

## Other Business

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of Oct. 14, 2015

**Subject:** Establishment of Metropolitan Council Equity Advisory Committee

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** By-Laws of the Metropolitan Council, Minn. Stat. § 473.127

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Michelle Fure, Public Involvement Manager, 651-602-1545; Lesley Kandaras, Senior Project Coordinator, 651-602-1609

**Division/Department:** Regional Administration

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council establish the Metropolitan Council Equity Advisory Committee.

### Background

On December 10, 2014, the Metropolitan Council received the recommendations of the Equity Working Group and directed the Regional Administrator to plan for implementation of the recommendations. (Business Item No. 2014-320.)

The creation of the Metropolitan Council Equity Advisory Committee is part of implementing the Equity Working Group's third recommendation:

Foster equity in the Council's work by serving as a convener on complex regional issues that impact equity and encourage the Council Chair to establish a committee or work group for at least the next two years to create more equitable outcomes for people who live and work in the Twin Cities region.

### Rationale

In August and September 2015, Metropolitan Council members and staff met with representatives from the Community Engagement Steering Committee, Blue Line Coalition, SWLRT Equity Commitments, and Equity in Place Coalition to develop this proposed committee charter. The content and intent behind the elements of the chart are explained below.

#### COMMITTEE PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Equity Advisory Committee is to advise the Metropolitan Council in its work to advance equity in the metropolitan region and meet the Council's equity commitments in *Thrive MSP 2040*.

In forming the Equity Advisory Committee, the Metropolitan Council affirms the commitment in *Thrive MSP 2040* to make residents and communities full partners in decision making which may affect them. The ultimate goal of this work is to create more equitable outcomes for the people who live and work in the region.

The Metropolitan Council will request advice from the Equity Advisory Committee regarding various policy issues. The Equity Advisory Committee may also identify additional policy topics for the Council's consideration to address.

The Committee will create an annual work plan based around these issues and topics. The work plan will be action oriented and focused on outcomes. This work will include supporting the implementation of the Public Engagement Plan

## **REPORTING**

The Equity Advisory Committee will report to the Metropolitan Council on a quarterly basis regarding the Committee's progress.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### Selection Process

The Metropolitan Council Chair will form a selection committee to recommend appointments to the Equity Advisory Committee. The selection committee will include Metropolitan Council members who serve on the Equity Advisory Committee and members of the community. Community representation must be robust enough to influence the selection committee recommendations. The full Metropolitan Council will approve the Chair's recommended appointments.

At least one representative from the following tables will be part of the initial selection process that will take place in 2015 and early 2016: Blue Line Coalition, Southwest Light Rail Transit Equity Commitments, Equity in Place, and the Community Engagement Steering Committee. In future appointment cycles, community will be represented on the selection committee.

Residents of the seven-county region may apply through the Metropolitan Council's advisory committee appointments process.

### Composition

The Equity Advisory Committee members will include people of different races, incomes, abilities, and backgrounds to ensure the Metropolitan Council is hearing from and accountable to the full range of voices and perspectives in the region.

The selection committee will use its appointment recommendations to the Equity Advisory Committee as one approach to adding diverse voices and perspectives to Council advisory committees.

The Chair will instruct the selection committee to place special emphasis on securing at least one representative from each of the following groups: African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, immigrants and new Americans, low-wealth residents, and people with disabilities.

### Metropolitan Council Members Serving on the Committee

The Metropolitan Council Chair will appoint four members to the Equity Advisory Committee from among existing Metropolitan Council members, one each from the Community Development Committee, Environment Committee, Transportation Committee, and Management Committee.

### Citizen Members

#### **Geographic members**

The committee will consist of one member each from District A-H:

- District A (Council Districts 1 and 2)
- District B (Council Districts 3 and 4)
- District C (Council Districts 5 and 6)
- District D (Council Districts 7 and 8)
- District E (Council Districts 9 and 10)
- District F (Council Districts 11 and 12)

District G (Council Districts 13 and 14)

District H (Council Districts 15 and 16)

### **At-Large members**

The Metropolitan Council Chair will appoint up to nine additional at-large members to provide for membership that reflects the range of interests and experiences of the region which may not result from the membership from the eight districts.

### Equity Advisory Committee Chair

The Committee will have co-chairs. One chair will be a Metropolitan Council Member and one chair will be a member from the community. The co-chairs will be selected by the Metropolitan Council Chair from the Equity Advisory Committee membership, and the Chair's selection will be approved by the Metropolitan Council.

### Terms

To provide continuity and stability, the Committee terms will be staggered. In the inaugural round of appointments, the geographic members will be four-year terms (ending in January 2020), and the at-large members and Council members will serve two-year terms (ending in January 2018).

In future rounds of appointments (beginning in 2018), all members will serve four-year terms.

### Responsibilities

Equity Advisory Committee members will serve as liaisons and ambassadors to the communities they represent. The Metropolitan Council public engagement staff will be available to support the Committee members' outreach and engagement efforts.

### **MEETINGS**

Meetings will be held at least quarterly. The Committee may choose to hold meetings more frequently. Meetings will be held in locations convenient to the community and in environments that foster interaction.

### **WORK PLAN**

The Equity Advisory Committee will form an annual work plan. Metropolitan Council staff will work with the Committee to ensure the committee is made aware of issues with enough time to provide advice and feedback. While the Committee will form the work plan, it is expected that the Committee will focus on Metropolitan Council's commitments made in *Thrive MSP 2040*, including implementation of the Public Engagement Plan.

### **Funding**

The Equity Advisory Committee will be established and maintained within existing Council budgets.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

In developing the Equity Advisory Committee charter, the Chair, the members of the former Equity Working Group, and staff consulted extensively with members of the community. There is no known opposition to the creation of this committee or the existing structure as proposed.