



Metro | *Making a great place*

MEMORANDUM (Draft)

To: Equity Strategy Advisory Committee members
From: Carl Talton, Phil Wu, Irene Konev, Ben Duncan, Julia Meier and Pam Treece
Re: Proposed draft recommendations for Metro to continue implementing the Equity Strategy & Action Plan
Cc: Martha Bennett, Scott Robinson, Patty Unfred and Pietro Ferrari
Date: Feb. 19, 2015

Following the Equity Strategy Advisory Committee's (ESAC) direction at its Jan. 26, 2015 meeting, a group of five Committee members met on Feb. 17, 2015 to discuss the content and recommendations of the "Equity Baseline Report – Part 1: A Framework for Regional Equity," authored by representatives from the six community-based organizations (CBOs) included in the Equity Baseline Technical Workgroup.

The group of five ESAC members is proposing that ESAC adopt the following recommendations to the Metro Chief Operating Officer (COO), based on the feedback collected from ESAC members and the group's discussion as follows:

1. **Equity+5 framework:** ESAC recommends that Metro reframe its current six desired regional outcomes paradigm as the "Equity+5" framework and concept. Equity+5 highlights the intersectionality of equity with everything that the agency does and affirms Metro's commitment to advancing equity throughout the region. In other words, equity stands out as an integral part of the other desired regional outcomes. In order to meaningfully improve the "Equity" outcome, Metro needs to improve the other five outcomes; and in order to improve the other five outcomes, Metro needs to improve the "Equity" outcome.

ESAC also suggests that Metro create a new logic model and accompanying graphic to describe the Equity+5 framework more fully.

2. **Racial and economic justice lens:** ESAC recommends that Metro develop a racial and economic justice lens as part of its Equity Strategy and Action Plan to prioritize addressing the most significant inequities and disparities that exist in the region, which primarily impact people of color and people with low incomes. This lens acknowledges the historical origin of these inequities and, at the same time, is forward-looking regarding the pressing need for prompt action and to be responsive to changing demographics. In order to make this "a great place for all," Metro needs to proactively focus its energies on the most impacted communities. This action will in turn benefit the entire regional population in the long-term.
3. **Community-led equity audit of Metro's departments:** ESAC values the experience and relationships gained by involving six CBOs in the creation of the Equity Framework Report and recommends to continue collaborating with community members to assist Metro in building its Equity Strategy and Action Plan. At the same time, ESAC considers that a "community-led audit" as suggested by the CBOs is counter-productive to building the

collaborative spirit that has been gained in the process. ESAC agrees that there is a need to establish accountability and performance measures to track progress made in advancing equity once the Equity Strategy and Action Plan has been adopted and implemented for a length of time,

4. **Additional data collection needs:** ESAC recommends the continuation of partnerships with existing data efforts (for example, the Greater Portland Pulse and the Regional Equity Atlas). Duplication of data collection efforts should be avoided.
5. **Other recommendations** include:
 - Metro needs to expand the definition of “community” as it embarks on the Equity Strategy and Action Plan development. The report focuses on “communities of color” and “people living in poverty.” However, for purposes of the successful completion of the Equity Strategy and Action Plan, the definition of “community” should be expanded to include stakeholders such as elected officials, businesses, philanthropy and other community-based organizations.
 - Metro should not try to lead on all 10 indicators. Metro is not necessarily the best lead organization for efforts around indicators such as education or justice. Metro needs to collaborate with partners in as many aspects as possible, and play a convening role if necessary.
 - Metro should consider the prompt development and application of a disparate impact analysis to all its decision-making mechanisms, in order to complement and support the Equity Strategy and Action Plan development.
 - Metro Council and highest ranking staff should reaffirm and restate their commitment to advancing equity and improving equity outcomes through the development and adoption of the Equity Strategy and Action Plan.
6. **Suggested approach for strategy development:** ESAC agrees with the CBOs' suggestions to identify short-, mid- and long-term equity activities that provide a roadmap for action. In order to demonstrate its commitment to advancing equity in the region, Metro should act on the areas over which it has immediate control, establishing a track record of “early wins” that increase its credibility and visibility. These early wins will help propel Metro into the development of medium- and long-term strategies.

ESAC recommends that Metro builds on a “continuum of equity” that includes immediate activities and opportunities for region-wide conversation on how to advance equity in specific subjects that require long-term strategies to come to fruition. The report may serve to identify a few long-term strategic discussions that would require significant regional community involvement, and could result in new policy directions for Metro on the indicators in which the agency has the most authority and impact.

7. **Report edits and desired changes:** Finally, the group of ESAC members had a number of suggestions for edits and language changes to the “Equity Baseline Report – Part 1: A Framework for Regional Equity.” Two ESAC members agreed to meet with the primary report writer in order to discuss possible language edits. However, those potential changes should not have influence on the content or writing of ESAC’s recommendations.

Next steps

- A quorum of ESAC members must consider these recommendations and decide whether to adopt them or modify them. Once ESAC has reached a decision on its recommendations, a final version of this memorandum will be submitted to Metro's Chief Operating Officer, Martha Bennett.
- The COO will consider ESAC's memorandum and use it as the basis to formulate her own recommendations for the Metro Council to discuss. The council will consider the COO's recommendations and provide additional direction for Metro staff to follow in the development of the Equity Strategy and Action Plan.
- It is the expectation that ESAC will decide upon its recommendations to the COO by its March 9, 2015 meeting at the latest. The recommendations from the COO will be considered by the Metro Council by the end of March 2015.