

City of Portland

Citywide Practices: Equity Project Report

February 2025



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Introduction

In November 2023, Portland City Council approved [an organizational structure](#) that includes a new Equity Officer who will report to the City Administrator, oversee the Office of Equity and Human Rights, and be responsible for leading the practice of equity citywide. The Citywide Practices: Equity Project (“Equity Project”) was commissioned by the City Administrator with the purpose of providing:

- recommendations on the Equity Officer’s roles, responsibilities, and reporting authority;
- a current state review of equity practices and policies at the City; and
- recommendations of actions and priorities for consideration to lay a foundation for success for the incoming officer to advance the equity practice citywide.

The Equity Project team was led by the Transition Team with support from a consulting team of NEX Strategies and Kearns & West. Assistant City Administrator Annie Von Burg served as project sponsor and the City Leadership Team served as the steering committee.

Project timeline:

July 2024	Finalize project work plan
Aug. to Oct.	Phase 1: Research and Phase 2: Stakeholder engagement
Oct. to Nov.	Phase 3 Analysis
Dec. 14	Draft report completed: stakeholder review to follow
Jan. 2025	Report finalized and sent to City leadership

This report is submitted to City Leadership Team for their review and deliberations as they make decisions about next steps, including the timeline for the Equity Officer recruitment.

Methodology

The project was conducted in three phases:

Phase 1: Research – Reviewed existing legal obligations, strategic goals, equity practices, practitioner roles, policies, and operations. Conducted scan of best practices to advance equity in organizational structures, which included analysis of other cities and the City’s current equity policies and practices.

Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement - Engaged subject matter experts and stakeholders for feedback on equity practices and the Equity Officer role, covering responsibilities, authority, reporting structure, and recruitment. Input was gathered via an employee survey (285 responses), a community organization survey (42 responses), and interviews with 49 internal stakeholders. See *Appendix A: Project Work Plan and Stakeholder Engagement* for details.

Phase 3: Analysis and Recommendations – Synthesized research and engagement findings to identify key themes and develop recommendations to support the Equity Officer role and organizational change.

Out of Scope: The project did not assess practitioner roles, resource distribution, or manage the Equity Officer recruitment process.

Key Findings and Considerations

Portland's transition to a new governance structure presents a pivotal opportunity to embed equity as a core driver of decision-making, policy, and service delivery. This moment calls for more than procedural change — it requires a shift in culture, strategy, and accountability. By aligning equity with citywide goals, establishing clear roles, and strengthening capacity, Portland can build a sustainable equity practice that serves its communities equitably and transparently.

The following key findings emerged from synthesized stakeholder feedback, survey responses, and review of Portland's current equity structures, roles, and practices. The section also includes opportunities for the officer's consideration to advance a cohesive and effective framework to strengthen operations, public trust, and community outcomes.

1. Underdeveloped Strategic & Leadership Vision Impedes Clarity

The city's lack of a unified, strategic vision for policy outcomes and how equity is integrated across programs has resulted in fragmented leadership, siloed decision-making, and inconsistent practices, creating gaps in accountability. Throughout the transition, staff report unclear direction, mixed messages about equity's role, and confusion about the roles of equity practitioners and the Office of Equity. Establishing a unified equity framework and priorities will become a central driver of decision-making, and help promote shared understanding, inform strategic priorities, and guide the Equity Officer's role, responsibilities, and goals. Further analysis of feedback from employee and community stakeholders through this project are helpful resource to inform the incoming officer's priorities. (See *Appendix B: Raw Data from Equity Officer Surveys* and *Appendix C: Preliminary Summary of Survey Responses*).

2. Inconsistent and Unclear Roles in Equity Practices Create Disparities Across Bureaus

Equity practices across bureaus are fragmented and inconsistent, with internal stakeholders expressing frustration over unclear roles and the siloed nature of work, which is often treated as separate from core decision-making. This lack of integration hinders tracking progress and accountability measures across the organization. Internal survey responses highlight priorities such as establishing clear procedures (51%), developing citywide equity plans for service areas (39%), and aligning the roles of equity practitioners within the broader bureau leadership structure (45%). Clarifying roles and responsibilities—among the City Administrator, Equity Officer, Office of Equity, and other stakeholders—can help reduce confusion on responsibilities, improve accountability, and support clear decision-making. Tools like RACI models and formal agreements will help to define responsibilities and foster collaboration.

3. Data Fragmentation Hinders Transparency and Accountability

Data tracking, reporting, and performance management related to equity are inconsistent across city bureaus. Each bureau employs different approaches, tools, and systems, leading to fragmented data and a lack of centralized oversight. This fragmentation makes it difficult for internal staff and the public to access up-to-date information on equity initiatives, compliance, and performance outcomes. Without a consistent data strategy, bureaus face challenges in monitoring progress and demonstrating accountability. The Equity Officer should prioritize the

development of citywide data tracking protocols to ensure uniformity, improve transparency, and strengthen decision-making capacity across the organization.

4. Current Successes are More Likely When Equity is Integrated into Leadership, Community Engagement, and Communications

According to internal stakeholders and best practices, the City's equity efforts are most successful when practitioners have strong relationships with decision-makers, partners, and colleagues, which fosters trust, collaboration, and ability to navigate difficult conversations and complex situations. Integrating equity-focused roles within bureau leadership teams, as well as aligning equity with communications, community engagement, and strategic planning efforts, will help to ensure equity is embedded within, and not isolated from, organizational practices. Strengthening citywide data tracking and reporting protocols should be a priority for the Equity Officer to enable data-driven decision-making, effectively communicate outcomes, and build public trust in the city's equity commitments.

5. Tension Exists Between Accountability and Partnership in Equity Roles and Structures

The roles of Office of Equity staff and bureau-based equity practitioners often overlap and conflict, leading to strained relationships and inconsistent practices. Internal stakeholder interviews highlight tensions, especially in areas of compliance, as it's unclear whether the Office of Equity's primary role is to enforce or build capacity as a partner with bureaus. While City Code authorizes Office of Equity to develop administrative rules and standards, it does not explicitly grant enforcement authority. These challenges are compounded by differing perspectives and levels of expertise: Bureau-based practitioners are deeply embedded in their bureaus' operational needs and policies (housing, transportation, public safety, etc.), while Office of Equity staff tend to bring citywide expertise on priorities such as race, disability, language access, and LGBTQIA2S+ equity. This divergence has contributed to strained relationships, uneven implementation, and fragmented approaches to work across bureaus.

