

Advancing Racial Equity in Local Government: Achieving Momentum

Achieving momentum to advance racial equity within a local government structure has occurred when racial equity is...

- **....Incorporated into an executive department.** For example, Seattle’s Race and Social Justice Initiative is led by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights. Portland has a similar model. City of Minneapolis includes racial equity as a function of the city coordinator through establishment of a division of race and equity.
- **....supported by creation of a stand-alone Equity Office or Chief Equity Officer.** Examples include Oakland, Long Beach, Austin, Louisville and San Antonio.
- **....is a distributed responsibility across departments and leaders who are accountable to the Mayor.** For example, the city of Madison, St. Paul.
- **....is overseen by a city manager.** City of Grand Rapids.

Appendix A: Example Legislation, Plans, and Tools

This appendix provides a sample resource list of supportive legislation, of racial equity plans, and of racial equity tools.

Examples of City Council Legislation

- In **Portland**, the Office of Equity and Human Rights (OEHR) was established by a City Council ordinance in 2011 that created the OEHR, provided initial staffing, and approved an initial work plan. See the Ordinance here: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/article/449202>
 - o For general information on the OEHR, see here: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/62229>
- In **Oakland**, the City Council created a Department of Race and Equity (DRE) by passing an ordinance in summer of 2015. The ordinance amended the city’s municipal code to create the DRE and establish definitions and implementation steps for a citywide equity strategy. See details of the ordinance here:
 - o Ordinance page: <https://oakland.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2145224&GUID=5AC84BDB-2E75-468A-A655-56171FBD9BDE&Options=Advanced&Search=>
 - o Finance committee report with ordinance proposal background and text as attachment A: <https://oakland.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3523770&GUID=9F1DC8EA-5933-4437-A016-0606BAF3A932>
 - Final ordinance: <https://oakland.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3850847&GUID=A99D7E87-FC53-4073-AC8A-8195479B6083> [JSA1]
- In **Tacoma**, the city proposed an Equity and Empowerment Initiative that was adopted by the City Council through a resolution in October 2014. This resolution defined equity as “when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential,” and established a shared equity framework for an inclusive and equitable Tacoma with five specific goals.
 - o For a copy of Tacoma’s resolution, see here: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3270290&GUID=92DD3F70-59B2-43B8-9792-83B2A32AD136>
 - o To see Tacoma’s Equity Framework and goals, see here: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3268699&GUID=7E088619-D311-4204-BAA0-77C1876A29E8>

- For general information on the resolution, see here: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1913712&GUID=1A28D7E6-FAAB-4B08-84D1-1C98CE6AC1C0&Options=&Search>
- **In Dane County**, the common council passed an Equity Impact Resolution in October 2013 to establish an interdepartmental workgroup to research equity initiatives and policies from other regions and to explore the use of equity impact assessment tools for use in policy and project decisions. For more details, see a related news release here: <https://www.countyofdane.com/press/details.aspx?id=3392>
- **In Seattle**, A **RESOLUTION** in 2009 affirming the City's race and social justice work and directing City Departments to use available tools to assist in the elimination of racial and social disparities across key indicators of success, including health, education, criminal justice, the environment, employment and the economy; and to promote equity within the City workplace and in the delivery of City services.

Examples of Executive Orders

- **In Seattle**, Mayor Ed Murray issued an executive order in 2014 such that all city departments would have to establish equity plans that set goals, track outcomes and publish reports annually to assess the city's progress in achieving racial equity. For details from the ordinance itself, see here: <http://murray.seattle.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/RSJI-Executive-Order.pdf>

Examples of Racial Equity Plans

- **In Seattle**, the Race and Social Institute (RSJI) recently released a 3-year strategic plan that builds on their past successes and lesson learned. The 2015-2017 plan articulates 3 core strategies with a commitment to measuring targets, tracking progress and reporting results. For more details, see the report here: <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/rsji-2015-2017-plan.pdf>

Examples of Racial Equity Tools

- **In Seattle**, the RSJI developed a racial equity toolkit for other city agencies to use when assessing policies, initiatives, programs or budget issues. RSJI encourages the toolkit be used early in decision-making processes and with the inclusion of diverse racial perspectives. For the RSJI racial equity toolkit, see here: http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit_FINAL_August2012.pdf
- **In Multnomah County**, the Office of Diversity and Equity developed the Equity and Empowerment Lens as a continuous improvement tool to promote racially equitable outcomes. The Equity and Empowerment Lens includes the 5P's framework to promote consideration of equity along the decision-making dimensions of people, place, power, process and purpose.
 - o For an overview of the county's Equity and Empowerment Lens, see here: <https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens>
 - o For the 5P's worksheet, see here: <https://multco.us/file/31827/download>
- **In Madison**, the city's Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Initiative developed both quick and more in-depth racial equity tools. Both sets of tools have a purpose of facilitating consideration of a proposed action or decisions' future impacts on communities of color and low-income populations. The

abbreviated version of the tool is intended to be used for issues on a short timeline or those without widespread impact.

o For the RESJ’s abbreviated racial equity tool, see

here: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/employeenet/attorney/documents/RESJfast.doc>

Examples of Racial Equity Frameworks

- In Tacoma, the city proposed an Equity and Empowerment Initiative that was adopted by the City Council through a resolution in October 2014. This resolution defined equity as “when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential,” and established a shared equity framework for an inclusive and equitable Tacoma with five specific goals: <http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/OEHR/Framework-Flyer-Equity-and-Empowerment-Initiative.pdf>

o Resolution

page: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1913712&GUID=1A28D7E6-FAAB-4B08-84D1-1C98CE6AC1C0&Options=&Search=>

o Resolution: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3270290&GUID=92DD3F70-59B2-43B8-9792-83B2A32AD136>

o Memo to city

council: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3268717&GUID=C8B0ED9D-A332-44E0-BAF8-52B64A781C0A>

o Vision, mission and

goals: <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3268699&GUID=7E088619-D311-4204-BAA0-77C1876A29E8>

o Council presentation: <http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/OEHR/Council-Presentation-Equity-and-Empowerment-Initiative.pdf> [JSA3]

Examples of Racial Equity Assessments and Analyses

- In Dane County, the Board of Supervisors commissioned a review of government programs, operations, and policies through an equity lens. The published report assesses the state of disparities and recommends racial equity indicators, strategies and resources for advancing equity through the county government. To read the resultant report by GARE and Center for Social Inclusion, see here: <http://www.wispd.org/attachments/article/101/Dane%20County%20Racial%20Equity%20Analysis%20-%20FINAL.pdf>