



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Zulma Maciel
Carolina Camarena
Jim Shannon

**SUBJECT: OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY
& LANGUAGE ACCESS EXPANSION**

DATE: May 28, 2021

Approved

Date: 5/28/2021

RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the following amendments to the 2021-2022 Proposed Operating Budget in the General Fund:
 - a. Increase the City Manager's Office's Personal Services budget by \$200,000; and
 - b. Decrease the Language Access Coordination Reserve in the amount of \$200,000.

BACKGROUND

The Mayor's March Budget Message for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, as approved by the City Council, directed the City Manager to articulate the work plan of the Office of Racial Equity, present options for continued multi-year funding, and include the following:

1. Integrate an equity framework into decision-making and operationalize this practice in daily work;
2. Create a coordinated community engagement approach that builds effective partnerships;
3. Create infrastructure to ensure the City has a data-driven approach to decision making;
4. Set aside resources for external consultants or facilitators to assist the City, where necessary; and
5. Substantially expand language access capacity and determine where to add a Language Access Coordinator.

In June 2020, the Mayor and City Council unanimously approved the establishment of the Office of Racial Equity (ORE). Subsequently, the City Manager's Office appointed a Director in October 2020 which set in motion the development of work items for the Office which resulted in the development of an operational workplan (Attachment A). The workplan, which is a work in progress, highlights five primary objectives:

1. Develop & Implement Training and Applied Practice Program
2. Build ORE Team and Citywide Infrastructure

3. Embed Equity in Budget Process
4. Support Reimagining Community Safety Project
5. Support Community + Economic Recovery Work

While not included in the attachment, integrating the work of the Immigrant Affairs team is a significant goal for the ORE. The team will be responsible for implementing the proposed *Welcoming San José Plan 2.0*, which was heard by the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee on May 20, 2021. The expansive work of the Immigrant Affairs team will be coordinated with the Racial Equity team to ensure alignment and efficiencies.

It is important to note that recent additions to the ORE workplan include the implementation of the strategies from the memorandum approved by the City Council on [May 25, 2021, Item 3.6](#), to help reaffirm San José's commitment to the safety and well-being of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and in combating hate crimes and misinformation targeting community members, along with additional direction provided by the memorandum from Councilmembers Peralez, Esparza, and Arenas, as well as the memorandum from Councilmember Esparza. Combined, the direction to the Administration is to implement 15 strategies to combat hate crimes and violence in coordination with the County of Santa Clara, County Hate Crimes Task Force, partner organizations, and the community, and to provide a status report to the Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Support Committee in six months, and annually thereafter.

Lastly, ORE will work with the City Attorney's Office and the Police Department and return with two Council Resolutions: 1) addressing the loss to historic Chinatowns and the subsequent intergenerational trauma it has had on the Chinese community; and 2) recommending for each law enforcement agency in Santa Clara County, including county, city, state, and campus police agencies, to take immediate steps as recommended by the County Hate Crimes Task Force and will be discussed at the upcoming Board of Supervisors meeting in June.

ANALYSIS

The ORE is recommended for permanent establishment with the 2021-2022 Proposed Operating Budget, including four positions that were added in 2020-2021.¹ This section addresses the five specific items requested in the Mayor's March Budget Message and highlights both progress as well as work in development.

Overall, despite not having most of the new positions filled, ORE has made steps towards building a City foundation for advancing racial equity in the following ways:

- Offered regular consultation to multiple departments on applying an equity lens to their work;
- Developed tools and process for Budgeting for Equity, and provided review, consultation, and technical assistance to all departments;

¹ Office of Racial Equity Staffing and Consulting Services, VIII-62:
<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/72245>

