

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF 2018-2020 DEPARTMENT DIVERSITY WORKPLANS

Council's adoption of the Diversity Advantage Initiative included 60 recommendations around the areas of Cultural Competence in City Government, Cultural Competence in the Community, Human Services, Public Safety, Education, Economic Development, and Civic Engagement. While some of these recommendations are department-specific, many of the recommendations are citywide responsibilities. Specific to the area of workplans on diversity, the Diversity Advantage Initiative recommends to "regularly review and evaluate citywide cultural competence efforts in the following categories: organizational values, policies, staffing, resources, service delivery, and public outreach¹" and to "establish performance measures to track progress at meeting goals and actions of the initiative"². In the workplans, these five focus areas were policy, training & development, hiring, programs & services, and communications & outreach.

In the writing of the workplans, departments were asked to:

- ensure strategies and tactics were based on one or more of Council's sixty-point recommendations.
- frame actions within a three-year timeline (beginning of 2018- end of 2020).
- balance budget needs and program integrity.
- recognize ongoing citywide initiatives and efforts and ways to support these efforts from a departmental level.

To review and evaluate citywide efforts, departmental work activities were mapped on to a 3-year timeline and organized by: (1) Diversity Advantage Initiative recommendation category; (2) department; (3) general activity type; (4) activity length and (5) specific Diversity Advantage Initiative recommendation point addressed. This makes it possible to analyze scale and themes in staff action.

This report and accompanying timeline provide a summary of the cumulative work across all departments; matches departmental actions with The Diversity Advantage Initiative recommendations; and analyzes similarities and differences between departments. It discusses implications for future work to inform leadership decisions and resource allocation.

¹ Cultural Competence in City Government 2a

² Cultural Competence in City Government 3

Plans at a glance

- Across the city, most actions addressed recommendations for Cultural Competence in City Government and Cultural Competence in the Community. Education and Public Safety recommendations were the least often addressed.
- Across the city, the specific recommendation points most often addressed were: 2a/2b, 10 and 12 from Cultural Competence in City Government.
 - 2a and 2b: Regularly review and evaluate City-wide cultural competence efforts in the following categories: organizational values, policies, staffing, resources, service delivery and public outreach. Establish a knowledge base of best practices and available resources for cultural competence and equity within the City
 - 10: Conduct a comprehensive review of public information tools, protocols and resources to identify strategies and methods for more effective communication with diverse populations.
 - 12: Dedicate resources for City departments to innovate and adapt to provide culturally competent services and improve public outreach and civic engagement
- Across the city, the following recommendations were not explicitly addressed:
 - Human Services 1, 4, 6, 7
 - Public Safety 4
 - Education 1,2,4,5,7
- Across the city, Training/Workforce Development and Communications/Outreach were the activity types most used. The activity type least used was Policy.

Each departmental workplan and All City diversity workplans summaries can be found [here](#).

Summary of Data

Activities in department's workplans were categorized based on the type of work: Policy changes, Training/Workforce Development efforts, Hiring/Retention activities, changes to Programs/Services, and Communications/Outreach strategies. Themes in activity types across the city are described below:

Policy

- Most actions focused on how to imbue tangible equity components into current policy and practices. This was seen in every type of policy change, such as: reviewing mission statements to center equity, to reevaluating procurement and contract processes for how they impact minority, women owned business enterprises (MWBES), to diversifying interview panels.
- Policy changes also emphasized evaluating gaps in current application of policies and developing methods to ensure consistent application going forward.

Training/Workforce Development

- All departments listed cultural competence and implicit bias as important trainings for their staff. Many departments also included searching for additional training options, budgetary allowances related to training, and methods to ensure the training informs practice. There was a heavy emphasis on literal training, but fewer departments included actions to promote career growth for employees that have historically not held management or supervisory roles.

Hiring/Retention activities

- As hiring is often a decentralized process, even with the training and supplemental guides from the Diversity Talent Hiring Initiative partnership between HR and Diversity, departments highlighted opportunities to develop accountability measures from a departmental level to ensure new processes introduced through the DTHI are supported.

Programs/Services

- Due to the different programs and services each department is responsible for, this area had the largest variance in content. Most often, departments evaluated or suggested improvements to their activities that required external involvement from, or are intended to benefit, under-represented members of the community. Departments were in different places with implementing actions based on if they have already conducted a review of their procedures.

Communications/Outreach

- All departments identified reviewing or updating their customer service/outreach/communication efforts with a focus on their appropriateness for

historically under-represented or unengaged community groups. Many departments listed this work as requiring an analysis of current practices and building a knowledge base about effective communication and outreach strategies.

