

Date: 10/31/2018
To: Mayor Jenny Durkan and/or her Executive Team and/or her Senior Staff
From: Mariko Lockhart, Interim Director, Seattle Office for Civil Rights
Shefali Ranganathan, Deputy Mayor

SECTION A: OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUE

Topic/Issue Title: Executive Order 2017-13 – Race and Social Justice Initiative
Please select one Briefing Function:

Briefing Function	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
General Update Only	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key Policy Impact/Change	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Permission Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivery of Information Requested from Mayor or E-Team	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direction needed on next steps	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Objective of this Briefing: Per Executive Order 2017-13, the Seattle Office for Civil Rights will provide the Mayor and her Executive Team with an assessment of the Citywide efforts to implement the Race and Social Justice Initiative. This briefing will include City equity leaders responsible for departmental and/or citywide efforts who will highlight successes, challenges, and opportunities to strengthen the City’s collective efforts to achieve racial equity.

Summary of Topic/Issue: The Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is the City of Seattle’s action plan to achieve racial equity in Seattle. By focusing on ending institutional and structural racism, RSJI works to end racially inequitable outcomes in key indicator areas such as education, criminal justice, housing, arts and culture, transportation, environmental justice, and workforce equity. In addition to departmental efforts and investments in these equity areas, we know that: 1) RSJI, an initiative born out of community organizing and activism, must be accountable to and follow the anti-racist leadership of communities most impacted by racism and 2) department leaders must be held accountable for embedding racial equity into their business lines and internal practices.

City equity leaders identified the following four structural impediments to institutional transformation: (1) challenges in developing and maintaining accountable community relationships, (2) inconsistent commitment among City leadership in accountability to racial equity outcomes, (3) inadequate formalized linkages between City equity leaders, and (4) lack of investment in culture shift measures.

Background: In 1996, Ven Knox (then Director of the Human Services Department) attended a four-day People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISB) Undoing Institutionalized Racism workshop in New Orleans. It was a life changing moment for her and she invited PISB back to Seattle with her to train her department of 361 employees. Within a few years, PISB had become established in the Seattle community and a movement for racial justice was born. The pressure from communities organizing for racial justice and the internal City support led to Mayor Nickels establishing the RSJI in 2004. Since then, the City has restated its commitment to RSJI via **Council Resolution (31164)** which re-affirmed the

infrastructure of RSJI; **Executive Order 2014-02**, which required annual RSJI reporting, Racial Equity Toolkit application on budget decisions, RSJI workplans, council reports, WEPAC and RSJI Surveys; a **2015 Memo to Directors**, which requires a minimum of 4 RET's by departments each year; and **Executive Order 2017-13**, requiring a Citywide assessment of RSJI. As RSJI celebrates its fourteenth year, a review of the Citywide landscape tells us we have built an expansive infrastructure that touches all aspects of City government. Almost all executive departments have active change teams and conduct a minimum of four Racial Equity Toolkits annually; RSJI supports Citywide trainings; and leads a Citywide racial equity leadership program (Core Team), currently on its fifth cohort. We have initiatives addressing environmental justice, equitable development, labor standards, internal city workforce and arts and culture. Despite these efforts, inequities persist. Low-wage workers of color cannot afford to live in Seattle, Black women remain the largest group stating they are not experiencing economic opportunities and Native, Black, and other communities of color continue to experience racial inequitable treatment by the criminal legal system. City employees continue to grapple with race-based harassment and anxiety within their departments. Due to continued, and in some cases growing racial inequities felt by both Seattle residents and City employees, there are both public and internal calls for a review of the barriers that keep RSJI from reaching its intended goal.

Recommendations to address structural barriers in the implementation of the Citywide RSJI Framework:

1. **Assessment:** Inconsistent commitment among City leadership in accountability to racial equity outcomes.
The City aims to reduce racial inequities in all aspects of our work, both internal and public-facing. To do this, departments should seek to embed racial equity in every aspect of their lines of business and internal operations. When department leaders lack a racial equity framework, they often consider and treat the work of advancing racial equity as ancillary or tangential. City leaders, especially directors and department decision-makers, must share the belief and conviction that racial equity is the foundation of public service.

Recommendations:

- A. Develop accountability agreements (with compensation and budget implications) with department directors and decision-makers that ensure commitment to racial equity. A component of this commitment is ensuring that departmental RSJI workplans are connected to overall department strategies. This should be complemented by some form of consequence for non-compliance and/or lack of demonstrated intent.

2019: Operationalize the development of accountability agreements working closely with the Innovation & Performance Team.

- B. Reinstitute the quarterly Directors' Forum for peer coaching, learning and support in racial justice analysis and application. In the recent Department Directors' trainings on racial justice and implicit bias, all directors expressed a strong interest in participating in a regular convening of peer directors to collaboratively work on advancing racial equity in their work.

2018: SOCR launches Directors Forum in December.

2019: SOCR will review, assess, and maintain the quarterly Directors' Forum. Directors will be required to attend 2-3 forums per year (requirement to be determined).

- C. Encourage directors to use their positional authority to elevate RSJI. Change teams and equity leads need the affirmation and support of department leadership in order to be most effective in carrying out their work.

2018: SOCR will work with the Mayor's Office on ways to engage directors in prioritizing RSJI within their departments.

