

Information Item

Equity Advisory Committee



Meeting Date: February 21, 2023

Topic

2050 Regional Development Guide Proposed Equity Definition

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Divisions/Departments: Community Development and Metropolitan Transportation Services

Background

To assist with stewarding the integration of equity throughout the development of the Regional Development Guide, an internal Equity Task Force was created as part of the staff work on the Development Guide. One of the objectives of the Equity Task Force is to define equity for the Council. In June 2022, Equity Task Force leadership created a Shared Language subcommittee to lead the work associated with developing this definition within the Task Force. The draft definition will be presented to the Equity Advisory Committee for feedback, and the presentation is posted on the agenda. As part of presenting the draft equity definition, the Shared Language subcommittee wanted to share where it sees each condition for success illustrated in context of the definition language. The five conditions for success the subcommittee identified are: Leading with race, action-oriented, historic context, power sharing, and accountability.

Leading with Race

We propose leading with race because race is the largest predictor of inequities and injustices faced by people across all quality of life measures, health outcomes, and economic mobility. Leading with race is a recommended practice from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity and is also in alignment with the state's One Minnesota Council on Inclusion & Equity and other Council work. Intersectionality applies, and other marginalized groups, such as people with lower incomes or with disabilities, continue to matter and will also be uplifted through a focus on leading with race.

Highlighted with underlining in the proposed definition

Equity is a process of improving outcomes toward eliminating disparities between Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color and white people living in the Twin Cities region. Equity requires an intentional, ongoing, and consistent practice of adapting policies, systems, and structures to measurably improve outcomes as defined by those most affected by them. These outcomes must reflect a nuanced and shared understanding of positive change built through community-centered, culturally responsive engagement. Equity requires that historically excluded communities—especially Black communities, Indigenous communities, and communities of color—share power in all levels of decision-making throughout Council development processes. Lastly, equity often requires the redistribution of both power and resources to improve the lives of Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color as these groups continue to bear exceptionally large and persistent inequities across nearly all metrics of well-being and economic opportunity. Equity at the Metropolitan Council means that the benefits and burdens of Council systems, services, and spending are fair, shared, and just, and designed to repair both historic and ongoing injustice.

Action-oriented

What this means

Names opportunities through which equity can be achieved; signals commitment and investment

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Historic Context

What this means

Remedy and repair require an unvarnished assessment of past Council actions and taking responsibility for resulting harm/inequities. This language supports the “reparative” section of the Equity Framework.

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Power Sharing

What this means

Engaging groups most impacted is an important starting point. Equity that endures involves transforming decision-making processes in meaningful ways for the long-term. This language supports the “Community-centered” section of the Equity Framework.

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Accountability

What this means

Accountability should also include ongoing transparency. Accountability has been identified as a value by the Council as part of the 2050 Regional Development Guide discussion on Vision and Values.

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