



# **Equity Committee Planning Group**

## Final Report



## Introduction

The City Council appointed fifteen people to serve on the ad hoc Equity Committee Planning Group on May 9, 2022. The planning group met six times between June and November 2022. This report summarizes their work including a recommendation on the creation of a permanent committee dedicated to issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in the community.

The following individuals served on the planning group:

- Glendora Claybrooks
- Stacey Dolezal
- Jennifer Eidson
- Rio Espinosa
- Rachel Greenough
- Cyndy Hillier, Co-Chair
- Valerie Holt
- Lusi Hong
- Shannon Huggins
- Mike Mata
- Maria Nguyen
- Sharon Noell
- Bryan Ortiz
- BJ Park
- Christen Sacco, Co-Chair
- Shane Skinner
- Isabella Raymond

## Purpose

As determined by the City Council, the purpose of the Equity Committee Planning Group was to help build the structure of the permanent committee by reviewing data about the community and City Council initiatives, by sharing group members' lived experiences, and by participating in engaging discussions.

## Planning Group Process

The planning group met monthly beginning in June 2022. Meetings were compliant with public meetings law and included an agenda distributed in advance and the preparation of minutes following the meeting. All meetings were held primarily in person, although a virtual option was made available for those unable to attend in person.

The agendas are summarized below and meeting minutes are attached.

### Session 1

The first session occurred on June 7, 2022, at the Juanita Pohl Center. In this meeting, planning group members participated in a getting to know you activity, set ground rules, and discussed their motivations for joining the committee. In addition, City Manager Sherilyn Lombos presented information on the community derived from the Census and 2020 Tualatin Community Survey.

## Session 2

The second session occurred on July 12, 2022, at Tualatin City Services. In this meeting, planning group members reviewed and adopted the ground rules, received a presentation from Deputy City Manager Megan George highlighting examples of other equity committees, and engaged with representatives from the cities of Wilsonville, Lake Oswego, and Beaverton regarding their equity committees.

## Session 3

The third session occurred on August 16, 2022, at Tualatin City Services. In this meeting, individuals had the option to present on their personal research into other equity committees. They then broke into small groups to discuss the components of the final deliverable and synthesize their thoughts into a presentation summarizing the group's discussion.

## Session 4

The fourth session occurred on September 13, 2022, at Tualatin City Services. In this meeting, small groups continued preparing before presenting their materials to the larger group. Using chart paper, planning group members then reflected on each group's recommendation to identify commonalities and areas of agreement.

## Session 5

The fifth session occurred on October 4, 2022, at Tualatin City Services. In this meeting, each small group was assigned one of the components to facilitate a conversation about and seek the group's consensus. There was not enough time to reach consensus at this meeting on all components and so planning group members agreed to schedule an additional session.

## Session 6

The sixth and final session occurred on November 1, 2022, at Tualatin City Services. In this meeting, planning group members brainstormed possible areas of focus for the permanent committee, and identified barriers to participation for some and strategies to address those barriers. The group then reviewed the decisions made at the previous meeting before finalizing the recommendation to the City Council.

## Recommendation

Title Eleven of the Tualatin Municipal Code is dedicated to city committees and boards. With some variation, each chapter of this section follows a similar format and includes many standard provisions. For example, existing code language defines quorum to mean, "A majority of the Committee shall constitute a quorum." Therefore, the efforts of the planning group did not encompass the entirety of what would be included in the Tualatin Municipal Code.

After several rounds of brainstorming and discussion, the planning group recommends the City Council include the following specifics in the final code language and creation of the permanent committee.

### **Name of Committee**

The planning group recommends the name of the permanent committee be *Tualatin Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Committee*. In shorthand, the committee could be referred to as the *I.D.E.A. Committee*.

### **Number of Members**

The planning group recommends the City Council appoint nine to thirteen members to serve three-year terms on the committee, at the recommendation of the Council Committee on Advisory Appointments. To achieve staggered terms, several initial appointments should be made for shorter terms.

### **Composition of Membership**

The planning group recommends the committee membership include one voting youth member (high school aged) that will count towards the total number of committee members. The planning group also recommends the number of members who reside outside of city limits be limited to no more than two. In addition, they recommend a member of the City Council be appointed as a non-voting liaison to the committee to ensure an open line of communication and support.

Finally, the planning group discussed additional eligibility requirements to ensure a diverse membership. In this instance, the planning group recommends specific language for code adoption.

In appointing members to the committee, the council shall seek to appoint members from a diversity of backgrounds, including cultural diversity, and experiences so that as many viewpoints as possible may be provided in furtherance of the committee's work. Recruitment efforts should include specific outreach to members of the BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities, the aging population, persons with differing abilities, and other underrepresented groups to achieve this goal. Persons not mentioned in this description are also invited and encouraged to apply.

### **Committee Positions**

The planning group recommends the committee appoint two co-chairs on an annual basis. To the extent possible, committee members should consider appointing members to leadership roles who have different term lengths and/or experience with the committee so that there is a progression of leadership.

