



CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2018

To: Simon Andrew, Assistant to the City Manager

From: Stefanie Bowers, Human Rights Coordinator & Equity Director

Re: Update on Racial and Socioeconomic Equity Review Toolkits

Introduction: Currently 8 City departments have received racial and socioeconomic equity toolkit training and have used the training to review their policies, procedures, services, and programs.

The use of racial and socioeconomic equity toolkits has allowed staff in those departments to normalize conversations on race and to be conscious of race in the services we provide as a City to the community. The toolkits have aided staff's ability to more effectively collect data, work with community voices, deliver the training of the toolkit to other staff for capacity building within the City, and to recognize racial equity as a priority that will lead us to better decision making and better outcomes.

Starting in August 2016 through August 2017, the following City Departments: Neighborhood and Development Services, Police, Human Resources, Finance, and Human Rights evaluated a current procedure, policy, program or service, and a new and/or potentially new procedure, policy, program or service using a racial and socioeconomic equity review toolkit. These departments were intentionally selected because they have one or all the following: 1) the services provided are heavily relied upon by persons of color or immigrant populations; 2) the community has expressed concern on how the services are delivered; or 3) the services provided impact large groups or persons in the community.

The Departments used a three-step process to gather information that was used to inform planning and decision making about public policies and programs. Each step is enumerated below.

Step 1: What is the impact of the proposal on determinants of equity?

The aim of the first step is to determine whether the proposal will have an impact on equity or not.

Step 2: Who is affected by the proposal?

This step identifies who is likely affected by the proposal.

Step 3: Opportunities for action?

The third step involves identifying the impacts of the proposal from an equity perspective. The goal is to develop a list of likely impacts and actions to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated, and positive impacts are enhanced.

Discussion: Below is the current progress and long-term impact on those Departments use of toolkits.

Accounting

Capital Grant Funding.

Now requires a racial minority impact statement as part of a new Grants Management Policy. It includes creating a map showing distribution of racial minorities in the city a map was created in ESRI (geographic information system software) and is available on the intranet for departments to utilize. Capital grant applications must use this map to identify the grant's location and review its impact on racial or ethnic minorities with a narrative statement as well as the block group identifier to quantify the impact. The racial minority impact statement and block group are required on the Grant Review Form that departments submit to get approvals for grants before they apply.

Revenue

Utility Billing.

A donation program was established in March 2018. This fund helps sustain the City's Utility Discount Program, which provides income eligible Iowa City utility customers a discount of 60 percent of the minimum water and sewer charge, 60 percent of the monthly storm water charge and 75 percent of the refuse and recycling charges each month. A news release, news interviews, and a bill insert were used to promote the program. Stories appeared on KCRG and KWWL news. Currently there are 123 accounts that make a monthly contribution on their water bill. Nearly \$6,400 has been given to date - about \$726 per month for the regular contributors.

Purchasing

Requests for Bids and Proposals.

Purchasing now includes a voluntary demographic information survey in all Request for Proposals and Request for Bids. Accounting also includes the voluntary demographic information survey when it sends out Automated Clearing House (ACH) letters to vendors. Each vendor that completes the survey and is identified as a "Women Owned Business", "Minority Owned Business" or "Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Business" is marked as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) in the financial software system. Sixty-one bids and proposals were received to date, and 9 received were from DBEs, 41 received were marked 'none of the above', and 11 received were incomplete (did not complete the survey). Looking at the slats, for the companies that filled out the survey almost 15% were DBEs. Of the 9 DBE submittals, 3 were awarded a contract.

Police

Online Feedback Form.

The online feedback form went live on September 7, 2017. Between then and November 2018, 39 submissions were received from the public. Most of submissions either asked questions or made comments about incidents in which the police were involved. Sixteen submitters asked for a police supervisor to contact them for follow up; 12 submitters requested no follow up; 3 submitters did not answer the follow up question.

Juvenile Curfew Standard Operating Guidelines.

From September 2016 through August 2017, there were 25 juvenile curfew citations issued. From September 2017 through August 2018, there were 6 juvenile curfew citations issued. This represents a 76% decrease in citations, with 11 of the 12-months in that period accounted for. Three of those cited were White; 3 were Black; and none identified as Hispanic. All the cited curfew violations involved one or more additional criminal violation by the minor. When other criminal acts are involved, the officer's discretion is reduced.

