery and communication

The anticipated outcome of the City's RGEAP is to have a workforce equity strategy for the City of Sacramento with the following intended results:

- The City's workforce reflects the City's demographics
- Improve relatable service delivery
- Provide accessible, inclusive, barrier free job/employment opportunities for all

The launch of the RGEAP to staff in March 2020 was delayed due to the high priority of relief efforts related to COVID and was rescheduled for Aug/Sept 2020. The fourteen strategies are specific recommendations to sustainably increase the diversity in City employment, increase equity in the opportunities presented to in its workforce, and convey to the community the availability of career opportunities. Some of these recommendations require systemic changes to current processes and historical practices as well as a competency-based awareness of opportunities to increase diversity.