



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 5

DATE: January 22, 2021

TO: Transportation Authority Board

FROM: Cynthia Fong - Deputy Director for Finance & Administration
Hugh Louch - Deputy Director for Planning

SUBJECT: 1/26/21 Board Meeting: Racial Equity Action Plan - Phase 1 Internal Programs & Policies

<p>RECOMMENDATION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Action</p> <p>None. This is an information item.</p> <p>SUMMARY</p> <p>The purpose of this memorandum is to present the first phase of the Racial Equity Action Plan. In July 2019, the City and County of San Francisco’s (City) Office of Racial Equity (ORE) was created by Supervisors Sandra Lee Fewer and Vallie Brown as a division of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. ORE was legislated in response to the City’s growing racial disparities, and as a mean to address the history of structural and institutional racism in San Francisco’s delivery of services to the public and its own internal practices and systems. ORE has directed City departments to develop and implement mandated racial equity action plans, and to analyze the disparate impacts of pending ordinances, as well as various other policy and reporting functions. While the Transportation Authority is not a City department, we have volunteered to participate in ORE’s overall efforts and develop and implement a racial equity action plan of our own. This first phase of the Racial Equity Action Plan focuses on internal programs and policies, workforce, and boards/commissions. It also includes a declaration of our agency’s key role and commitment to ensuring equitable and inclusive outcomes in San Francisco.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Programming <input type="checkbox"/> Policy/Legislation <input type="checkbox"/> Plan/Study <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Project Oversight/Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Budget/Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Contract/Agreement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Racial Equity Action Plan
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BACKGROUND

We joined the second San Francisco cohort of the Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity program in January 2017. At the annual staff workshop in August 2017, all staff participated in a racial equity training segment that focused on the role of government in advancing racial equity. In fall 2018, we started our internal Racial Equity Working Group (REWG) composed of at least one person from each division within the agency and began to identify opportunities to advance racial equity internally and externally. In 2019, the REWG conducted an agency assessment and employee survey to identify areas for improvement. Using the resulting feedback, REWG led and supported a number of initiatives to evaluate our culture and management, our hiring and contracting practices, and the funding we allocate. This work included reviewing our interview selection process, hosting regular racial equity trainings to normalize conversations on race and equip staff with skills to speak to racial issues. It also involves applying a racial equity tool or similar processes to agency projects and processes, including sales tax reauthorization, the Downtown Congestion Pricing study, and the multi-agency ConnectSF long range planning program. In February 2020, all staff participated in another racial equity training segment that continued to focus on the role of government in advancing racial equity.

DISCUSSION

We began working on the Racial Equity Action Plan in July 2020. The effort assisted us with reviewing current structures, behaviors, and norms that lead to unequal outcomes that fall along racial lines and to catalyze meaningful action towards institutional change. As outlined by ORE, this first phase of the Racial Equity Action Plan focuses on internal programs and policies, workforce and boards/commissions. It also includes a declaration of our agency's key role and commitment to ensuring equitable and inclusive outcomes in San Francisco.

Specifically, development of the first phase of the Racial Equity Action Plan directs us to:

- A) assess current conditions in seven key focus areas for all employees especially for Black, indigenous, and people of color:
 - 1) Hiring and Recruitment
 - 2) Retention, Promotion, and Protection
 - 3) Discipline and Separation
 - 4) Diverse and Equitable Leadership and Management
 - 5) Mobility and Professional Development
 - 6) Organizational Culture of Inclusion and Belonging
 - 7) Boards and Commissions
- B) identify necessary staffing and resources;



C) hold ourselves accountable by setting timely, measurable goals and commitments; and

D) intentionally address interpersonal and institutional racism within our agency.

In August 2020, the REWG began drafting a preliminary action plan and coordinated with staff responsible to implement the actions to ensure feasibility of the implementation. Between September and October, the REWG engaged and solicited feedback from executive management and staff. Thirty staff members participated and provided feedback (70% of total staff). In November 2020, we submitted our preliminary action plan to ORE for their first review. Together with their feedback and those from executive management and staff, the REWG developed 88 actions to implement over the next few years. The accompanying slide deck provides a few examples of work we will do in 2021 to advance the Racial Equity Action Plan recommendations. The Racial Equity Action Plan will be a living document that our REWG will track and update over time as we address these actions.

Next Steps. The Racial Equity Action Plan provides one mechanism that our agency is using to address equity in our work. Inequitable policies and practices throughout transportation planning history have contributed to racial segregation, systemic discrimination, and the resulting health, education, and income disparities that we find in San Francisco and throughout our country. In coordination with ORE, we will be developing phase 2 of the Racial Equity Action Plan that focuses on external agency functions such as procurements, contracting/grants, and delivery of services and programs to San Franciscans, is expected later in 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None. This is an information item.

CAC POSITION

None. This is an information item. The CAC will be briefed on this item at its January 27 meeting.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

- Enclosure - Racial Equity Action Plan: Phase 1 Internal Programs & Policies