Application of Diversity Advantage Initiative Recommendations

The All City Diversity Workplan Summary has a column dedicated to the corresponding Diversity Advantage Initiative Recommendations. Workplan activities are categorized with all appropriate recommendation points, even if the activity is listed in another Diversity Advantage Initiative category. While specific activities could address multiple points and focus areas within the Diversity Advantage Initiative, the overwhelming majority addressed Cultural Competence in City Government and Cultural Competence in the Community. Due to the nature of recommendations in the Human Services, Public Safety, and Education categories, fewer departmental activities could be mapped on to specific recommendation points. However, this can be remedied by adding definition to certain outreach and program/service actions (i.e. holding community outreach events at human service agencies or in the Bellevue School District).

Citywide Priorities

Priorities were determined by summarizing each department's activities and identifying which actions all departments are engaging in. Those actions were then grouped by theme:

- **Language and Information Accessibility:** All departments included translation of materials, reviewing current methods of communication, and ensuring language accessibility in public-facing events/services as a priority. Departments differed in how they operationalized this priority: some focused on translating their most commonly used documents, some involved focus groups to determine more effective communication formats for communities historically effected by oppression, and some prioritized technical solutions that improve accessibility.
- **Employee Diversity and Inclusion:** All departments identified methods to increase employee diversity and inclusion. Most of the activities pertained to analyzing job requirements, outreach to potential applicants, and hiring practices. While not in every department, most departments explicitly addressed actions that promote inclusivity for

their current employees as well. Departments differed in specific tactics, but there was significant overlap in activities around hiring.

- **Training:** All departments included diversity, equity and inclusion trainings in their workplans, namely Cultural Competence and Implicit Bias. Most departments included capacity-building trainings as well, such as educating staff on Title VI requirements and language accessibility. Included with training were policy actions relating to new hire training schedules, regular access to trainings for current staff, increasing number of trainings available, and how different responsibilities of certain positions may need specific types of training (i.e. hiring managers or management).
- **Staff development in cultural competency:** While this is implied through the robust plans for training, this merited a separate mention as this speaks about how the organization can invest in employee growth and development around cultural competency that includes the ability to participate in other programs such as the Employee Resource Groups, attend diversity related trainings, events, or conferences.

Citywide Collaboration Opportunities

By centering workplans on recommendations from the Diversity Advantage Initiative, departments have naturally created opportunities for collaboration and mutually-reinforcing activities citywide. In addition, there are a multitude of interdepartmental collaborations that could occur (i.e. Transportation working with Human Services to determine specific transportation needs for social service agencies in Bellevue). Citywide collaboration opportunities were determined by grouping similar work actions and identifying processes that are applicable in all departments:

- **Outreach Strategies.** Nearly all departments listed reviewing their current outreach/communication practices and results. Many had suggestions for finding ethnically and culturally relevant media sources, reviewing how open positions are advertised, developing nuanced engagement strategies for specific populations, and determining outreach toolkits or checklists that allow departments to assess impact. Strategies, resources and progress-measuring tools can be developed collaboratively and/or shared between departments.
- **Demographic & Feedback Analysis.** Multiple departments identified needing to understand their baseline activities better to accurately measure their progress. This involves inventorying current program/service results, demographic analysis of staff and community, and/or focus groups or surveys of staff and community. Departments would benefit from collaboration to share best practices/tools and with the purpose of not overburdening the same community groups with surveys.

- **Process Improvement.** Since all workplans require some type of progress measuring, sharing toolkits and/or results of specific activities/initiatives allows departments to learn from each other and keep each other accountable. Many departments wanted to develop new methods or tools to track progress, which is both time and resource-intensive. Sharing these developments eases the workload for all departments and will allow for a cohesive assessment of citywide progress if measurement tools are the same.
- **Evaluation of cultural competency.** As a starting point, various workplans identified hiring and training as two areas where understanding of cultural competency can change and inform organizational culture and practice. Many also looked at accountability vis-à-vis performance evaluations. One of the city’s core competencies related to this is “values differences.” This can be used to measure efforts around becoming more culturally competent and equitable – both on an individual and an institutional level.

Positive Deviance

While the intent to compare departmental workplans is to look at commonalities that may assist in informing citywide priorities, it is also important to note positive outliers that are mentioned in a department’s workplan that could benefit another departments’ work. The following examples highlight some of these items:

- **Community Development’s hiring practices.** “Evaluate the diversity of each candidate pool with HR Recruiter using comparisons from previous or similar job postings prior to closing the position. If candidate pool based on gender and race is below an acceptable threshold as agreed upon with the department Director, the position should remain open.”
 - This deviated from other hiring initiatives due to its specificity and measurable way to consider diversity in applicants.
- **Human Resource’s focus on specific barriers to training.** “Evaluate training programs available to partially benefitted staff. Based on evaluation and feedback, develop new practices that provide equitable access to training for partially benefitted staff.”
 - This deviated from other training initiatives as it focused on an individual and current inequity in training policies, not on a general initiative to train all staff.
- **Fire Department’s potential internship position.** “Develop paid internship for 3 candidates (from below a certain socioeconomic standard) that lasts 6 months and leads to Bellevue Fire recruit academy. Market to school district.”
 - This deviated from other outreach initiatives as it creates a novel and meaningful pathway for engagement while still focusing on a population impacted by inequity.
- **Parks and Community Service’s** an equity statement of fairness that will be included in every strategic plan.