6. Accountability and Compliance Gaps in Equity Work

Portland faces systemic gaps in accountability and compliance related to its equity goals.ⁱ While the Office of Equity has authority under City Code to develop administrative rules and policies, it lacks sufficient enforcement powers to ensure compliance, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Language Access, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Equity roles are distributed across the Office of Equity, other bureaus, and the City Attorney's Office and Auditor's Office. When accountability gaps arise, it is not always clear which entity is responsible for taking corrective action, leaving the City vulnerable to inconsistencies and liability. Limited resources and high vacancy rates—34% of equity positions were unfilled in FY22-23—further strain capacity, especially in small bureaus. To address these challenges, the Equity Officer should assess staffing needs, foster resource-sharing, and strengthen cross-bureau capacity. Building strong relationships and trust among leadership, practitioners, and community stakeholders is also essential to integrate equity into decision-making and reflect the priorities of those most impacted by systemic inequities.

7. Hybrid Model Support and Role Integration Risks

There is strong support among internal equity stakeholders for a hybrid structure that combines centralized oversight with decentralized implementation, with 68% of survey respondents favoring this approach. This model balances citywide accountability standards with the flexibility to meet the unique needs and available resources of different service areas. However, the model does present risks, which include ambiguity around the Equity Officer's role and authority, and capacity issues caused by replacing the Office of Equity Director role with an Equity Officer position. To ensure success, the city must clearly define decision-making responsibilities across stakeholders. Tools like RACI models can clarify roles, reduce ambiguity, and improve accountability, enabling consistent yet adaptable implementation of equity practices across bureaus.

Recommendations for Equity Officer and Leadership

The following recommendations are informed and based in the key findings and considerations and are deemed foundational for clarifying the Equity Officer's roles and authority and advancing the equity practice citywide.

Recommendation 1. The City Leadership affirm overarching objectives to provide a shared direction for the City's equity work and equity officer recruitment.

The Equity Officer will start as the City lacks a coherent and unified, organizational strategic vision for desired policy outcomes, including how equity relates to the pursuit of those outcomes. The city government's history of fragmented, siloed leadership and decision-making has resulted in inconsistent practices and accountability gaps. According to staff feedback, the path forward seems unclear even among leaders, exacerbating confusion and undermining efforts to manage this change. They cite mixed messages around the role of equity and core values in ongoing decision-making.

Minimally, the recruitment and onboarding processes require a high-level administrative vision reflecting the organization's greatest needs. Otherwise, the Equity Officer will face immediate and ongoing challenges aligning citywide efforts due to a lack of unified direction. Leadership's affirmation of the following high-level objectives will set a preliminary shared direction for the officer and organization to build upon:

- Unify efforts and establish, manage, and lead collaboration in having clear equity standards for consistency across service areas and bureaus.
- Strengthen accountability and performance tracking to measure and report on equity outcomes with clarity and transparency.
- Build organizational capacity by providing training and tools to enhance ability to analyze and implement actions and decisions resulting in equitable outcomes.
- Address disparities related to race, language access, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability using an intersectional approach.
- Foster collaboration and partnerships between City leadership, Office of Equity and Human Rights, equity practitioners, and community stakeholders.
- Ensure regulatory and policy compliance by integrating equity considerations into operations, ensuring adherence to local, state, and federal laws and standards.

Recommendation 2. Focus Equity Officer's scope of work on high-impact areas and initiatives.

The Equity Officer has the potential to unify fragmented efforts and advance a meaningful equity strategy by establishing, managing, and leading collaboration in implementing citywide standards and policies to pursue equitable outcomes.

Key opportunities to meet immediate needs within the scope of this position include:ⁱⁱ

- Clarifying roles and strengthening relationships between the Office of Equity and Human Rights, City Leadership Team, and equity practitioners,
- Tracking performance metrics more consistently, and reporting on outcomes to strengthen accountability, and
- Leveraging training and resources to build capacity, promote compliance with regulations, and sustain long-term efforts.

To support meaningful progress, the Equity Officer should be included as a part of high-impact teams accountable for citywide decision-making, including the City Leadership Team and executive-level meetings within the Office of the City Administrator. Additionally, it is important that the position title selected for this role has consistency and parity with the City's current practices and standards for similarly held positions with executive authority overseeing other citywide areas of the organization. At their November 5, 2024, meeting, City Leadership Team approved the proposed officer roles and authority. (See *Appendix D: Proposed Equity Officer Recommendations*).

Recommendation 3. Commit to equitable hiring guidelines and process for the Equity Officer and other vacant citywide officer positions.

The hiring of the City's first Equity Officer overseeing the practice and advancement of equity citywide is truly significant. The Citywide Practices Projects developed equitable hiring guidelines (*Appendix E: Equitable Hiring Guidelines for Citywide Practices*) with input from consultant Camille Trummer and the Office of Equity and Human Rights' 2018 "Strategic Planning Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report" by Kristina Smock Consulting. The guidelines have been developed to ensure that the recruitment, interviewing, and hiring processes for the citywide officers are fair, inclusive, and accessible to a diverse range of candidates and demonstrates the City's core values and commitment to creating job opportunities for all Portlanders.

The hiring manager for the Equity Officer should follow the guidelines and commit to an open, public recruitment process that includes meaningful participation of equity subject matter experts and stakeholders in the process, including as part of the interview panels process.

Recommendation 4. Adopt a hybrid reporting structure with a clear decision-making and reporting framework.

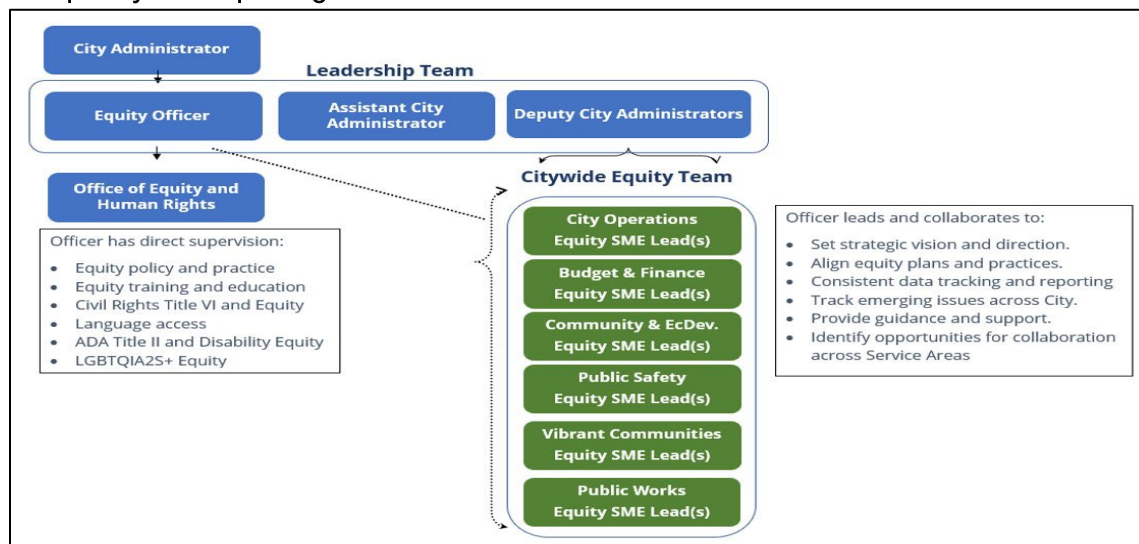
A hybrid reporting structure is recommended to support the City's equity practice, as it balances centralized oversight with decentralized implementation. This approach is supported by most surveyed practitioners and is also a natural progression of the City's already established structures. It can offer the flexibility needed for bureaus to address specific equity needs, while also ensuring consistency in standards and practices citywide.

