



**CITY OF BOULDER
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: APRIL 19, 2022

AGENDA TITLE

Consideration of a motion to accept the April 12, 2022 Study Session Summary regarding the Update on Racial Equity Plan Implementation

PRESENTER/S

Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager
Aimee Kane, Equity Program Manager
Ryan Hanschen, Engagement Specialist
Ana Silvia Avendaño-Curiel, Equity Policy Advisor
Ryan Hanschen, Engagement Manager
Taylor Reimann, City Council Administrator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Boulder (COB) has a long history, commitment, and intention of improving the ability to welcome, support and serve people of diverse backgrounds within the community and city organization. However, those traditional efforts failed to address the institutional racist policies and actions that would have a real positive impact on employees and the community.

The purpose of this study session is to:

- Outline key racial equity work to date
- Frame what work items are prioritized in 2022
- Reiterate the commitment council made with the adoption of Council resolutions #1178 in 2015 and #1275 in 2019

Present: Mayor Aaron Brockett, Mayor Pro Tem and Study Session Facilitator Rachel Friend, Council Members Bob Yates, Mark Wallach, Nicole Speer, Lauren Folkerts, Matt Benjamin, Junie Joseph, and Tara Winer

Staff: Nuria River-Vandermyde, City Manager; Aimee Kane, Equity Program Manager; Ana Silvia Avendaño-Curiel, Equity Policy Advisor; Ryan Hanschen, Engagement Specialist; Taylor Reimann, City Council Administrator; Emily Sandoval, Sr. Communication Program Manager

Overview

The study session provided the opportunity for council members to learn more about the progress to date since the adoption of the city's racial equity plan as well as; upcoming work items prioritized in 2022.

Summary of the Presentation and Discussion

The equity program manager, policy advisory, engagement manager and city council administrator highlighted one specific project in support of each goal of the racial equity plan and upcoming 2022 projects:

- In support of ***Everybody Gets It***
 - three workshops are provided: Advancing Racial Equity: The Role of Government (987 employee participants to date); Bias and Microaggression Workshop (445 employee participants to date); Racial Equity Instrument (177 employee participants to date)
 - 34 employee equity ambassadors facilitate workshops through a robust train-the-trainer model
 - qualitative feedback indicates employees are shifting towards a desire for more action-focused activities to advance racial equity
- In support of ***Justly Do It***
 - Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit has been released to guide departments to establish their own JEDI teams
 - opportunity to facilitate departmental equity assessment, review departmental policies, build capacity among team members specific to the business service of each department
- In support of ***Power to all People***
 - Community Connector participation in East Boulder Subcommunity Plan
 - Spanish-first design sessions assisted in design of remaining community engagement
 - Identification of water quality issues in San Lazaro mobile home community
 - Identification of grant assistance for solar lighting to increase safety
- In support of ***Community Commitment***
 - Renaming of city Municipal Building to the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building
 - partnership with Tate family
 - fundraising campaign to assist with infrastructure improvements and naming ceremony with state leaders and Tate's living relatives from across the country

- Penfield Tate III quoted as saying, “He had a love affair so deep and long-lasting with this city. This is sort of the ultimate tribute to him.”
- In support of ***Representation Matters***
 - project launched to improve boards and commissions
 - administrative enhancements to appointment process already commenced for 2022 recruitment process
 - city staff working with external consultant to create a DEI blueprint for board and commission support staff to enhance accessibility, belonging and equity for board and commission members
 - Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Readiness Assessment completed by board liaisons and secretaries to create baseline data
 - respondents indicated the belief that many members of City Council believe DEI efforts would better help boards meet city mission
 - Concerns were raised regarding the lack of training, skills, and structure to integrate DEI work into the board and commissions processes
 - acknowledgement of structural challenges, including current board relationships, how groups interface with council and the politicization of the appointment process
- 2022 Citywide high level work plan items
 - creation of Data team and hub to assist users of the racial equity instrument to disaggregate data by race, ethnicity, income, age and other demographics to better understand disparate impacts of programs, policies, practices and financial decisions
 - enhanced partnerships leaving the city as leaders in racial equity work and continuation of organizing and operationalizing intentional racial equity efforts
 - continued work on the DEI blueprint for boards and commissions
 - inventory of organizational policies to be prioritized for analysis with the racial equity instrument
- 2022 Department Work Plans
 - 18 departments to launch or prepare to launch departmental JEDI teams
 - departments with JEDI teams to participate in departmental assessments to establish where departments are in their racial equity journeys, what training is necessary, and prioritization of policies and programs for review with the racial equity instrument
 - completion of inventories of departmental policies for analysis with racial equity instrument

Council posed questions and discussed with staff perceptions about what is going well with racial equity work, what excites council most, what perceived barriers exist to advance equity work and how council members see themselves playing a role in mitigating barriers.

- Questions included:
 - is there a percentage of staff per department required to assist with advancing racial equity work – request for one person/department be recruited for racial equity ambassador program

- involvement of youth participation – currently only engagement with Growing Up Boulder; anticipation of internship programs with CU and I Have a Dream Foundation
- clarification of various racial equity tools and assessments, how each is utilized
- question about participation of people of color within equity workshops and required attendance, what systems are in place to minimize additional harm – upcoming affinity policy and groups; equity ambassador support systems
- Overall feedback from council was positive about outcome progress to date
- Numerous projects highlighted as going well, including:
 - JEDI Teams toolkit
 - Bias and Microaggression workshop as ‘life changing’
 - Spanish translation on sales tax website
 - Spanish translation for 2020 COVID Business Grants
 - equitable prioritization of water uses in draft Comprehensive Flood and Stormwater Master Plan update
 - Renaming of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building
 - Climate Justice Initiatives
 - Community Connectors Programs and connectors as a bridge to community
 - active involvement of community connectors in the East Boulder Subcommunity planning process
- Areas of upcoming excitement for council
 - walks and chats with council
 - relational nature of the work
 - opportunities for personal growth and expansion especially for privileged identities
 - policy and other changes that can be made and the ripple effect to go beyond what’s currently happening
- Perceived barriers to furthering the work
 - explicit analysis in how racial equity instrument is being applied and how it changes decisions
 - majority white community and policy makers
 - work is hard and contentious
 - too many tools and lack of clarity, may be too much analysis mechanism and not proving effective
 - lack of bringing partners deep into engagement – keeping partners engaged in the conversation
 - knowing what’s in control of the city as an organization vs. community behavior and building a foundation of trust
 - lack of accountability and personal growth of the community, community buy-in
- Council role in mitigating barriers
 - council needs to be held accountable
 - not backing away from difficult conversations
 - build trust with community and community organizations advancing racial equity
 - expanding the saturation point so racial equity is the foundation of all we do
 - integration in three-legged stool

- concrete actions from guiding coalition or departments that make steps to make life better for community members
- opportunity for council members to reinforce work by having difficult conversations publicly
- ongoing conversation with constituents who are not onboard with a decision after application of the racial equity instrument