- Completed an RFP for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) consultants, DEI training for City staff, and training specific for law enforcement;
- Supported citywide staff workgroups, focused on data, community engagement, workforce equity, and reimagining community safety;
- Developed the SJ Equity Atlas (beta version);
- Completed the *Welcoming San José 2.0 Plan* in coordination with community partners, and began development of an evaluation plan;
- Continued language access support for EOC and departments;
- Provided consultation on the City Bilingual Pay policy;
- Recruited one Staff Specialist and two Assistant to the City Managers (A2CM) – the Staff Specialist began in February 2021, the Immigrant Affairs Manager (A2CM) began in May 2021, and the Racial Equity Manager (A2CM) is expected to be onboarded in June;
- Drafted job specifications for departmental Equity Manager positions;
- Convened several meetings with partner organizations to solicit input from community members on a variety of topics, such as marketing and outreach to non-English speakers, rental and financial assistance, and combatting anti-Asian American & Pacific Islander hate; and
- Participated and continues to have a role in Community and Economic Recovery.

1. Operationalizing Equity into City Decision-Making

At its core, ORE's work requires two foundational components:

1. Make racial equity a core value across all functions and levels of City government.
2. Build capacity in the organization to modify or transform City processes, practices, and decision-making – in all departments – that will, in the long-term, improve outcomes for communities of color, as well as other excluded groups in San José.

To accomplish this, ORE will focus on citywide efforts such as training, creating tools, supporting existing work groups and the interdepartmental Racial Equity Team. With current resources, each department will also be assigned a member of the ORE team to act as a consistent thought-partner, who will ask hard questions and help think through how to apply racial equity principles to departmental work and systems.

To help build an infrastructure for accountability that results in progress towards anti-racist departmental decisions, ORE will also begin developing a preliminary system for tracking the following:

- Equity-related commitments across the City and progress toward implementation;
- Application of an equity lens to key departmental decisions, with a specific focus on staff recommendations to Council;
- Institutional changes that support racial equity principles, such as infrastructure for using disaggregated data in decision-making and improved community engagement.

With over 6,600 full-time equivalent positions, and four ORE team members plus three team members in the Office of Immigrant Affairs – once fully staffed – a comprehensive

accountability infrastructure will be more effective when directly embedded within City departments. In the past year, two departments, Housing and Library, have created positions specifically focused on equity and have been able to more effectively integrate and operationalize an equity framework in their department's work and build in accountability. In turn, both departments have made significant equity-focused progress in 2020-21, including:

Library

- Developing EDI Quality Standards to integrate into the Education & Digital Literacy Strategy and all City education programming, develop tools and processes to support deeper EDI program evaluation;
- Supporting leadership in prioritizing service roll-outs based on Equity Index and other data sources;
- Deepening inclusion through developing a departmental Racial Equity Team, Disability Access Committee, and programming for teens and adults with intellectual and learning disabilities and other underrepresented communities;
- Developing stronger data collection and analysis to support deeper understanding of department reach in communities - as well as growth opportunities, particularly for greater inclusion of broader racial/ethnic, multilingual, older adults and low-income households; and
- Analyzing the Department's community outreach efforts and developing relationships with additional organizations and participation in key stakeholder dialogue spaces.

Housing

- Providing support to three teams to use an equity lens on projects such as the Homelessness Emergency Aid Program racial equity workplan (HEAP/HHAP), the rent stabilization strategic plan, and COVID-19 equitable recovery to improve outcomes for underserved communities;
- Assessing data gaps and developing a framework to evaluate equitable access, distribution, and outcomes of clients of housing grant funded programs;
- Coordinating department-wide foundational racial equity training and cross-cultural conversations to build knowledge and normalize conversations around racial equity;
- Coordinating an active Housing Department Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) team to advise and lead internal racial equity initiatives;
- Updating the department's language access policy to improve language access for limited English-speaking residents and those with vision and hearing impairment – the policy will include procedures for staff to hire professional interpreters and translators when needed and to lessen reliance on multi-lingual staff to interpret and translate;
- Planning a Housing Department Open House to provide a regular/predictable touch point and opportunity to collaborate with community members, especially BIPOC communities most impacted by housing issues and homelessness; and
- Developing an RFP to procure a racial equity consultant to lead the department through a racial equity action plan process and root cause analysis in 2022.