Among equity practitioners who completed the survey, 68% preferred adopting a hybrid model. Respondents emphasized the importance of accountability through a combination of citywide baselines for consistency and service area flexibility when implementing equitable policies and practices. Additional feedback emphasized unique needs and resource disparities across bureaus and service areas, reinforcing the importance of flexibility a hybrid model may offer.

A hybrid reporting structure with these elements helps establish clear roles and relationships:

- The Equity Officer reports to the City Administrator and is part of the City Leadership Team and other citywide decision-making groups.
- The Equity Officer oversees the Office of Equity and Human Rights, which may include delegation of supervisory responsibilities as needed.
- The Deputy City Administrators (DCAs) & Assistant City Administrator (ACA) will select Service Area Equity SME Leads to be on a Citywide Equity Team.
- The Equity Officer convenes and leads this team with a focus on citywide strategic vision, policies, and practices.
- Dual accountabilities exist among the Equity Officer, DCAs, and Citywide Equity Team.

Sample Hybrid Reporting Structure:



While a hybrid structure can offer several benefits, navigating decision-making and dual accountability relationships in this structure can be complex and challenging. Frameworks like RACI, RAPID, and MOCHA can help reduce ambiguity about roles in processes and projects, including decision-making.

Visualizing relationships on an organizational chart and developing working agreements with team members can further clarify roles, align expectations, reduce duplication, and improve communication. Once hired, one of the first tasks of the Equity Officer should be to work closely with city leadership to establish the model to advance and support the equity practice work. Equity practitioners within service areas are already exploring opportunities to prepare for and leverage a hybrid model to advance equity. City leadership should be engaged actively in these discussions now to ensure efforts and objectives for the future are aligned.

Current State Review and Environmental Scan

A. Organizational Core Values

In June 2020, Portland's City council formally adopted six core values: **Anti-Racism, Equity, Transparency, Communication, Collaboration, and Fiscal Responsibility**. Resolution 37942 defined these values as essential to reimagining city governance and advancing equity across all areas of work.ⁱⁱⁱ Each core value explicitly or implicitly integrates principles critical to advancing equity:

- **Anti-Racism:** "Racism, discrimination, and bias will not be tolerated within the workplace or our communities," making "actions to dismantle institutional and systemic racism...the responsibility of every employee and resident."
- **Equity:** "Equity, access, and the removal of institutional and systemic barriers to resources and opportunities is essential in diversifying our workforce and the public good."
- **Transparency:** Trust is built through "integrity and inclusion," and "reimagining political processes occurs through accountability," – "developing a culture of information sharing" supports these efforts.
- **Communication:** Effective communication is "a catalyst for transformative change," and "knowledge sharing will impact our workplace and communities."
- **Collaboration:** "Inclusive outreach and public engagement" enhance "institutional knowledge and awareness," and "all behaviors, actions, decisions, and systems shall reflect a culture of accountability and commitment to the City's core values."
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Budget decisions focus on "fiscal resiliency, climate action, equity, and the needs of our most vulnerable populations," – "community values, addressing inequities, and transparent budgetary decisions are essential to developing trust."

B. Office of Equity and Human Rights Purpose and Authority

The Office of Equity and Human Rights (Office of Equity) was established by ordinance in 2011 to advance equity by promoting and developing policies, procedures, and training with a focus on both internal and external disparity reduction.^{iv} The Office of Equity is charged with promoting equity within city government, supporting community engagement, and resolving issues rooted in bias and discrimination.

Under city code, the Director of the Office of Equity has broad administrative and policy-making authority. They oversee the Office's operations, develop annual work plans, and collaborate with bureaus, boards, and commissions to advance equity. The Director can adopt administrative rules, propose policy changes, and recommend equity initiatives and implementation strategies to City Council. The Director is also expected to play a key role in accountability, reporting to Council and the public on the City's progress toward equity goals.

C. Equity Areas: Current Goals, Policies, and Procedures

Overall, the city classifies equity-related programs, initiatives, and policies in four areas: **Racial, Disability, Language Access, and LGBTQIA2S+** while taking an intersectional approach overall. The Office of Equity provides policy development and training in these areas, and equity practitioners incorporate policies and practices based on the specific needs, mission, and operations of their own bureaus and service areas. Though inexhaustive, the following section outlines current high-level policies and procedures in each area.

Racial Equity Goals: Eliminating racial disparities in hiring, contracting, and service delivery; strengthening engagement with communities of color; and addressing systemic inequities across sectors such as housing, transportation, and criminal justice.^v

Key Policies and Procedures:

- ***Complaint Procedures:*** Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Language Access – Establishes procedures for addressing complaints related to race, color, national origin, or language access discrimination.^{vi}
- ***Equal Employment Opportunity:*** Prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, color, or national origin.^{vii} In 2023, Council amended Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) policies to prohibit discrimination based on hair texture historically associated with race, including braids, afros, and twists in compliance with state legislation – Washington and Oregon passed their versions of the Crown Act in 2020 and 2021, respectively.^{viii}
- ***Racial Equity 101 Training:*** A mandatory program aimed at providing a shared understanding of systemic racism and tools to apply an equity lens to their work. Required for “all regular, limited duration, and temporary City of Portland employees whose appointment is for six months or more.”^{ix}

Disability Equity Goals: Ensuring equitable outcomes in all city activities, promoting fair hiring practices, and removing barriers to opportunities and contracting for people with disabilities.^x

Key Policies and Procedures:

- ***Complaint Procedures:*** Title II of the ADA: Specifies steps for investigating complaints related to disability discrimination.^{xi}
- ***Equal Employment Opportunity:*** Prohibits discrimination based on mental or physical disability, and ensures equal employment includes providing reasonable accommodation to an applicant or employee with a known disability.^{xii}
- ***Public ADA Accommodations:*** 311 online form available to the public with the option to contact the city via phone or teletypewriter (TTY) for an accommodation for a city-administered program, service, event, or activity. Specific steps for granting event accommodations.^{xiii}

Language Access Goals: Ensuring meaningful access to City services for individuals facing language barriers with a focus on standard operating procedures, tracking requests, and developing individual bureau-level language access plans.^{xiv}

Key Policies and Procedures:

- ***Complaint Procedures:*** Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Language Access: Establishes procedures for addressing complaints related to race, color, national origin, or language access discrimination.^{xv}
- ***Language Pay Differential:*** Compensates multilingual employees for providing language assistance, which expands access for Portland’s diverse communities.^{xvi}

LGBTQIA2S+ Equity Goals: Promoting representation, equity, and justice through robust city policies; fostering an inclusive economic ecosystem; strengthening community engagement with

LGBTQIA2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or gender expansive, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual, and two-spirit) communities; and tracking progress on equity initiatives using data and performance management systems.^{xvii}

Key Policies and Procedures:

- ***Equal Employment Opportunity.*** Prohibits discrimination based on sex, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.^{xviii}
- ***Expanded Definition of Family.*** In 2023, Council amended BHR sick leave administrative rules to expand the definition of family, including eliminating sex-specific designations of domestic partners and including chosen family members.^{xix}

D. Audit Findings

Under the City Charter, the City Auditor's Office is responsible for auditing the government's performance – reviewing, assessing, monitoring, and reporting on "the efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of a program or service."^{xx} The office applies an equity lens to its analyses to assess Access, Quality, Procedural Fairness, and Outcomes as part of performance, a method based on research conducted at the University of Colorado and endorsed by the Association of Local Government Auditors.^{xxi}

In October 2024, the city's first annual Audit Impact Report reviewed the implementation status of prior auditor recommendations from 2018-2023.^{xxii} Overall, the report found the city lagged its peers in implementing auditor recommendations over the prior five years (46% vs 58%) and identified coordination as the biggest obstacle to implementation. Among those recommendations with incomplete implementation are equity-related issues such as reducing language barriers experienced when collecting taxes, fines, and fees; and improving planning and ADA compliance within the Bureau of Emergency Management.

Some equity-related audit findings in recent audits (conducted 2020 through 2024) include:

- **Racial and Economic** - Inclusionary Housing: Housing Bureau should improve Program goals, support for property owners, and monitoring to ensure Program helps address housing crisis (2024)^{xxiii}
- **Language Access** - Taxes, fines, and fees: Customers who owe caught in maze of inconsistent and uncoordinated collection strategies (2022)^{xxiv}
- **Disability** - Emergency Management: Pandemic highlights City's long-standing neglect of people with disabilities (2021)^{xxv}
- **Racial** - City's reliance on complaints for property maintenance enforcement disproportionately affects diverse and gentrifying neighborhoods (2021)^{xxvi}
- **Language Access** - Portland Police needs to ensure language services are equitable and consistent (2021)^{xxvii}
- **Racial and Gender** - Equity in Construction Contracting: Some goals achieved despite mismanagement, waste, and gamesmanship (2020)^{xxviii}

E. Equity Structure, Practitioners and Estimated Capacity

The City has positions across different bureaus and programs focused on promoting equity, accessibility, diversity, and inclusion, with a mix of strategic, operational, and specialized functions. Based on data available in 2022-2023, an estimate of equity practitioners at that time was about 65 FTE.^{xxix} It's important to note the estimate is based on outdated and incomplete information. The organization's actual capacity may be lower or higher, as the City currently lacks standard definitions for what constitutes an equity practitioner at the organization, which affects any analysis. Establishing standard definitions will enable the City to better assess and track equity positions and capacity based on organizational needs and will also assist the City in improving coordination, collaboration, and consistency in practice over time.

Based on the position titles, the positions have descriptions that focus on several roles:

- Leadership and Management
- Specialized Policy, Data Analysis, and/or Strategic Planning
- Program Management and Coordination
- Training and Capacity Building
- Operations and Administration

The positions oversee, support, and/or coordinate with a range of functional areas, including, but not limited to: Racial Equity and Inclusion, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Language Access, Title II of the ADA and Disability Equity, People and Culture, Performance, Partnerships & Equity, Tribal Relations, Training, Equity Policy, Procurement, and Service-Specific Areas.

Equity-focused positions and capacity are unevenly distributed across the organization and vary based on leadership priorities, budgets and resources, policies, and program needs. FY2022-2023 data showed that 34% of equity positions were vacant, with 20 (of the total 66.55) positions vacant. Some challenges this creates are having siloed and inequitable levels of investment and staff capacity to carry out equity training, program development, analysis and reporting across bureaus and service areas. It also causes inconsistency in implementation equitable practices and confusion among leadership, practitioners, and the public in how the organization advances its citywide priorities of equity and anti-racism.

To access the overall equity-focused FTE capacity across the City, standard definitions should be established, including role types and examples. A sample definition is provided in the endnote.^{xxx} Using these definitions, BHR can update a list of positions and a deeper analysis can be conducted with feedback from practitioners to determine capacity across the organization. Data can also be collected through tools as a survey conducted with Deputy City Administrators and bureau directors to collect information on current positions, such as title, FTE, responsibilities, focus areas, supervision, and vacancies. For areas without equity-focused roles, the survey will identify reasons for their absence.

F. Comparative Analysis of Equity Strategies Used Across Jurisdictions

Reviewing equity-focused strategies and structures across jurisdictions highlights common trends and innovative approaches to advancing equity goals. This section summarizes research-backed best practices applicable to public sector organizations and outlines approaches taken by

other jurisdictions, emphasizing emerging trends and varied approaches to implementing equity structures and defining Equity Officer roles.

