



Memorandum

To: Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager
From: Megan George, Deputy City Manager
Date: June 28, 2021
Subject: Equity Committee Research Summary

Cities across Oregon have formed citizen committees to work on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The following committees were reviewed and summarized in the attached matrix: Ashland, Beaverton, Lake Oswego, McMinnville, Medford, Ontario, and Troutdale. This memo summarizes some of the major takeaways from that comparative research.

Committees are permanent.

All committees reviewed are permanent and included in their city's municipal code. Lake Oswego's *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force* was disbanded in December 2020 after completing their final report; however, one of their recommendations was to form a permanent committee to advise the City Council, which is currently in progress. Staff expect to convene the permanent committee for the first time this fall. Similarly, Beaverton's *Diversity Advisory Board* was made permanent in 2013 after years of work from an ad hoc committee.

Most committees are new or have new scopes of work.

As with Lake Oswego's *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force*, many of the committees are brand new. Ashland's *Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission* is currently recruiting their first committee members and expects the commission to be convened for the first time in July of 2021. McMinnville's *Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board* is a few months further along having had their first meeting in March of 2021.

Other committees were updated this past year to encompass a broader scope of work. Troutdale's *Public Safety and Equity Advisory Board* purpose statement was updated in 2021 to include issues of equity in addition to their long-standing charge to provide advice on matters of public safety. Medford's *Commission on Access, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion* replaced the existing *Multicultural Commission*, expanding the scope to include other types of equity issues after newly appointed committee members asked for the change.

While some committees specifically reference certain groups of people or have targeted initiatives, none of the committees have narrowed their focus to working on issues of race, access, or gender exclusively.



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Many committees are explicitly tasked with serving as liaisons to or connecting directly with community members and groups.

It is common for committees to be expected to conduct outreach to individuals, community groups, and oftentimes other city advisory committees. Beaverton's *Diversity Advisory Board* purpose statement includes "assisting the City in strengthening the relationship with diverse community groups, including historically underrepresented communities, specifically communities of color, immigrants, and refugees." Medford's *Commission on Access, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* purpose statement includes "providing input and advice to other City boards and commissions on diversity, equity, and inclusion." Ashland, McMinnville, Ontario, and Troutdale purpose statements all include specific reference to this responsibility.

In practice, committees handle this differently. McMinnville's *Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee* has discussed assigning committee members to attend other committee meetings and report back. Beaverton's *Diversity Advisory Board* partnered with community groups to host the Beaverton Night Market, as part of the City's Welcoming Week.

There is a mix of self-directed project work, and more formal responsibilities.

Most committees' workload is a mix between self-directed initiatives and ongoing or City Council assigned responsibilities. Beaverton's *Diversity Advisory Board* is likely the most established committee. Annually, they issue a report card on the City's implementation of their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, which they are a primary author of and update every four to five years. They also establish annual priorities, which drives their agendas and sub-committee work.

Ashland's *Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission* is one of the newest committees, but will be provided with a work plan adopted by the City Council to guide their first six-months of work. One of their first assignments will be to work with Southern Oregon University on a research project to better understand equity disparities across their community.

Other committees have more latitude to pursue topics that interest committee members. McMinnville's *Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee* spent their first few meetings brainstorming potential topics, resulting in two changes to the committee's structure (and City code) already.

Medford's newly-formed *Commission on Access, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* will have part of their agenda driven by City projects – like an upcoming houselessness plan – that needs community input. City staff describe their role as akin to a consultant; intended to provide feedback on City projects and programs using a DEI lens.

There is a range of focus areas.

The following focus areas were pulled from purpose statements or recent agendas.

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plans – Beaverton, Medford, Ashland, McMinnville



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- Place Naming and/or Signage – Beaverton, Ontario
- Economic Development – Beaverton, Ashland
- Community Engagement – Beaverton, Ontario, McMinnville, Lake Oswego
- Census Outreach – Beaverton, Ontario
- Review and Provide Feedback on City Projects and/or Programs – Beaverton, Medford, Ashland, McMinnville
- Homelessness – Ontario, Medford
- Proclamations – Medford
- Human Resources Processes – Ashland, Lake Oswego
- Land Acknowledgements – McMinnville
- Public Safety and Police – Troutdale