2. Creating a coordinated Community Engagement approach

Meaningful community engagement is a central principle in advancing racial equity work. The City will continue to rely on local organizations, neighborhood associations, business associations, faith groups, schools, etc. to reach the diverse members of our community. Collaborating with partners that demonstrate both cultural responsiveness and linguistic capabilities imparts the opportunity to center the voices of the community and subsequently better inform the City's response to people's needs.

The ORE is in the process of creating a coordinated community engagement approach that builds effective partnerships. In June of 2020, a Community Engagement Work Group was formed, with participation of approximately 40 staff participants from various departments. The group has conducted a robust visioning and prioritization process to help define the problem, articulate the group's mission, vision, and values, and both identify and prioritize possible solutions.

The Community Engagement Work Group has identified several areas where additional support and policy development is required. While City Council Policy 6-30, *Public Outreach Policy for Pending Land Use and Development Proposals*, establishes an existing community engagement policy related to development projects, more work is needed in order to establish a citywide policy for quality, coordinated, non-extractive community engagement.

As more departments develop and implement a deliberate equity framework, the City will experience a progressive increase in community engagement across the spectrum of policy, programming, and budgetary decisions. For some departments like Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhoods Services, this will mean expanding on a pre-existing foundation of current community engagement work. For many other departments, including internally facing strategic support departments, this means learning about and building the capacity to begin community engagement work with the public, contractors, and other City staff.

In an effort to improve interdepartmental coordination, efficiencies and effectiveness, the Work Group identified two possible technology solutions: 1) a citywide community engagement calendar that would allow staff to see what events are being scheduled and could allow for shared meeting times or event announcements, and 2) a relationship database such as a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to provide a consistent mechanism to track the history of engagement with neighborhood and business associations, community-based organizations, and residents, as well as past and present partnerships, and deliver actionable insights based on the analysis of this data. Though not included in the 2021-2022 Proposed Operating Budget due to the ongoing General Fund shortfall, these investments will be evaluated as part of future budget development processes.

Additionally, ORE, in partnership with the Office of Economic Development and the Latino Business Foundation (LBF), is working on an equity-driven assessment of the needs of small businesses impacted by COVID-19 so that ultimately LBF can implement a virtual incubator program. The City approached this work by centering the perspectives of small business owners in East San José and thereby co-designing a program that worked for them.

Specifically, the small business needs assessment project launched with a survey to gather input from the community for economic recovery. The team, which included the Latino Business Foundation as an equal partner, designed the survey together. The input provided by the Latino Business Foundation was invaluable in framing the survey questions as the team had a much deeper understanding of the business owners in East San José and their lived experiences. The cross-functional and cross-departmental process offered innovation through a diversity of perspectives and ideas. The Latino Business Foundation managed all aspect of the outreach, marketing and implementation of the survey. They are also the owners of the data. This process and methodology valued other racial equity goals such as data privacy, trust in the process, respect for lived experiences and place-based understanding of the population being surveyed. The responses from the survey offered insight into the needs of business owners and recommendations for action. This is just one example of the ways in which meaningful community engagement can be implemented, but there are opportunities to apply a similar framework at the neighborhood level in the future, such as with Project Hope.

3. *Building an equity-focused data infrastructure*

Robust disaggregated data is critical to informing strategies for equitable community outcomes. To this end, the [San José Equity Atlas](#) was developed in December 2020 as a tool to support the City's Budgeting for Equity process. The Equity Atlas currently highlights basic demographic indicators of race and income and integrates a scoring process that uses national best practices from Policy Link, GARE and Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative. It can be used in a variety of ways to help inform a department's approach to projects, programs and services. Upcoming releases will add further data, additional benchmark indicators and other features to enable the City to leverage the full power of data.

