

Metro | Meeting minutes

Meeting: Equity Strategy Advisory Committee
Date: Monday, March 17, 2014
Time: 3 to 5 p.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center, Room 270, 600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, 97232
Purpose: Discussion and approval on definition of equity; update from Baseline Workgroup

Attendees

Equity strategy advisory committee Carl Talton, Chair; Betty Dominguez, Daniel Vázquez, Pam Treece, Kirsten Kilchenstein, Judi Martin,

Metro Molly Vogt, Pietro Ferrari, Cassie Salinas, Valerie Cuevas

Absent

Rey España, Philip Wu, Julia Meier, Ben Duncan, Virginia Nguyen, Sydney Webb, Joseph Berezinskiy

Welcome and announcements

Carl Talton called the meeting to order and asked for the committee to review the minutes from the previous meeting. Approval of the Feb. 26 meeting minutes have been tabled until the next meeting to give everyone sufficient time to review.

Pietro Ferrari announced that Metro is providing up to 4 scholarships for advisory committee members to attend next week's Governing for Racial Equity conference. Committee members should email Pietro Ferrari for information on registering if they are interested.

Status report

Pietro Ferrari shared the materials presented to Metro Council at the March 13 work session to re-ground the draft definition within the program's milestones. Pietro Ferrari shared condensed program goals from the [Equity Strategy Program Work Plan Step 1: Equity Baseline](#), page 3.

1. Establish an evidence-based decision making process with communities most impacted
2. Build internal/external capacity to understand Metro's role
3. Identify institutional barriers
4. Define and implement strategy

While noting that the timeline in practice is less linear than on paper, Pietro Ferrari noted that while we are on track in addressing goals 1 and 4, we need to also focus on goals 2 and 3 which are the least discussed about. Developing internal capacity at Metro will be an on-going challenge to create a culture whereby equity is the norm.

Concurrent coordination with Metro's existing programs and projects concerning equity include:

- [Diversity Action Plan](#)

- Parks and natural areas levy
Levy language includes a mandated equity component
- Title VI/Environmental Justice (EJ) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan coordination
- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and MTIP benefits, burdens and disparate impacts analysis
- Equity and engagement roundtable
A bimonthly meeting of staff working to coordinate and share information on equity and EJ work within existing projects.
- First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA)
Established in 1989 by the Oregon Legislature, the FOTA program is a policy that guides outreach and recruitment for employment and procurement practices for the Oregon Convention Center, Portland's Centers for the Arts and Portland Expo Center. The program is under a current review to best meet principles and respond to changing demographics.

Pam Treece asked for clarification on how these program goals were used in public communications since without context there isn't a good understanding of them. Pietro Ferrari agreed that the goals provided are a summary from the equity Workplan and further elaboration is needed when presenting them so that they are not taken out of context.

Equity definition – feedback from Metro Council

Carl Talton shared that Metro Council was complimentary of the work the advisory committee has done, the time dedicated to this effort, and appreciated the clear layout of the definition into the 3 statements: vision, problem and solution. Carl shared the following suggestions for word choice per Council's recommendations:

Healthy environment

One councilor strongly recommended including "clean air and water" to clarify the phrase "healthy environment" in the first statement of the working definition. The term "environment" can be tricky and carry difficult connotations. The term "healthy environment" would be kept provided that it implies other aspects like safety and livability.

Distribution of resources

Also identified by some councilors as a tricky term with possible negative connotations, instead of replacing it with "utilization" of resources would offer a better frame.

Benefits

The addition of "burdens" alongside to read "benefits and burdens" was suggested by some councilors, but not everyone agreed.

Carl Talton responded that including "burdens" is something the advisory committee had previously decided against that in order to have a positive focus. The committee voiced agreement to keep the last paragraph unchanged. "burdens."

Carl Talton asked the committee for any objections to these revisions and no members objected. The Advisory Committee approved the final version of the Equity definition with the recommended changes by Council.

Baseline workgroup indicator roadmap

Update

Pietro Ferrari reminded the committee that Meg Merrick, Portland State University, has been brought as a technical resource to support the baseline workgroup.