Public Hours at Animal Care & Adoption Center.

There has been no significant change in the status of this proposal. Staffing models don't show a viable option for expansion of service hours or additional programming without the cutting of hours at the facility at some other time during the week. Currently it is open 10:30 AM to 5:30 PM Monday - Friday and 10:30 AM to 3:00 PM on Saturday. Iowa City Transit does not have a route that runs to the location. Both the hours of operation and the location can serve as barriers to persons in the community who wish to adopt.

Neighborhood and Development Services

Complaints Mapping.

The City received 2,400 complaints in calendar year 2017 and continues to monitor where complaints are located. Complaints appear to be originating from every neighborhood. Neighborhoods with more rental properties tend to have higher complaint activity. Steps have been taken to be more proactive in high complaint neighborhoods. At the start of July 2018, a Neighborhood Response Officer position was created. Their duties include addressing neighborhood quality of life concerns and issues that arise in the downtown area. The regular duty hours are Tuesday - Saturday 6:00 PM to 2:00 AM. Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings are peak times when many neighborhood complaints for nuisances such as loud noise, garbage, parking, etc., come in.

Bike racks on older multi-family properties.

No progress has been made on the bike rack project. To move forward, partnerships with private property owners will need to be explored. MPO will also gauge support for a code change to retroactively require bike racks at all existing multi-family buildings if there is sufficient interest amongst City Council and administration.

Notification of Rezoning and Redevelopment.

Staff continues to emphasize good neighbor meetings, post public notice signs and written notification to all dwelling units for which applicants can obtain addresses.

Since the last report out in October 2017, Ordinance 17-4728 was adopted amending the major site plan review process to require notification to occupants of rental properties and an occupant transition plan for any additions or alteration to a residential development with more than 12 dwelling units. This includes the following requirements:

Within twenty-four (24) hours of applying for major site plan approval, the applicant shall post notice on the subject property of intent to develop on the site. The notice to be posted will be provided by the City and shall be posted as directed by the City. For major site plans involving any additions or alterations to existing development containing over twelve (12) residential units, the applicant, within twenty-four (24) hours of applying for major site plan approval, shall mail written notice to all current occupants of the development property informing them of the application and intention to develop on the site, the anticipated construction timeline, and phasing of the project. The applicant shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the City that such notice requirements have been satisfied before the application will be considered complete.

For major site plans involving any additions or alterations to existing development containing over twelve (12) residential units, the applicant shall submit an occupant transition plan if there are any occupants of the development on the date the application is submitted. Such a plan must include the number of current occupants; a general description of current contractual obligations between the owner and the occupant(s); when any leasehold interest expires; and a construction timeline and phasing plan.

In addition, the ordinance required that the City Council consider and approve the occupant transition plan prior to approval of the site plan or issuance of a building permit.

The intent of the code change is to provide a means of communicating pending changes to existing rental residents where the proposed changes would not otherwise trigger a zoning process and to require City Council consideration in an otherwise administrative process. Since the ordinance's adoption, 21 major site plan cases have been filed with the City. None of these met the threshold for triggering use of the new major site plan process. Staff will continue to monitor future site plan activity for compliance.

Staff is still in the process of acquiring new permitting and plan review software which will incorporate electronic application submittals. After the contract is finalized it will take about 18 months to implement. Residents will also be able to view permit activity for subdivisions and buildings.

Human Rights

Online Complaint.

The option to submit a discrimination complaint online went live in February of 2017. Since that time 27 complaints of discrimination in the areas of education, housing, employment, and public accommodation have been submitted online out of approximately 42 complaints total being filed during that time. The online complaint option allows for persons to file a complaint of discrimination with the Human Rights Office 24/7. This streamlines the process and allows for an efficient and accessible way for persons to report discrimination at any time.

Discrimination Complaint Party Mapping.

Complaint mapping was completed for 2017. Based on this information staff will continue to place more resources in the businesses and landlords in the downtown region due to the slightly higher number of complaints filed. Staff will also provide broader outreach to students and consumers on their rights.