Research-Backed Best Practices

- **Embed Equity Analysis into Decision-Making.** The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) recommends leveraging tools like equity frameworks, racial equity impact assessments, and data analysis to integrate equity into decision-making processes.^{xxx} Some jurisdictions apply these tools to ensure policy, budget, and operational decisions address systemic inequities and produce equitable outcomes.
- **Balance Centralized Oversight with Decentralized Implementation.** Cities often implement a hybrid structure for their equity teams, balancing centralized oversight through core teams focused on integrating best practices with decentralized implementation. Generally, these teams are composed of department-level practitioners and core functions focused on integrating best practices organization-wide. According to the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), this approach provides citywide consistency while allowing departments to address specific departmental and community needs effectively.^{xxxii}
- **Transparent and Measurable Goals.** Transparent performance tracking, such as through public dashboards and results-based accountability, demonstrates accountability and builds public trust. GARE emphasizes that measurable equity outcomes are crucial for evaluating progress and ensuring consistent improvement.^{xxxiii}
- **Establish Community Engagement as a Core Component.** Meaningfully engaging communities is central to equitable governance. GARE underscores the importance of partnerships with community organizations to ensure equity initiatives are informed by lived experiences and aligned with community needs.^{xxxiv} ICMA cites partnerships, including those with the community as critical to sustaining change efforts.^{xxxv}
- **Develop Capacity Organization-Wide to Sustain Change.** As the Urban Institute notes, successfully advancing equity often involves adopting a change management model.^{xxxvi} When systems and processes are narrowly adopted, true transformation cannot occur, and these inconsistencies can create harm in communities. ICMA outlines the importance of building capacity to sustain organizational change and advancing equity.^{xxxvii} Insufficient or misaligned resources inhibit implementation and training helps build capacity by expanding knowledge and understanding. Infrastructure – knowledgeable teams, equity practitioners, and data systems – support implementation.

Equity Officer Roles

As jurisdictions across the country have grappled with their role and responsibility to address longstanding systemic and structural inequities impacting communities, the Equity Officer role has become more common in local governments.^{xxxviii} This has resulted in common challenges associated with introducing and integrating new positions and practices into organizations. At formation, the position – and any supporting it – is particularly susceptible to resistance, lack of infrastructure, limited capacity, insufficient authority, and unrealistic expectations.^{xxxix} As community needs, organizational leadership, internal dynamics, and available resources change, these can present ongoing challenges as organizations continue to mature in their equity practices.

Especially when inaugurating the role, an Equity Officer should anticipate navigating instability as the organization seeks to evolve. Success in these roles is predicated on the active support of organizational leaders, sufficient authority, and access to required resources.^{xi} Additionally, jurisdictions must recognize that the effort to advance organizational equity practices and policy is an enterprise-wide one requiring commensurate resources to foster change. This means no single person is responsible for advancing equity within an organization – Equity Officers typically have team members to support their efforts, as well as partners collaborating throughout the institution and beyond it.^{xii}

Equity Officers and their collaborators seek to improve decision-making throughout their organizations to support implementation of more equitable policy and improved outcomes. Our review of job descriptions from other cities and first-hand perspectives from Equity Officers found that officers were frequently expected, and insufficiently resourced, to engage community members, assess public needs, define desired outcomes, investigate drivers, measure performance, improve processes, build internal capacity to navigate social complexity, manage limited resources, advise decision-makers, and demonstrate influential thought leadership.^{xiii}

Structural Considerations

Most organizations we reviewed focused their equity programs on education, tool development, measuring performance, and addressing racial disparities.^{xliii} The following themes emerged:

- **Diversity & Inclusion Scope.** Explicitly include diversity and/or inclusion within the scope of roles and responsibilities for equity-centered departments, offices, or officers.^{xliv}
- **Disability, Procurement, and Economic Development Functions Elsewhere.** Among cities with offices dedicated to equity, few included disability, procurement, or economic development functions within the office's scope of roles and responsibilities.^{xliv}
- **Senior-Level Officer Roles.** Many jurisdictions position the Equity Officer as a senior-level role, reporting directly to the City Manager or Mayor, ensuring access to decision-making spaces and accountability for citywide equity efforts.^{xlv}
- **Codifying Offices.** Some cities have attempted to codify their equity offices to increase the likelihood of long-term continuous operations.^{xlvii}
- **Community Engagement.** Some cities establish formal integration of community voices into governance structures, often through embedded community engagement functions, advisory committees, or partnerships with local organizations. They aim to ensure equity efforts are responsive to the needs of those most impacted by systemic inequities.^{xlviii}
- **Cities with No Equity Officer.** Several of the organizations do not currently have an Equity Officer role (or comparable position).^{xlix}

Conclusion

In the future, Portland's equity efforts will likely be judged by the City's ability to build trust, reduce disparities, and improve outcomes for all Portlanders. Achieving these goals requires more than individual leadership roles – it demands a unified vision, clear roles, sufficient operational capacity, and transparent accountability. These efforts must be sustained through a commitment to cultural change and systemic reform, ensuring equity remains a guiding principle across administrations and beyond leadership transitions. By embedding equity into its governance framework now, Portland can create lasting, meaningful change.

Endnotes

- ⁱ Simone Rede. (2024). *2023 Audit Impact Report*.
- ⁱⁱ These opportunities are consistent with findings from engagement with stakeholders, who ranked these among their top three priorities for the officer role.
- ⁱⁱⁱ City of Portland Council. (2020). *Resolution No. 37492 - Adopt Anti-Racism, Equity, Transparency, Communication, Collaboration, and Fiscal Responsibility as the Core Values of the City of Portland resolution*. <https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/Record/13780724/>
- ^{iv} City of Portland. (1998). *City Code 3.128 - Office of Equity and Human Rights*. <https://www.portland.gov/code/3/128>
- ^v The Office of Equity and Human Rights. (2015). *Citywide Racial Equity Goals & Strategies*. <https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/policies/37144-citywide-racial-equity-goals-and-strategies-exhibit-a.pdf>
- ^{vi} City of Portland. (2019). *ADM-18.02 - Title VI Civil Rights Complaint Procedures (Amended)*. <https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/amended2019-adm-18.02-title-vi-civil-rights-complaint-procedure-746396.pdf>
- ^{vii} City of Portland. (1998). *City Code 3.100.005 - City Policies Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Civil Rights*. <https://www.portland.gov/code/3/100/005>
- ^{viii} City of Portland. (2023). *Administrative Rule 191325 - Amend Human Resources Administrative Rules for compliance with Washington State Law and equity updates Amend HRAR 2.01, 6.04(A), 6.04(B), and 6.10(A) exhibit a*. <https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/recordhtml/16277082/>
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- ^{xxx} An equity practitioner is an employee who dedicates over half their time to advancing equity through policies, practices, and work culture. Their responsibilities include identifying and addressing inequities, promoting racial and disability equity, educating on systemic issues, and directing resources to support marginalized groups. Their role may not explicitly include "equity" in the title.
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- ^{xli} Julie Nelson et al. *Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government*. Pages 43-44.
- ^{xlii} Reviewed job descriptions included those from Denver, CO; Chicago, IL; Washington, DC; and Austin, TX. Public perspectives included those from Erin Brown (Denver, CO); Stephanie Williams (Worcester, MA); Brion Oaks (Austin, TX); Amber Hewitt (Washington, DC); and Candace Moore (Chicago, IL).
- ^{xliii} Reviewed cities included Seattle, WA; Denver, CO; San Francisco, CA; Minneapolis, MN; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA; Washington, DC; Pittsburgh, PA; Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Milwaukee, WI; Albuquerque, NM. Cities were selected to establish a mix of geography, size, demographic makeups, and governance structures. Moreover, each has its own unique histories related to navigating racial dynamics.
- ^{xliv} Boston, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Milwaukee, and Albuquerque.
- ^{xlv} Milwaukee and Albuquerque include ADA Coordinators; Milwaukee includes a Contract Compliance Officer; and Boston maintains an Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Department. Pittsburgh's former Office of Equity included a Contract Compliance Analyst and several Business Diversity roles before those functions were restructured when the Mayor's office absorbed the Office of Equity in 2023.
- ^{xlvi} Denver and Atlanta Officers report to the Mayor, and DC's Officer reports to City Administrator.
- ^{xlvii} Seattle and Chicago were successful, but Atlanta was not.
- ^{xlviii} Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) includes both city staff and community members; San Francisco's Office of Racial Equity Division includes a Community Engagement and Partnerships Director and the Justice and Equity for Transportation Council composed of community members; Boston's Equity and Inclusion Cabinet includes a Director of Community Engagement; Atlanta's Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion includes a Community Engagement Director and Community Affairs Coordinator; Austin's Equity Action Team includes both city staff and community members; and Albuquerque has a Community Empowerment Officer within its Office of Equity & Inclusion.
- ^{xlix} San Francisco and Minneapolis have Directors as their highest-ranking administrators focused on Equity. Pittsburgh eliminated the position under a new mayoral administration. Albuquerque's Director of Equity & Inclusion reports to the Human Rights Officer, who leads its Office of Equity and Inclusion.