One issue the baseline workgroup would like input from the advisory committee on is: To what extent is it important for the indicator work to reflect and consider historical perspective? With some communities starting on a deficit, how far should indicators go back in the face of unavailable data. Molly Vogt added that lots of historical data this type of project could require is not readily available. Substitute or proxy data could be recommended instead but may still lead to inconsistencies.

Carl Talton reflected on the migration of communities of color out of NE Portland and how it would be difficult to isolate one of the several historical factors that led to that. Betty Dominguez agreed, adding that indicators ebb and flow overtime and can be difficult to measure without accurate historical data. Daniel Vázquez asked the baseline workgroup to find a way to acknowledge historical data, including the poor feasibility of that data, while moving forward with current, more accurate indicators. Kirsten Kilchenstein called for a strong acknowledgment of historical indicators' importance and any patterns that can be deciphered. Betty Dominguez called for the baseline workgroup to remember to consider the entire region when acknowledging historical and current indicators, an acknowledgement that the "we" has changed historically, i.e. immigrants and multi-generational families. Molly Vogt offered that a narrative may best acknowledge historical indicators rather than quantitative data. The committee expressed agreement, with Daniel Vázquez adding that since it will be important to be able to defend the equity baseline report well, reliable quantitative data as much as qualitative considerations are important.

Roadmap the work ahead

Molly Vogt presented a draft roadmap that will be presented to the Baseline Workgroup to continue to move forward with indicator selection while incorporating the new technical assistance of PSU. For Step 1, the baseline workgroup will start with the desired regional outcomes and what it means to the community to develop a qualitative narrative on equity as it relates to each desired regional outcome. Metro staff, working with PSU, will then identify existing candidate data sources, report back to the baseline workgroup who will prioritize and identify gaps as needed. The baseline workgroup has already put a lot of great work into thinking through the desired regional outcomes. The relationship map will be Step 2, and will address how Metro can or cannot influence selected indicators. Betty Dominguez commented that the draft roadmap looked good and was tangible

Pietro Ferrari added that the process of sorting through indicators will function like a funnel from broad to specifics and that indicators must be actionable, measurable and Metro specific but can still be challenging to Metro. It has been good to have this process of selecting indicators in the hands of the community through the baseline workgroup but it is important to consider their limited capacity.

The committee asked about how feasibility was being considered by the baseline workgroup, how data will be maintained and how Metro would resource collection. Molly Vogt replied that

feasibility will be examined on a case-by-case basis and the group may consider proxies but that the group may consider that indicators shared with others like Greater Portland Pulse or CLF Equity Atlas would strengthen those shared indicators. Ultimately, recommendations could be made to Metro Council to consider on new data collection. Kirsten Kilchenstein agreed with the approach to ground the indicators in the desired regional outcomes. The baseline workgroup has been an engaged group with good attendance at the scheduled meetings.

PSU will be bring lessoned learned from their experience working with Greater Portland Pulse like being intentional about equity as an outcome and valuing community voice. Betty Dominguez voiced agreement that it is always important to be intentional about equity.

Next steps

The next advisory committee meeting is Wednesday, April 23, 3 to 5 p.m. Previous meeting schedule listed the meeting as Monday, April 23 but it is Wednesday, April 23. A revised schedule will be sent to the committee.

Carl Talton asked when advisory committee meetings were scheduled to go to every 8 weeks instead of every 4 weeks as the committee is presently meeting. Pietro Ferrari responded that the committee is scheduled to meet monthly through July for current needs and then a new meeting plan can be reached based on future needs.

Per committee suggestion, a telephone conference call option will be made available to committee members upon request if they are unable to attend in person. Please make your request to valerie.cuevas@oregonmetro.gov at least 1 day in advance of the meeting.

Attachments

1. Equity strategy program milestones and deliverables
2. Baseline workgroup draft roadmap
3. Metro's Equity Definition - 20140317
4. Meeting schedule - revised

MEETING TOPIC

FROM

DATE