- 2. Assessment: The City has challenges in developing and maintaining accountable community relationships. The City's racial justice efforts, in every equity area from housing justice to environmental justice, must be accountable to communities most impacted by institutional racism embedded in the outcomes of these efforts. Our most recent successes include: giving attribution and acknowledgment to the community organizing efforts that established citywide equity initiatives; providing financial resources to bring community members into City processes; and taking leadership from community in the adoption of the [Equity and Environment Agenda](#). However, we continue to struggle with disconnected and disparate community engagement practices that negatively impact community collaboration; funding decisions that create competition rather than collaboration among community-led organizations; and policy development that fails to center the solutions generated by those most impacted by institutional decisions.

Recommendations:

- A. Prioritize deliberations that allow for root cause analysis and solutions for communities most directly affected by racism. This means at multiple levels -- departments, interdepartmental teams (IDTs) and Mayor's Office policy team -- maintaining and increasing investment in community outreach, engagement, and capacity-building on issues acutely impacting the community. It will require allocation of financial and human resources and allowing time for community engagement in policy and initiative development. Examples include ensuring budget resources for language access and community outreach and engagement.

2018: SOCR will work with DON and MO on next steps.

- B. Develop citywide accountability mechanisms that hold departments responsible for addressing community harm. Such a mechanism could be department workplans "with teeth" in which the community outcomes are actually developed with the communities most impacted. A hypothetical example might be that the Office of Housing would meet with community groups from the International District, Southeast and Central District and agree to develop workforce housing specifically for black, Asian and Latino community members displaced from Seattle due to gentrification. To change departments' orientation and approach to developing workplans that impact communities, leadership and staff should use Racial Equity Toolkits and will need technical assistance and support provided by SOCR to make this culture shift. An example of a nationwide practice that demonstrates accountable community relationships is the U.S.

Department of Housing's 'Right to Remain' legislation that provides restorative community processes for community members displaced by gentrification.

2019: SOCR will develop a detailed implementation plan for this recommendation.

3. Assessment: Inadequate formalized linkages between City equity leaders. As the City continues to develop equity initiatives to address pressing social problems, equity leaders driving these initiatives face departmental isolation; under-resourcing for carrying out the community objectives of their work; and disconnection from a Citywide theory of change strategy.

Recommendations:

- A. Create a cross-City "Equity Think Tank" that formalizes and resources a structure for equity leads and strategists to build a cohesive citywide (cross-departmental) strategy; empower equity leads as advisors to department directors, the Mayor's Office, and CBO.

2018 SOCR will provide a memo to MO on current work, lessons learned, existing collaborations and how we can build on this work before expansion.

4. To address the lack of investment in culture shift measures: To realize racially just community outcomes, departments must ground their work in racial equity. Our collective challenge in shifting departmental culture stems from the lack of integration of racial equity into lines of business and internal departmental policies and practices; lack of institutional willingness to slow down processes and risk diving deeply into racial equity; and preference to maintain status quo.

Recommendations:

- A. Each department creates an equity plan for the entire department that firmly embeds racial equity into the business lines and internal policies and practices.

2018: SOCR will develop implementation plan to support departments (likely linked to the Train the Trainer model below).

- B. SOCR increases Citywide training and RET support capacity through a Train the Trainer model that will develop a Citywide cadre of Master Trainers.

2018: SOCR develops Train the Trainer proposal and submits to the Mayor.

- C. Departments ground decision-making processes in local history and community values. By applying a racial equity framework in policy and operational decisions, we will begin to shift our internal culture.

2018: SOCR will further develop options in partnership with DON and Mayor's Office on implementation.

D. Each department funds the development of racial equity efforts beyond Change Team endeavors.

2019: SOCR develops RSJI framework and training for budget process as part of Directors’ Forum learning agenda.

2019: Departments allocate budget for RSJI efforts in 2020 budgets.

E. Department leadership encourages and supports establishment of communities of practice for department employees and leaders committed to racial equity. Additional examples of culture shifting measures include: encouraging and creating a citywide community of practice; coaching for department employees and leaders; and establishing actionable accountability measures for racial justice efforts.

2019: Communicate clear commitment to racial equity – practice & outcomes
Establish Citywide community of practice for RSJI training & RET technical assistance team

Indicate Legislation and/or Council action:

Council-led Racial Equity Toolkit on the structure of SOCR in 2018

Please give a brief overview of any financial impacts:

Budget implications are dependent on adopted recommendations.

Document Name	Document Type (PDF, Word, Excel...)
1) RSJI E Team Briefing PowerPoint	PowerPoint
2) List and Description of Departmental Equity Areas	PDF

This document, and attached supporting materials, has been sent to relevant CBO/OPI staff and relevant E-Team/Senior Staff Lead (as applicable) 72 hours prior to submission to MO_Briefings. ☒

Please check all that may apply to this submission:

Public Rollout Involving the Mayor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Event Already Scheduled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal Review Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legislation (to write, transmit, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant Budget Impacts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Operational Support Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communications Strategy Needed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Significant Policy Impacts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IDT or Cabinet Involved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Council Briefing Upcoming	<input type="checkbox"/>	SLI Response Due to Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify in Summary)	<input type="checkbox"/>