Appendices

Appendix A: Project Work Plan and Stakeholder Engagement

Appendix B: Raw Data from Equity Officer Surveys

Appendix C: Preliminary Summary of Survey Responses

Appendix D: Proposed Equity Officer Recommendations

Appendix E: Equitable Hiring Guidelines for Citywide Practices

Appendix A: Project Work Plan and Stakeholder Engagement

Citywide Practices: Equity Project Workplan

(Approved by City Leadership Team - 07.16.2024;
updated 08.21.2024 to include stakeholder engagement plan)

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Project Team:

- Jennifer Chang, Transition Team – project manager
- Jamey Duhamel, Transition Team – project support
- Autumn Carter, NEX Strategies - consultant
- Ben Duncan, Kearns & West - consultant
- City Leadership Team (City Administrator, Assistant City Administrator, Deputy City Administrators) – steering committee and project sponsor

Partners in the project include subject matter experts (SME) and other stakeholder groups outlined in the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan on page 3.

The goal of the project is to prepare City Leadership and the organization for the new role of the Equity Officer. The project will provide members of the city's leadership team with analysis of current internal practices and external concerns, research-based best practices, and recommendations to inform their decision-making on the hiring of the Equity Officer and priorities for the position and equity practice.

SCOPE OF PROJECT

The project will involve three phases:

- **Phase 1: Research** - Gather and review information related to existing legal obligations and strategic goals, definitions of equity practice, employee practitioner roles, guidelines, policies, operations; conduct environmental scan of best practices in organizational structure and practices for advancing equity work. The project team will develop and manage the research plan.
- **Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement** - Consult and engage with subject matter experts and other stakeholders for their opinions and feedback on:
 - ✓ Equity Officer position roles and responsibilities, lines of authority, span of control, and relationship to internal and external partners
 - ✓ Equity Officer recruitment process and timeline
 - ✓ Current state of equity practices (e.g. identify roles, structures, processes)
 - ✓ Desired outcomes for the equity practice in the future.
- **Phase 3: Analysis and Recommendations** – The project team will analyze information from the research and engagement phases to produce a report with analysis and recommendations. It will include a risks assessment, proposed strategies, and conditions to support the staff and organization through change.

Out of Scope: To advance and institutionalize the equity practice citywide, this project will provide analysis and recommendations to City Leadership Team to inform their decision-making. Deliberations about effectiveness of current staff roles, capacity, or distribution of resources across the city is out of scope for the project. Additionally, managing the Equity Officer recruitment process is out of this project's scope.

DELIVERABLES

The project will produce a final report with the following anticipated deliverables:

- Current State Review and Environmental Scan (existing system, staffing, operating norms, and practices; strengths, gaps/needs; best practices)
- Considerations for the Future State
- Recommendations:
 - Equity Officer Key Roles and Responsibilities, including authority, span of control, collaborations and relationships with other leadership and practitioners, on-boarding, and support to transition into the new role.
 - Equity Officer recruitment process and timeline.
 - Organizational needs the Equity Officer may consider prioritizing.
 - Potential actions, structures, resources, and options to lay foundation for success for the equity practice (e.g. core equity team, transition support).

The report will be submitted to City Leadership Team for their review and deliberations as they make decisions about next steps, including the hiring of the Equity Officer.

PHASES AND TIMELINE

Dates	Description
By July 30	Project workplan approved
July 1 to mid-September	Phase 1: Research
Mid-July to late-October	Phase 2: Stakeholder engagement
October 1-30	Phase 3: Analysis
Late-October	Draft report completed
Late-October to mid-November	Stakeholder review of draft
Late-November	Report finalized and sent to City Leadership
December and ongoing	Leadership deliberations and decisions, including officer recruitment
By December 31	Officer job description finalized (depending on City Leadership decision)

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Objectives:

The objectives of the stakeholder engagement plan for the project are to:

1. Identify potential roles, responsibilities, and levels of authority for the Equity Officer position that may align with organizational and community needs.
2. Define the current state of the practice of equity at the City of Portland.

To avoid engagement fatigue, the team plans to review and use applicable and available data/reports from prior engagement and reviews to inform this process.