In addition, future work to create a data-driven infrastructure includes:

- Equity Index: continued development and the potential integration of tools such as the Social Progress Index, National Equity Atlas and other equity indicators;
- Digital Equity Index: currently being developed by the Library Department;
- Data for place-based equity: to develop a city-wide approach to identify and map low resourced neighborhoods and business districts; and
- Aggregate data assets from City departments and study cross-functional use.

Creating the data-focused tools and coordinated infrastructure that allow City staff to analyze both services and outcomes based on disaggregated data will build the foundation needed for equitable decision-making at all levels of City government.

4. External Consultants and Additional Support

The ORE will be using consultants to train staff members in City departments. As directed in the City Council-approved Mayor's March Budget Message for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, one-time non-personal/equipment funding of \$100,000 is included in the Proposed Operating Budget for external consultants and support.

To maximize the use of available resources, as part of the fiscal year-end clean-up and rebudget process, the Administration will recommend repurposing \$100,000 of ORE's current year vacancy savings and rebudgeting into 2021-2022 so that a total of \$200,000 is available for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training in 2021-2022. This work that would have been conducted by ORE staff in 2020-2021, but due to delays in recruiting and hiring of new ORE positions, this training will be done by consultants next fiscal year. Foundational training will include DEI concepts with special emphasis on racial equity, implicit bias, facilitating racial equity conversations and operationalizing racial equity practices into the development of policies, programs, practices, and budget recommendations. Consultants will also provide foundational racial equity training for law enforcement professionals of the Police Department in the amount of \$100,00 that will be paid by the previously approved Police Reforms Workplan funding.

Training consultants have been selected through an RFP process and training is estimated to begin in July 2021 for City cohorts, starting with executive and senior leadership. When working with the training consultants, ORE will apply a cohort model for increased peer learning and continuous learning practice for City staff. The City DEI training and cohort model will also contribute to operationalizing racial equity practice in daily work.

The fiscal year-end clean-up and rebudget actions will also include the rebudgeting of another \$150,000 in current year personal services savings into 2021-2022 to hire temporary staff and provide non-personal/equipment savings of \$55,000 to complete existing projects, including: implementing strategies to combat hate crimes against the Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) community, community planning related to Indigenous' Peoples Day, and assisting with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) workshops.

5. Expanding Language Access capacity, including a City Language Access Coordinator

San José is home to a diverse population. The 2017-18 Annual Report on City Services notes that 58% of San José residents speak a language other than English at home and 25% speak English less than "very well." This data is further supported by research from New American Economy that states that in 2018, more than 21% of immigrants, or 164,862 people, living in San José had limited English language proficiency. Among them, the top three languages spoken at home other than English were: Spanish (43.4%), Vietnamese (22.6%) and Chinese (17.6%). Providing culturally relevant information in native languages is vital to providing resources to our communities that need it the most.

Since 2016, the Office of Immigrant Affairs was tasked with operationalizing the City's Language Access Policy though it was not until late 2019 that the City created a temporary position to serve as Language Access Coordinator (LAC). With the onset of the pandemic, the LAC was assigned to the EOC as part of the Emergency Public Information Officers Branch.

During the City's response to COVID-19 (March 2020-Present), the Emergency Public Information Officers Branch implemented the City's first-ever Language Access Unit (LAU) led by the LAC. This resulted in the translation of 3,159 pieces of communication into Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese (traditional and simplified). In addition to translations, the LAU has helped transcreate a series of social media posts and advertisements to ensure cultural relevancy in addition to language access.

The LAC's duties include:

- Procure, coordinate, and manage translation vendor(s)
- Lead and manage City staff assigned to the LAU, including the facilitation of weekly meetings
- Ensure all outreach plans are developed with cultural relevance in mind
- Transcreate all outreach material including social media posts, ads, newsletters, website, presentations, and printed material
- Coordinate the review of the weekly Flash Report, timely professional translations by assigned vendors, troubleshoot translations issues with vendors, checking and approval of invoices
- Schedule and coordinate City staff assigned to LAU for all emergency events, i.e. wildfires, PSPS events, civil unrest, etc.