Phase 2 of Toolkits: with the goal of continuing to advance social justice and racial equity within City procedures, policies, programs, and services, several City departments, including Parks and Recreation, the Housing Authority, the Fire Department and the Library are currently using a racial equity review toolkit. Current updates follow.

Library

Adverse effects of overdue fines on children's access to library services.

The Library has chosen to look at how fines present a barrier to children from moderate to low income families and to eliminate these barriers if possible. The first step in their study was mapping out locations of children's library cards that were delinquent due to fines (owe \$10 or more). The data showed that the largest number of delinquent children's cards are in neighborhoods that have been identified by Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as low to moderate income. During FY20 budget preparation further study was done to determine what percent of all fine income came from children's materials.

Multiple national studies are available that show a positive impact on children's library use when overdue fines are eliminated, and there is a national discussion regarding library fines. We know that library fines represent a barrier to access and literacy resources for many children in our community. While fines are not meant to be punitive, the reality is they become punitive for children who face access and other issues related to utilizing Library services. An overdue fine of 25 cents a day is equally assessed to all overdues, however it does not equally affect low, medium and high-income households.

The Library Board has approved a budget request that eliminates fines on all children and teen library materials which will reduce income from fines. If approved through the City budget process we hope to remove these fines by June 1, 2019, in time for the summer reading season. Further study will show if a no fines policy for children's materials results in higher use and fewer delinquent cards.

Monitor conduct reports regarding teens to determine if racial minorities are disproportionately affected. Identify ways to ensure fair and equal treatment.

The Library's conduct database was reviewed, and it was determined that there are a much larger percentage of conduct reports written for Black teens than any other racial group. To determine a baseline, a usage study of the Teen Center was repeated twice, each for two weeks, once in the summer and once in the fall, when school was in session. A count was done each hour of the perceived ethnicity and race of the teens in the Teen Center. We found that, during the summer, the teens who use the Teen Center are 49% Black, 45% White, 4% Asian/Pacific/Islander and 2% Unknown. During the school year we found that the teens who use the Teen Center are 64% Black, 32% White, 3% Unknown and 1% Asian/Pacific/Islander. The information gathered will serve as a starting point for an ongoing study. Currently staff work with teens whose behavior does not meet the criteria of the Teen Center so that they will not be banned as an adult would. This entails talking with the teens and when possible with the parents.

Study the ways that racially diverse groups obtain information about library services with a goal to improve information delivery to identified populations.

The Library's Communications Overview, a document that details each way the Library communicates with the community and the intended purpose of the communication was reviewed. The demographics for the community and demographics of students in the Iowa City Community School District were also studied. Then three questions were focused: What are the languages spoken in homes in our community? Where do new Iowans get information about the Library and the community? Where do racially diverse groups get information about Library programs? As a response, we gathered information to answer these questions.

There are a couple anticipated outcomes for this work. First, an email group will be cultivated to share Library information. The people in the email group will have contact with populations who find information in nontraditional settings such as newsletters, bulletin boards and other venues related to the organizations they work with. Second, more flyers will be translated each year. Staff is also considering translating the webpage to other languages. Staff have been working with OmniLingua on additional translations of Library flyers. "How to Get a Library Card" information was translated into Swahili and these bookmarks were available beginning in mid-November.

In December, Kara Logsdon gave a presentation about how the Library shares information about Library collections, programs, and services to the City Manager's Roundtable. Members of the Roundtable were able to provide feedback to Kara on the initiatives. A copy of the presentation follows this memorandum.

Parks and Recreation

Map and evaluate home address locations of Group Swim and Private Swim lessons. Compare data with progression through the first four levels of swim lessons to determine if all neighborhoods are represented and having similar success in learning to swim.

The mapping of swim lesson participants has been completed. The maps of swim lesson participants show that the program reaches all areas of the community. Staff continues to evaluate participation from youth who have been identified as coming from moderate to low income households and underserved populations to determine how to reduce barriers to swim lesson participation. Early indications are that transportation is the most common barrier.

Map and evaluate home address locations of individuals who rent garden plots.

Compare with garden locations to determine future locations and outreach to expand community gardens.