Roles in stakeholder engagement:

- Facilitators: Equity project team members: Jennifer Chang, Jamey Duhamel, Autumn Carter, Ben Duncan
- Stakeholders: The project will use various channels to engage several groups, including those with subject matter expertise (SME) in equity and other technical areas. As people are available and interested in participating, these may include the following, among others:

Employee groups - internal to City:

- Office of Equity and Human Rights
- Equity managers
- Citywide Equity and Civil Rights managers (Civil Rights and Racial Equity, Language Access and Language Equity, and ADA and Disability Equity)
- Other equity practitioners (as identified by equity managers and directors)
- Tribal Relations
- LGBTQIA2S+ Equity Program
- Bureau equity councils/committees
- DEEP employee resource groups
- Bureau directors

Community groups:

- Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC)
- National equity and governance focused organizations
- Culturally specific agencies
- LGBTQIA2S+ organizations
- Civil Rights and Racial Equity organizations
- Language Access and Language Equity organizations
- ADA and Disability Equity organizations
- District coalition offices

- Decision Makers: The engagement process is intended to inform the decisions made by the City Leadership Team. The City Leadership Team also serves as the steering committee on the process and includes:
 - City Administrator Michael Jordan (hiring manager for the Equity Officer)
 - Assistant City Administrator, Annie Von Burg
 - Deputy City Administrators
 - Donnie Oliveira (Community and Economic Development)
 - Sonia Schmanski (Vibrant Communities)
 - Sara Morrissey (City Operations)
 - Priya Dhanapal (Public Works)
 - Jonas Biery (Budget and Finance)
 - Mike Myers (Public Safety)

Potential Research Questions: (project team will be refining throughout the process)

Objective 1: Officer Roles, Responsibilities, and Authority

- What priority outcomes should the City focus and make progress on for the next 3-5 years? (Provide a pre-populated list; space for write in.)
- Imagining someone entering the role of the Equity Officer for the City of Portland, how might you envision them working with others in the organization?
- What might the new Equity Officer focus on to help strengthen the organization?

Objective 2: Current State of Equity at the City

- Who are equity practitioners within the City? What are their specific roles and responsibilities? How do these roles interact?
- How is the City currently structured to address various aspects of equity, including race, gender, and accessibility?
- What do you think is working especially well? What do you think could improve?
- Can you tell us a bit about how your bureau or team specifically approaches this work? Do you do things differently from other teams? If so, in what ways does your approach differ?
- How does the City balance internal organizational needs with external community needs related to equity, and what mechanisms help maintain this balance?
- To what extent has the City established mechanisms to promote accountability for achieving more equitable outcomes within the organization and through its programs? How effective are they?

Methods of Engagement

The following methods will be used to gather feedback on the two objectives. Depending on the stakeholder group, questions will focus on gathering data to inform one, or both, of the two objectives.

- Survey: *Focusing primarily on objective 1*, a questionnaire drafted with input from equity practitioner leadership, previous data/reports from prior engagement, and similar surveys designed for the communications and engagement officer projects.
 - Employee survey: Understanding employee and team dynamics, sentiment, and perspectives on organizational culture
 - Community survey: Understanding community dynamics, sentiment, and perspectives on public desired outcomes.
- Interviews: *Focusing on both objectives 1 and 2*, individual discussions will be conducted with identified equity subject matter experts internal to the City.
- Focus groups: *Focusing on both objectives 1 and 2*, focus groups will be held with various equity subject matter experts and practitioners designed to better understand current structures related to organizational efforts to advance equity, including roles, practices, operations, resources, and structures.

Process and Timeline – (June to October 2024)

Stakeholder Group	Expertise	Objectives	Engagement Method	Timeline for Engagement
Office of Equity and Human Rights Leadership - (Director and Deputy Director)	SME; Organizational/ Institutional Knowledge; leadership	1 & 2	Interviews, survey	Jul - Oct
Office of Equity and Human Rights (staff)	SME	1 & 2	Survey, focus group	Aug-Oct
Citywide Equity and Civil Rights managers	SME; Citywide-level/ Institutional Knowledge; leadership	1 & 2	Interviews, survey, focus groups	Sept - Oct
Equity managers	SME; Bureau-Level/ Institutional Knowledge; leadership	1 & 2	Interviews, survey, focus groups	Jul - Oct
Other equity practitioners (as identified by equity managers and directors)	SME; Bureau-Level/ Institutional Knowledge; leadership	1 & 2	Interviews, survey, focus groups	Jul - Oct

Stakeholder Group	Expertise	Objectives	Engagement Method	Timeline for Engagement
Tribal Relations Leadership - (Tribal Relations Manager)	SME; leadership	1 & 2	Interviews, survey	Aug-Oct
Bureau directors	Organizational/ Institutional Knowledge	1	Survey	Aug-Sept
Bureau level equity councils/committees	Organizational/ Institutional knowledge	1	Survey	Aug-Sept
DEEP, Employee Resource Groups	Organizational/ Institutional knowledge	1	Survey	Aug-Sept
ADA policy & compliance	SME; leadership	1& 2	Interviews, survey, focus group	July-Oct
Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC)	Community	1	Survey *small group discussion via GTAC meeting updates	June-Oct
National organizations	SME Community	1	Survey, interview	Aug-Sept
Culturally Specific Agencies	SME Community	1	Survey	Aug-Sept
Disability Community Organizations	SME Community	1	Survey	Aug-Sept
Legal and Compliance Organizations	SME Community	1	Survey	Aug-Sept
District Coalition Offices	Community	1	Survey	Aug-Sept

The City Leadership Team will primarily be informed on the stakeholder engagement process through the reporting and updates of the project team.

Engagement - Proposed Timeline

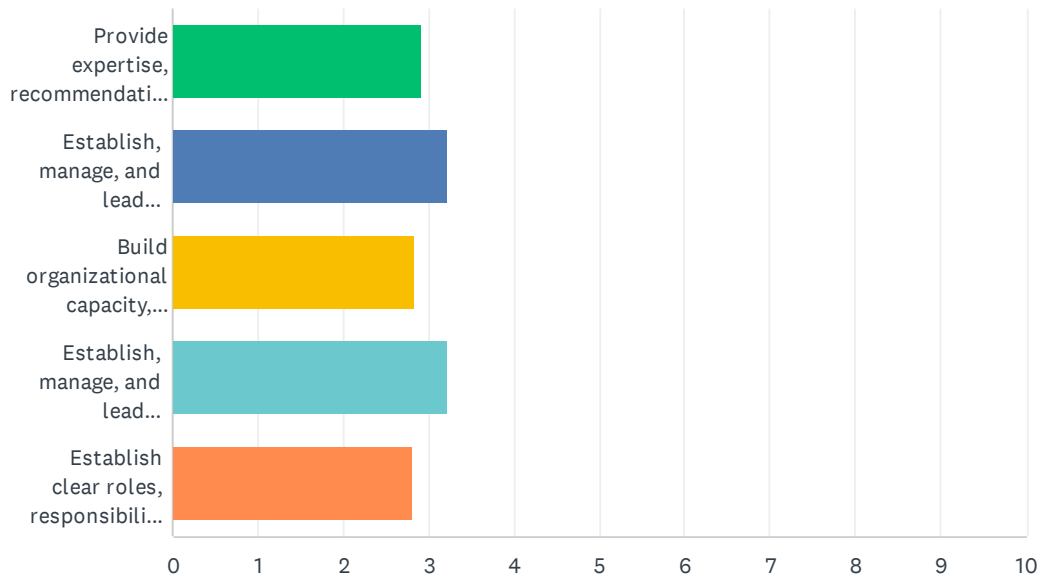
- Interviews will occur from mid-July to October.
- Surveys will occur from late-August to early-October.
- Focus groups will occur from mid-September to late-October.
- Stakeholder groups review of the draft report will occur from early-November to early-December.

