



5 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

With the ongoing pandemic of Covid-19, the Rising TIDES Taskforce and City Council have needed to remain nimble in advancing our desired goals and outcomes, while also meeting the needs of the communication. As such, we are proud to report a final update on our top 5 strategic priorities, outlined in our June 2020 report to the Council:

1. **Heavily Publicize Board Commission opportunities:** We continued our efforts to publicize opportunities for community engagement in our Boards and Commissions at the city. We relaunched a “Why I Serve” campaign, highlighting current Board and Commission representatives, showing the diversity of our community and the impact our members have.
2. **Build routines to ensure internal employee culture.** Creating an overall culture of belonging through training and regularly scheduled team building exercises that both introduce and celebrate different cultural backgrounds has remained a critical priority. Through the addition of the Equity and Inclusion manager position, the City conducted 12 trainings for internal employees, developed two staff bodies (Equity Leadership Team and the Advancement Team) to build capacity and inclusion in the City’s equity initiatives and established quarterly department meetings with Equity manager.
3. **Utilize existing community resources to implement outreach and educational activities more effectively.** We collaborated with City Staff to build on strengths in existing programs and outreach activities to increase the diversity, equity and inclusion of our outreach and educational impact.
4. **Ensure that staff members training to be friendly and responsive to the needs of diverse populations.** Through the addition of the Equity and Inclusion Manager, the City has prioritized Equity 101 trainings to understand the City’s equity initiatives and recognize instances of inequity in their interactions with other staff and the community. Staff use these learnings to adjust their approaches to engaging with residents and visitors in the City.
5. **Host a supplier diversity series that provides detailed information on how to do business with the city.** We connected with a number of staff to create common goals around increasing supplier diversity in the City’s procurement and created a goal in the updated Equity Action Plan. While we were not able to hold a supplier diversity series, staff and Task Force members learned a lot and made a number of connections to continue the work moving forward.

BACKGROUND

Appointed in 2018, the Rising TIDES Task Force began with 13 members dedicated community members with the purpose of providing City staff guidance and action steps aligned with the newly adopted Equity Plan. After eighteen months of work, the Task Force extended its work for twelve months in June 2020. This report is not possible without the dedication of the Task Force’s 10 members and 2 staff liaisons:

MEMBERS

Chair: Joelle Allen
Vice Chair: Amber Alexander
Ruth Paradise
Brad Taylor-White
Myat Thanda Tun
Ajani Woodson
Melissa Johnson
Fartun Hussein
Sam Powers
Sheri Hixon

Staff

Kirsten Santelices
Kiarra Zackery

RELATED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. **Hiring of the Equity and Inclusion Manager:** The City hired Equity and Inclusion Manager, Kiarra Zackery on August 31, 2020. This role has supported the fulfillment of the Task Force's recommendations by integrating the Task Force's work into the updated Equity Plan and developing an Equity Action Plan.
2. **Building an Equitable Golden Valley Quarterly Forums:** We have offered a series of educational forums reflecting the educational goals of an equitable and inclusive City culture. Forums included: Dis/abilities in the workforce, Lasting Impacts of Discriminatory Housing, What Does it Mean to Have Voting Access and a Discussion with City Leadership.
3. **Advertising Financial Assistance in Park and Recs Programs:** Parks and Recreation Department updated its financial assistance program and placement of financial assistance application information to be more visible to community members including the potential for an online application with less frequency.

SUBCOMMITTEES

The Task Force delegated tasks and initiatives to voluntary subcommittees. Subcommittees developed strategic priorities, met with City staff and communicated updates at monthly meetings. The following recommendations are a result of their work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To maintain continuity of the previous year's recommendations and provide structure to the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission, we recommend the City continue working on the initiatives listed below and integrate the work of the new commission accordingly.