- While most departments incorporated actions to include elements of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their vision or mission statements, Parks is developing a standalone equity statement that will be used for all other planning or operational documents.
- **Utilities Department’s commitment to external trainings and conferences related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.** “Provide external trainings (up to 5 persons/year) on diversity and racial equity.”
 - This deviated from other training recommendations because it expands opportunities from city-offered trainings and is also incorporated as a strategy to help inform and champion other equity elements in policy, hiring, and service/program delivery.

Title VI and ADA-Specific Work

Most accessibility work was limited to translation and language accommodations for public events. Gender disparities, physical accessibility and adaptations for different cognitive/processing styles were rarely included, if at all. Note that these plans were created prior to the adoption of the ADA Self-evaluation and Transition plan in January 2019. The Self-evaluation and Transition plan includes specific work items related to the ADA and corresponding city departments. The following workplan items are representative examples of actions specific to Title VI and ADA in various departments:

Training/Workforce Development

- Train staff on language access resources (ADA compliance, Title VI, legal requirements and best practices). Track training in database, ensure new employees are trained within 3 months of hire and yearly refresher for staff.

Programs and Services

- Install hearing loop technology at Community Centers and other high demand service locations. Ensure all city facilities adhere to ADA standards.
- Create a mechanism for requiring Title VI inclusion in program and project planning and require an approved Title VI plan for project approval.

Communication/Outreach

- Developed workshops and videos that assist Bellevue residents in understanding various application/permitting processes. Videos meet ADA and language accessibility requirements.
- Utilize Title VI mapping to focus on providing building/land use info to communities with limited English proficiency

Policy

- PDF Accessibility for flyers and other information created by Graphics.
- Review and update employment standards to be reasonable and achievable by all new recruits, regardless of age, gender, race, sex, etc.

Existing Resources and Future Resources

Resources exist in the city in the form of subject matter experts in departments such as HR, Finance & Procurement, etc. and teams like OPT, Communications, and the Diversity team, among others. These resources can assist in informing or guiding aspects of the departmental workplans that pertain to the purview of the following teams or departments. The list below identifies some resources but is not meant to be exhaustive.

Plan area	Team or Department	Function or project
Policy	Operations Policy Team, department leadership team	Operationalization of initiatives and processes
Policy – Contracting	Procurement + Diversity	Procurement Diversity Inclusion Plan
Training & development	Human Resources	The PLaCE assists in listing all available city training, automatic reminders for required trainings, ability to match competencies covered in trainings that can be useful for performance management.
Training & development	Diversity Advantage Team	Diversity related curriculum and offerings will continue to expand outside of Cultural Competence Foundations, Implicit Bias, Ableism & Allyship, and Title VI.
Hiring & Retention	Human Resources	Diversity Talent Hiring Initiative; development of onboarding, mentorship, and exit interviews
Hiring & Retention; Training & Development	Employee Resource Groups	Workplans related to awareness, skills development, mentorship, and advocacy.
Communications & outreach	Interdepartmental outreach team	Streamlining and coordinating processes for city outreach
	Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network	Outreach intake process to underrepresented communities
	Communications + Diversity; ADA Core team	Developing a language access policy, trainings on Title VI and ADA

Since nearly all departments identified activities that involve translation, reviewing hiring practices, and training, specific resources will be in high demand. Particularly Human Resources and Information Technology will be tapped to help with hiring initiatives and technical assistance around increasing accessibility of websites and materials. There is also significant emphasis on how to track and measure progress, which may become a time-intensive effort. It will either require developing new implementation/ evaluation tools and testing them for validity or adding an additional work responsibility to monitor progress. In addition, resources will have to be devoted to communicating updates on workplans, so departments don't unnecessarily duplicate activities and can structure their activities to be mutually supportive (i.e. sharing demographic analyses or holding combined outreach events).

Leadership's Role

Leadership's involvement in this process ensures that the city continues intentional support of Council's direction and that these efforts are neither siloed within a department or staff position. While the Diversity Advantage Initiative applies to all activities and city employees, the Operations Policy Team's support of these workplans is the lever of change that determines how this work may be institutionalized to enhance the organization's practices and policies around diversity, equity, and inclusion for years to come.

Specific roles and responsibilities that pertain to OPT:

- Assess and triage rising priorities within the workplans.
- Provide definition and direction around current vague workplan items.
 - This is currently a citywide weakness. If a department lists "develop Title VI training performance measures", there needs to be more details to operationalize this action. What will be the effect of the performance measures? How are the results of performance measures incorporated into other activities in the workplan?
- Support diversity liaisons and staff through recognizing achievements, identifying and encouraging positive deviance.
- See how workloads can be adjusted so employees can engage in this work
- Identify where departments can engage in mutually-supportive actions and keep each other accountable. This requires regular and meaningful communication and updates.