The mapping of garden plot renters has been completed. The map and information gathered, to date, was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission at its November meeting.

The maps of the garden plot renters identify several areas of the community where residents are not using this program. Staff will be evaluating each of these areas to determine if there is a suitable location for a new garden plot nearby or if there are other reasons why particular neighborhoods do not seem to have an interest in garden space. The Parks Commission recommended that priority be given to neighborhoods with concentrations of rental homes and multi-family homes.

Map and evaluate home address locations of recreation summer camp participants to determine if all neighborhoods are represented in the children served by Parks and Recreation.

Mapping of summer camp participants will be completed in the near future to determine if the program is providing equitable service to all areas of the City.

Using recent Tree Inventory data, compare the tree canopy coverage of a variety of neighborhoods and compare with data of income levels and race to prioritize future tree planning projects to provide equity throughout the community.

Staff plan to evaluate tree planting efforts and tree canopy coverage through use of data from the 2017 Tree Inventory.

Parks and Recreation Director, Juli Seydell-Johnson provided an overview of these toolkits at the December City Manager's Roundtable. Copies of the handouts from the presentation follow this memorandum.

Fire

Emergency Services Youth Summer Camp – Are All Neighborhoods/Schools Being Represented.

The camp held three sessions this year: junior high, senior high, and *Dream Center*. The camp registration forms were used to obtain attendee demographic data needed for this proposal - city, address and school. For the purposes of this proposal, "neighborhood" is defined using the city's census tracts boundaries. Attendees not residing in Iowa City were excluded from the final data set. The Iowa City data set is 64.

In reviewing the data a few concerns were noted: school boundaries do not necessarily align with the census tracts and, due to open enrollment, camp attendees may not live near the school they attend or may live outside of Iowa City and attend school in Iowa City.

Moving forward "neighborhood" will need to be further refined to best represent the data (school vs. census tract).

Unattended Cooking Fires – Evaluate Factors Tied to Incidences of Fire.

The purpose of this proposal is to identify the number of incidences of unattended cooking per neighborhood, evaluate causal factors (age, alcohol, etc.), and identify any trends related to the fire locations. For the purposes of this proposal, we again defined "neighborhood" using the city's census tracts boundaries.

Using incident data retrieved from the records management system (January 2017-November 2018). The initial review of data indicates unattended cooking fires are fairly spread out through the city. As expected, a larger number of incidents occur in multi-family housing units located in areas typically heavily populated by college students. A deeper look at the remaining census

tracts will be conducted to provide additional information and identify trends – owner occupied/rental, single family/multi-family, etc.

Ride Along Program – Are All Neighborhoods/Schools Being Represented.

A review was conducted of ride along request forms submitted from January 2017-November 2018. While the data clearly shows the Department hosts a significant number of riders (EMT students, fire science students), it also shows very few community members take advantage of the opportunity. As a result of the toolkit process, the ride along form has undergone an initial revision and the process for conducting backgrounds checks is under review.

The Housing Authority

Survey current participants and new voucher holders to determine if the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated briefings are creating participation barriers to working families and Review the HUD mandated briefing materials to determine the impact of Limited English Proficiency on Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) participants' understanding of family obligations and reporting procedures.

Current Housing Choice Voucher participants and new voucher holders are being surveyed to determine if the Housing and Urban Development-mandated briefings create participation barriers. The Housing Authority sent out surveys in mid-August to 240 recipients of Housing Choice Voucher. Administered surveys to briefing attendees in the 4 following briefings (consisting of approximately 52 persons). Of the 292 surveys sent out, 44 have been completed and returned.

The Housing Authority is beginning to review completed surveys to determine the impact of Limited English Proficiency on the effectiveness and accessibility of the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP), specifically regarding participants' understanding of family obligations and reporting procedures.

Review and analyze the impact of periods of ineligibility for families terminated or denied housing assistance.

Staff has reached out to forty-seven Housing Authorities across the country to inquire into their policies regarding periods of ineligibility. However, the response rate has been low. Staff will continue to reach out to more Housing Authorities to get more data.

Conclusion: Staff will continue to report out on its use of toolkits within City operations.