INCREASING DIVERSITY IN BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND CITY COUNCIL

Seeing oneself represented on boards, in senior leadership positions, committees and task forces is critical to engaging a diverse slate for future openings. To do so, the Task Force recommended and accomplished the following tactics to drive engagement with the community:

1. **Heavily Publicize Board and Commission Opportunities:**
 - Through our monthly city newsletters, we've taken the opportunity to highlight various members of our Boards and Commissions through a "Why I Serve" campaign. These communications highlight what our members gain from these experiences, as well as what the skills and talents they feel they can bring to an engagement like this. We've been intentional to highlight the diversity of our active community members, and hope to continue to inspire more members to join the future.
2. **Prioritizing Youth Engagement:**
 - The Task Force recognizes a lack of voice from youth community members in our Boards and Commissions. As such, we recommend adding youth liaison positions to each Board and Commission (focused on Golden Valley residents, or students of the school districts that serve our community).

Lastly, as DEI efforts continue under the newly formed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission. We would recommend the following actions to continue progress in diversifying our Boards, Commissions, and City Councils:

1. **Proactive Planning for Openings (aka Succession Planning):**
 - Anticipate openings and attrition in Boards and Commissions and develop a marketing plan for the recruitment process
2. **Continued Youth Outreach:**
 - Creating flyers, language and opportunities for youth to connect to ongoing activities at the City
 - Craft a statement on why youth is important to our City and post to the City website
 - Youth-specific "Why I Serve" campaign with current youth board members and engage them with new ways to recruit their peers

- Build relationships and pipelines for youth engagement through Robbinsdale Area School District, Hopkins School District, Perpich Center for Arts and Breck School
- Essay contest: “Why Civic Engagement is Important?”

COMMUNICATING EQUITY WITH THE COMMUNITY

As the City continues on its journey of social justice and equity, we recommend the City communicate its efforts, initiatives and ideals with the community. Communication should be

1. **Update the City Website:**
 - Make the information about volunteer and service opportunities more accessible on the city website.
 - Increase the breadth of information on the website about resources for people living in mid and lower income housing.
2. **Connect with politically active community members:**
 - City Council members present a “State of the City” report at political party district meetings at least once a year.

As implementation of a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission becomes a reality, we recommend implementing the following outreach and educational activities:

1. Classes and informal workshops on “Culturally Competent Messaging”.
2. Informal community events where people interact with each other and have an opportunity to get to know each other like games, informal discussions of topics of interest, singing, dancing, eating, etc.
3. Plan a PRIDE-like event for different cultures in the month of July

ELIMINATING BARRIERS IN PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

We have met with the Park and Rec staff to discuss ways in which the programming and use of facilities could better reflect and fill the culturally diverse interests and economic ability of the people living in Golden Valley.

1. **Increase diversity in Parks and Rec offerings to include programming in different languages and culturally specific classes and events**
2. **Advertise funds available through private and public assistance for community members with economic needs**
3. **PRIDE-like event for different cultures**

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission develops its work plan, it should consider coordinating events with the Parks and Recreation to create a sense of belonging and inclusion in the City.

PROCESS FOR REVIEWING CITY CONTRACTS & RFPS TO ELIMINATE POTENTIAL BIAS

In April 2021, City Attorney Maria Cisneros, Equity and Inclusion Manager Kiarra Zackery and City Clerk Theresa Schyma created a process for legal and equity review of all contracts, requests for proposals, bids and quotes. This review process ensures the City is creating pathways for equity within every step of the procurement process. In a collaboration of Public Safety, Physical Development and Legal staff, the supplier diversity subcommittee met with leaders in supplier diversity across the state in state and county-level positions. From these conversations, the City has identified four components needed to develop an infrastructure for supplier diversity:

- a. **Develop a vendor database/directory:** Build relationships with and identify small, BIPOC, women and vet-owned businesses across industries for future procurement.
- b. **Create a procurement policy:** Outline a process according to size, industry and/or vendor certification. The City can create opportunities for small and minority-owned businesses by revisiting rewarding

process for contracts under \$175,000 or requiring large contractors to subcontract parts of the bid to underrepresented business.

- c. **Determine metrics and measures for success:** Track spending with DBEs, MBEs, veteran- and women-owned businesses and develop key performance indicators based on the data.
- d. **Outreach/training:** Once a procurement policy and process is developed, facilitate outreach events and trainings for business owners to learn about the City's process and procurement needs. These events can be "Lunch and Learns" and "Supplier Fairs" to attract new and different businesses to the City.

We recommend the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission continue to collaborate with City staff to develop measures of success and plan the supplier diversity events.