



## **METRO COUNCIL RETREAT**

Meeting Summary

June 5, 2012

Oregon Zoo, Sunset Room

**Councilors Present:** Council President Tom Hughes and Councilors Carl Hosticka, Carlotta Collette, Rex Burkholder, Kathryn Harrington, Barbara Roberts and Shirley Craddick

**Councilors Excused:** None

**Staff/Guests Present:** Martha Bennett, Scott Robinson, Alison Kean Campbell, Andy Shaw, Ina Zucker, Annierose Vonburg, Kelsey Newell, Cary Stacey, Nikolai Ursin, Colin Deverell, Ramona Perrault, Katie Shriver, Mike Hoglund, and Nuin-Tara Key

Council President Hughes convened the retreat at 1 p.m.

### **1. FRAMING THE ISSUE**

In 2010, the Metro Council adopted equity as one of the region's six desired outcomes and more recently directed Metro leadership and staff to begin to address equity and help the Council identify out how to operationalize the goal. In response to Council's direction, staff produced the *Metro Equity Inventory Report*, which provides a snapshot of where and how Metro intentionally incorporates equity considerations into agency activities. The inventory was intended to provide Metro and community stakeholders with information on how Metro currently considers equity and to serve as a platform for developing an intentional strategy to advance equity issues in the future.

### **2. WHAT WE WANT OUT OF THIS RETREAT**

Ms. Martha Bennett proposed a set of questions for council consideration during the retreat aimed at helping the council reach agreement on:

- An expectation of equity as a regional outcome;
- A process to develop agency-wide strategy; and
- A timeline for the development of a strategy.

She stated that the purpose of the retreat was not to define equity or the strategy.

### **3. PRESENTATION**

Ms. Nuin-Tara Key, with assistance from Mr. Mike Hoglund, provided an in-depth overview of the *Metro Equity Inventory Report*, the first of a three-phased approach to develop, define and implement an agency strategy through community engagement to address equity. Ms. Key reviewed the project's three-phase approach, overviewed Phase 1's focus, desired outcomes and staff findings, and provided a few local and regional examples of jurisdictions who have formally

established programs to address diversity, equity, human rights and social justice. (Full presentation and report included as part of the meeting record.)

Ms. Key stated that the report's findings were based on shared themes and commonalities of efforts to advance equity at Metro and through input gathered during interviews with external stakeholders. She stated that the report's primary and overarching finding was that Metro currently lacks a consistent strategy to address equity. In the absence of a broader strategy, the organization has experienced agency-wide challenges such as limited effectiveness in achieving Metro values and inefficiencies with duplicative staff efforts. Additional high-level themes identified in the report were divided into four categories:

- **Barriers**: Efforts to build and maintain relationships with underserved communities are inconsistent
- **Limitations**: Metro has limited experience around the issue of equity and has not invested in capacity and knowledge building for staff, leadership or partners to advance equity as part of Metro's activities
- **Implementation considerations**: Staff identified the need to have guiding documents or policies to consistently implement efforts to advance equity.
- **Role of leadership**: The Council and the Senior Leadership Team have supported the goal of overcoming regional inequity, however no specific direction or allocated resources to advance the work.

#### **4. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Ms. Key briefly summarized staff's recommendation to support the project's proposed Phase 2 which if implemented would:

- Define a process for the development of an agency-wide strategy;
- Focus desired outcome on equity to create actionable goal; and
- Identify institutional and structural challenges.

#### **5. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Ms. Bennett facilitated Council's discussion. Discussion included:

- The difference between diversity and equity. Councilors emphasized that there are multiple forms of equity and that different agencies have different missions and therefore will approach equity differently.
- Whether Metro's concept of diversity addressed diversity in Metro's workforce or leadership. Members also emphasized the need to address the broader issue of Metro's hiring processes and creating an agency where people from diverse backgrounds feel comfortable .
- Councilors recommended that the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) used in Metro hiring practices be reevaluated as the population the program was developed to support and assist no longer live in the target area.
- Councilors stated that the original intent of establishing equity as one of the region's six desired outcomes was to address the equitable distribution of the region's benefits and burdens. The definition was intentionally vague.

- Councilors discussed the multiple definitions of the term *community* and emphasized that geographic location does not directly imply a community. Some geographic areas encompass many communities.
- Members recommended that staff's recommendation be revised to read, "Identify institutional and structural challenges and opportunities."
- Councilors emphasized that people at Metro are dedicated to addressing equity, but that without shared strategies or best practices the result can have unintended consequences. Members agreed that the agency's practices need to be applied consistently and that in order to address equity at a regional level, Metro must lead by example and establish internal practices first.
- Council discussed the multiple functions and roles of Metro: employer, purchaser, service provider, federal conduit for funding, regulator, investor, educator and convener.
- Council generally discussed the location of Metro meetings, open houses, etc. and impacts to different populations and stated that additional techniques needed to be used to broaden participation. Councilors offered other less expensive options to recruit and include new people and perspectives such as Opt In.
- Councilors stated that Metro has lots of tools for relationship building, but that there is a strong need and desire to establish authentic, ongoing community relationships. Council discussed the need to convene partners in the equity community to do a critical and honest review of Metro and provide advice. Some councilors emphasized the need to establish clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for the Council and partners. Example groups include the HUD Consortium and environmental justice groups.
- Some members discussed the need for a tool or system for which each program within Metro, as an institution, is filtered and evaluated. Councilors acknowledged that the criteria used may be different based on the program.
- There was brief discussion about the Greater Portland Pulse project and the desire to review the data collected from the indicators on regional trends and performance measures.

## **6. SUMMARY AND DIRECTION TO STAFF**

Council directed staff to examine Metro's role in equity as an employer, purchaser, service provider, federal conduit for funding, regulator, convener, investor and educator and come back to the Council with further recommendations. Council requested an additional retreat be scheduled.

## **7. ADJOURN**

Seeing no further discussion, the retreat concluded at 4:05 p.m.

Prepared by,



Kelsey Newell, Regional Engagement Coordinator

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF JUNE 5, 2012**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Doc. Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Doc. Number</b>
	Agenda	N/A	Annotated agenda	60512c-01
	Report	June 2012	Metro Equity Inventory Report (Executive Summary)	60512c-02
	Report	June 2012	Metro Equity Inventory Report (Section 1)	60512c-03
	Report	June 2012	Metro Equity Inventory Report (Section 2)	60512c-04
	Handout	N/A	Diversity and Equity support one another, but there are differences	60512c-05
3.	PowerPoint	6/5/12	Phase 1: Metro Equity Inventory	60512c-06