Currently, the LAC is a temporary position funded by the Coronavirus Relief Fund until June 30, 2021. This memorandum recommends reallocating the \$200,000 in the Language Access Coordination Reserve that was established in the 2021-2022 Proposed Operating Budget to the City Manager's Office to continue this position for an additional year. Because language access services are critical for a large percentage of City residents, the LAC position will expand on the successful EOC LAU model by assisting departments in the creation of their own LAU to significantly expand language access services provided by the City. The position will be funded on a one-time basis and the continuation of this position would be considered as part of the 2022-2023 Proposed Budget process.

Given that the role of the LAC is focused on communicating to a large sector of the San José population, the most appropriate "home" for the LAC and the associated body of work is within the Office of Communications. Consistent with the goal of embedding racial equity work within the City, this is an example where a piece of work that has been incubated within the ORE and can now be successfully transitioned into another part of the City organization. This action helps cement Language Access within the City system itself to help ensure the City communicates effectively with the San José community.

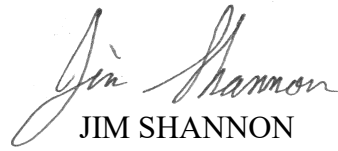
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COORDINATION

This memorandum was coordinated with the Housing and Library Departments.

/s/
CAROLINA CAMARENA
Director, Office of Communications

/s/
ZULMA MACIEL
Director, Office of Racial Equity


JIM SHANNON
Budget Director

Attachment A: Office of Racial Equity Workplan

Office of Racial Equity: Objectives

Goal: Enable the City organization to embed a racial equity practice that will examine and improve San José's internal policies, programs, and decision-making so that, ultimately, we improve outcomes for communities of color.



**Develop +
Implement
Training + Applied
Practice Program**



**Build ORE Team +
Citywide
Infrastructure**



**Embed Equity
in Budget
Process**



**Support
Reimagining
Community Safety
Project**



**Support
Community +
Economic Recovery
Work**

Racial Equity: OKRs

November 2020-December 2021

Objectives

Develop + Implement Training + Applied Practice Program (Normalize)

Build ORE Team + Citywide Infrastructure (Organize)

Embed Equity in Budget Process (Operationalize)

Support Reimagining Community Safety Project

Support Community + Economic Recovery Work

Key Results

- # of City employees trained by Dec 2021
- % of participants who rated the training good or better
- % increase in knowledge, understanding
- % of participants who can demonstrate how to apply racial equity concepts and tools to their work
- % of trained staff reporting use of training info/tools in their work
- Develop centralized resources (web)
- Complete procurement process for consultants

- Recruit and Hire ORE Team by June 2021
- Establish Citywide Equity Committee by August 2021
- # of Depts with Equity Teams
- # of Depts with departmental Racial Equity Action Plans
- # of Equity and Inclusion managers (or in similar role)
- Support 5 Equity Work Groups

- # of staff trained in budgeting for Equity Worksheet (BEW)
- # of depts/divisions who apply BEW to their budget proposals
- # of dept level performance indicators, disaggregated by race, that are identified / agreed upon and data is being collected
- Build SJ Equity Atlas that includes race and income

- Consultant(s) and MSAs in place by May 2021
- Develop community engagement framework
- # community members give input to “reimagining community safety”, of which X% are directly impacted community members
- Implement 15 strategies to combat AAPI hate and violence

- Co-design racial equity framework
- Assist OED in small business needs assessment and analysis
- Assist OED in virtual incubator partnership and build for equitable recovery
- Ensure community engagement in financial and rental relief efforts
- Revise Community Engagement Policy

Status 100% goal met In progress