In addition, the planning group discussed creating a secretary position that would support the co-chairs and appointed staff liaison with onboarding, record keeping, and reviewing minutes. They suggest this position be appointed as needed, rather than as a permanent leadership position.

Finally, the planning group also recommends that the committee appoint task force leaders from within the committee to lead special efforts, as needed. Representatives from nonprofit organizations and subject matter experts (like representatives from public safety) could be invited to attend and participate in these efforts as well.

### **Powers and Duties of Committee**

The planning group recommends the following powers and duties be considered for the committee:

- Research to identify and increase areas of opportunity
- Increase access
- Establish goals and objectives
- Measure success towards accomplishing established goals and objectives
- Engage with the community

### Areas of Focus

While the purpose of the planning group was to advise on the structure of the permanent committee, time was also allocated to brainstorm possible areas of focus for the permanent committee. The following is a result of several brainstorming sessions and has not been edited, prioritized, or discussed at length by the planning group.

- Affordable housing for BIPOC community
- Land acknowledgment
- Multicultural center
- Food carts (multicultural foods/gathering place)
- Library cultural events
- Diversity employment at the city/blind hiring policy
- Breakdown barriers for employment services for participation in government (resume writing services)
- Other to include equity topics (w/ subcommittees to address)
  - Race
  - Income
  - Houselessness
  - Varying physical/mental abilities
- Influence policy training, transparency: City matters

- Core values to create & direct subcommittee
- Have objectives and measure the objectives
- Funding for research
- Partner with non-profit
- Seek opportunity to partner with organizations doing similar work
- Grants/funding
- Educate the general population and sub-populations because everyone comes from somewhere (Example: Wilsonville's Civic Academy)
- English as a second language courses for people who want to get more involved
- Financial compensation for people who want to get involved
- City's Human Resources policies – identify barriers starts with human resources
- Land Acknowledgement
- Education on how to say the names of parks and other places
- Multicultural center – a gathering place with food, a place they can read public information about the city. A place we can put all these practices together
- Provide childcare for participants
- Tap into students who are not going to college and prepare them for the trades
- Accessibility – sign language interpreters, close captioning council meetings
- Making Tualatin more immigrant friendly – English conversation nights
- English second language classes and checking on existing classes/programs to make sure they are well enough resourced
- How the city works – for example how a bond comes from property taxes
- Research areas – how do people feel part of the community or not
- With schools – how to get more diverse voices into schools, which is really important for students to see in the community
- Language and life experience exchanges in a safe environment
- Education about mental health issues related to people not being allowed to be or valued for who they are. Statistics don't lie
- Tualatin Council may desire a peaceful coalition of it many citizens in order to further the safety and success of the City. This may well be supported by exhibiting/teaching/modeling an understanding that many cultural groups in America are made up of many other subcultures. The City should make part of this Committee's duties completion/oversight of measurement of the cultures present in its citizens. Further, the advancement of diversity practices in its staff should also be related to the duties of this Committee. Thus, the growth in City practices and its programs can be planned in conjunction with one another.

## Barriers to Participation and Strategies

As with the previous section, time was allocated to brainstorm barriers to participation and possible strategies to address those barriers. Again, the list was not edited, prioritized, or discussed at length by the planning group.

| Barriers  | Strategies   |
|---|--|
| Not being specific enough so people know they can be included                                 | Be specific to include people  |
| Transportation  | <p>Someone assigned to oversee transportation aspect. Contact so-and-so if you need a way to get to the meeting</p> <p>Collect resources that are available for people to get to places</p> <p>Stipend for uber or lyft credit to eliminate transportation barrier</p> <p>Extending hours of Ride Connection</p>   |
| Trust   |  |
| Childcare needs   | Provide childcare  |
| Second job conflict   | Pay a stipend  |
| Assurance all ages are welcome  |  |
| Understanding the need, being able to express input   | Make information available online. Be transparent about what the committee is working on   |
| Feeling intimidated for any number of reasons   | <p>Language access</p> <p>Outreach events within communities, not just online ad. Tent or go out to community and explain what the goal is</p> <p>Materials need to be diverse and accessible</p> <p>Creating a short video with people who represent every type of person, young, later in life, people of color, ESL w/ translator, etc. and all are encouraged to apply</p> |
| Digital access  |  |
| People who are abrasive, bullies, people with agenda. Am I going to be called racist all day? | Process to remove people from the permanent equity committee. Rules about this   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>Recording all meetings. Video and audio taped. Important for transparency. This will also help keep people accountable. Public records</p> <p>Include rules that can be used when needed</p> <p>Education about how it is okay to feel uncomfortable</p> <p>Sensitivity and awareness training</p> |
|--|---|

Conclusion

The planning group would also like the City Council to consider future updates to the code language based on feedback from the permanent committee. For example, terms like “BIPOC” and “LGBTQIA+” are commonly used today, but they replaced other terms that were deemed less relevant by today’s standards. As time and learning progresses, it may be necessary to update language like this.