City of Oakland Racial Equity Impact Analysis

Introduction

The establishment of the Department of Race and Equity the City of Oakland kicked off an effort to explicitly imbed racial equity in its decisions and policies. Unlike the blatantly discriminatory policies of the past, most policies today are not designed to intentionally exclude or to create additional barriers for people of color. But unfortunately, many policies still have real consequences that adversely affect how people of color experience and are impacted by systems. These policies seemed to be "face neutral" or "race silent" but their repeated application lead to outcomes that, over time, cause disparities that are predictable by race.

For this conditions to change, City staff and policymakers must grow the capacity to assess and design explicitly for racial equity. **Racial Equity Impact Analysis** is a template to guide this process of change. By applying an equity focus and analysis to key deliberations, City government can work with community to create conditions where everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to meet their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential.

This work is building on ongoing efforts. Communities of color have advocated for generations for the City of Oakland to meet its obligations regarding equity. Community studies and recommendations like the "Roadmap Toward Equity: Housing Solutions for Oakland, California by Policy Link, and Race, Inequality, and the Desegregation of the Bay Area, Urban Habitat, 2016, and others, document the case for a City of Oakland response to racial inequity.

The City of Oakland's commitment to taking intentional steps to further racial equity is essential to building and maintaining meaningful relationships with underserved communities. We can work with community to create a city where everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to meet their essential needs, advance their well-being, and achieve their full potential.

Race and Equity Working Assumptions

- Race matters - almost every indicator of well-being shows troubling disparities in outcomes by race

- Disparities are often created and maintained inadvertently through policies and practices that contain barriers to opportunity

- It's possible - and only possible, to close equity gaps by using strategies determined through an intentional focus on race

- If opportunities in all key areas of well-being are equitable, then equitable results will follow

- Given the right message, analysis, and tools, people will work toward racial equity

(Credit to the RACE MATTERS Toolkit and the Annie E. Casey Foundation for researching and crafting this assumptions language)

Racial Equity Focused Results

This approach has the built-in advantage of driving concrete, data driven, outcome oriented problem solving actions. It educates about racial disparities, informs about root causes, engages impacted community and ultimately provides a set of specific recommendations to work with and a framework to evaluate impacts of decisions on equity.

The Department of Race and Equity has led the work to adapt a result based racial equity analysis approach to be applied to emerging and revisions of existing policies, practices and procedures to advance equity. While this does not serve as an immediate cure-all, embracing an explicit equity approach will help Oakland move toward the vision of equity and away from practices that are likely to perpetuate the status quo or worsen inequities to:

- Explicitly **address issues of social and economic injustice, and structural racism**
- Use data to identify groups impacted by racial disparities and racial equity outcomes
- Disrupt racial bias and assumptions embedded in policies, procedures and systems
- Build in decision-making prompts that evoke consideration of equity and inclusion of community
- Foster focused engagement of underserved stakeholders
- Systemically analyze potential impacts of City action or inaction on groups impacted by disparities
- Increase institution's capacity for, and commitment to results based accountability

Who should use it?

A **Racial Equity Impact Analysis** can be used at all and multiple levels of the organization and policy process, and in fact, doing so, will increase effectiveness.

City staff: The routine use of a racial equity impact analysis by staff provides the opportunity to integrate racial equity across the breadth, (meaning all governmental functions), and depth, (meaning across hierarchy) of the City. It serves to elevate equity to the same status as project feasibility and budget supported by well-developed analysis.

Elected officials/City Leadership: Decision makers can use a racial equity focus to set priorities and bring greater consistency between values and practice. When leadership integrates racial equity into their work, it will be reflected in the priorities of the City budget, in direction provided to management, and in the questions asked of staff. Leadership can arrive at more equitable solutions by asking racial equity impact analysis questions from the worksheet when issues are being presented for consideration.

Community advisory bodies: Community advisory bodies can use a **Racial Equity Impact Analysis** to drive towards a more equitable membership composition and better work products. They could also use the worksheet questions to frame conversations with the City and encourage greater accountability.

Racial Equity Analysis Worksheet

Department and Lead:

Title and Description of plan, policy initiative, program, budget issue:

1. Set Equitable Results and Outcome(s) – Be specific about what are the desired racial equity conditions your department wants to see for Oakland residents.

2. Gather the right information/data about impacts (most information will need to be informed by engaging community**)**

What does the data tell us?
Identify known racial inequities that could be impacted by this effort
- What are the root causes of these inequities?
- What racial/ethnic groups are most impacted by disparities?
- Will the proposal have impacts in the specific geographic areas (neighborhoods, areas or regions)? What are the racial demographics of those living in that area?
- What are the needs or opportunities to address these inequities?

Define the most important racially equitable indicator(s) for your Department
- What are the most important areas impacted by this effort?
- What Indicators would you use to measure the desired result?

3. Identify and engage your stake holders *(gather demographic data to identify racial/ethnic groups living, working and or socializing in the area impacted by the policy /proposal- see Inclusive Engagement Guide as a resource)*
- Who are the stake holders who may be affected by this policy? How can we best reach them and engage them?
- How can we maximize engagement and impact of underserved stakeholders?
- Who is missing and how can we engage them?
- How will we meaningfully consider the perspectives of underserved stakeholders during final decision making?

4. Identify Equity Gaps
- What is the history of the racial/ethnic group(s) in Oakland? How has past public policy impacted disparities in their current conditions? How might those disparities factor into their ability to benefit from this proposal?
- What adverse impacts or unintended consequences could result from this policy if enacted as envisioned/written?
- How would different racial /Ethnic groups in Oakland would be impacted if this policy if were enacted as envisioned/written?
- What additional barriers might prevent individuals in certain racial/ethnic groups form benefitting fully if this policy were implemented as written?

5. Fill in Equity Gaps
- What steps could be taken to prevent or minimize adverse impacts or unintended consequences?
- What steps could we take to address historical harm or other barriers that could prevent various racial/ethnic groups from accessing the policy fully?

- What partnerships will be necessary for this effort?
- Are there further ways to maximize racial equitable outcomes?

6. Implementation
- Based on this analysis, what are the recommendations for the most equitable policy option(s)?
- Does the policy and any equity-enhancing measures related to this policy have adequate funding? If not, how might this be addressed?
- Are mechanisms in place ensuring successful implementation and enforcement?
- Are there provisions to ensure ongoing collection of data disaggregated by race/ethnicity?
- If no, on any of the above questions, what are the barriers to the steps needed to move forward?

7. Evaluation and Accountability
- What are the measures determining underserved groups are better off?
- What are the mechanism we will utilize to measure for racial equitable outcomes? (*Note: all measurement data needs to be disaggregated by race and any other relevant demographic to track impact on equity*)

How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
# clients/people served	% common measures
# Activities (by type of activity)	% Activity- specific measures
Is anyone better off?	
# or % Skills/knowledge	
# or %Attitude/opinion	
# or % Behavior	
# or % Circumstance	

- What is the mechanism for course correction if racial equity outcomes are not achieved?
- How will the community be informed of progress toward achieving racial equitable outcomes?