Appendix B: Raw Data from Equity Officer Surveys

City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for City Employees)

Q1 The following are common roles and responsibilities of equity officers in different jurisdictions across the United States. Prioritize the following list based on what you think are the most important areas for the City of Portland's Equity Officer to focus on: [Rank the following list with your top priority as number 1]

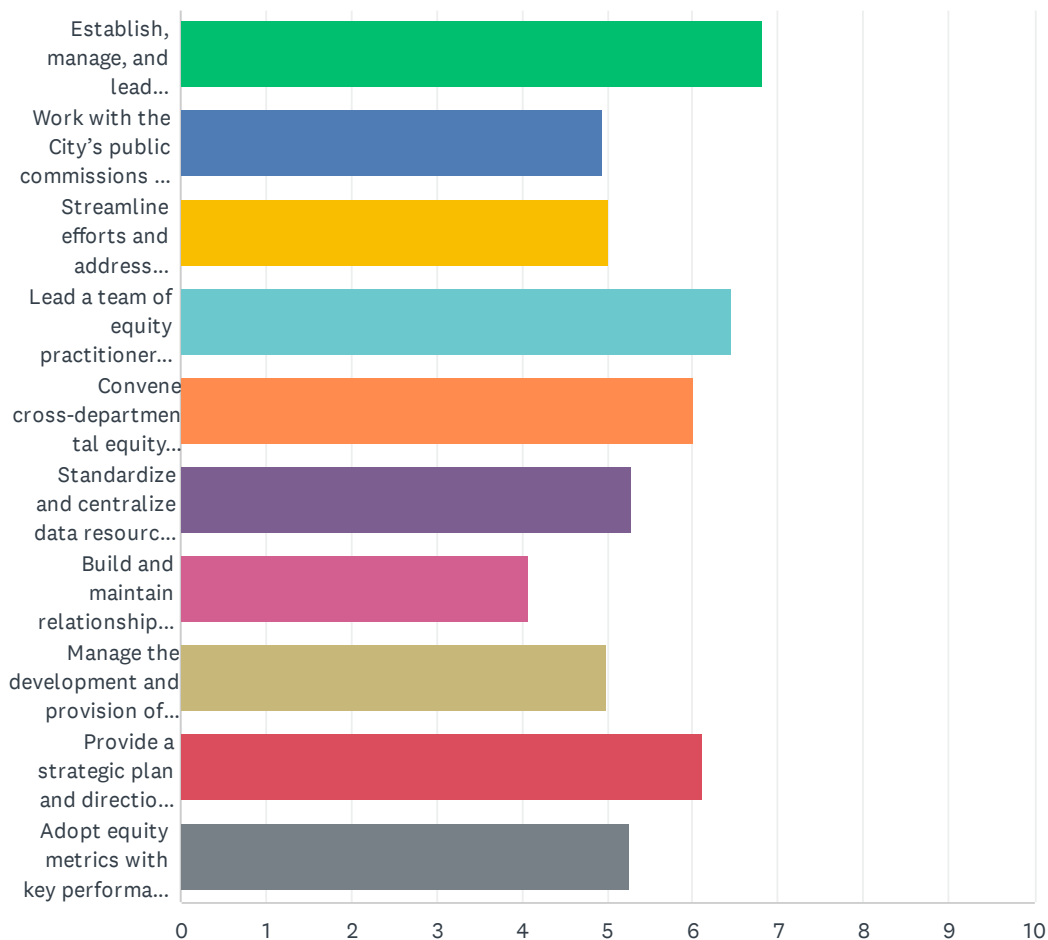
Answered: 272 Skipped: 13



	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Provide expertise, recommendations, and leadership to support the pursuit of equity objectives citywide.	20.59% 56	20.22% 55	17.28% 47	15.81% 43	26.10% 71	272	2.93
Establish, manage, and lead collaboration in implementing accountability measures for monitoring and evaluating progress, outcomes, and community impact citywide.	20.59% 56	25.00% 68	22.43% 61	18.38% 50	13.60% 37	272	3.21
Build organizational capacity, skills, and resources needed to advance equity objectives citywide.	16.18% 44	16.91% 46	21.69% 59	23.90% 65	21.32% 58	272	2.83
Establish, manage, and lead collaboration in implementing standards, policies, and a strategic vision to advance equity citywide.	27.21% 74	18.01% 49	17.65% 48	22.79% 62	14.34% 39	272	3.21
Establish clear roles, responsibilities & authorities for equity practitioners and teams to advance the practice of equity citywide.	15.44% 42	19.85% 54	20.96% 57	19.12% 52	24.63% 67	272	2.82

Q2 Many additional responsibilities and requirements of a city government can be part of an equity officer's job. Prioritize the following list based on what you think should be included as one of the primary roles of the City of Portland's Equity Officer: [Rank the following list with your top priority as number 1]

Answered: 271 Skipped: 14



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for City Employees)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Establish, manage, and lead collaboration in implementing clear procedures, guidelines, and definitions of equity for shared usage and understanding citywide.	19.56% 53	15.87% 43	15.87% 43	7.75% 21	11.44% 31	7.38% 20	4.80% 13	7.38% 20	6.64% 18	3.32% 9	271
Work with the City's public commissions and committees to develop and incorporate equity-focused goals, policies, and/or strategies.	6.27% 17	7.38% 20	8.49% 23	9.59% 26	8.49% 23	12.55% 34	12.92% 35	9.23% 25	12.55% 34	12.55% 34	271
Streamline efforts and address redundancies among equity-related efforts citywide.	8.49% 23	8.86% 24	9.23% 25	11.07% 30	7.38% 20	7.38% 20	9.23% 25	8.49% 23	11.81% 32	18.08% 49	271
Lead a team of equity practitioners and define the scope of City equity roles, including partnerships with the Bureau of Human Resources, employee resource groups, and bureau-specific equity committees.	18.82% 51	14.02% 38	11.81% 32	8.49% 23	8.86% 24	11.07% 30	7.38% 20	7.75% 21	5.17% 14	6.64% 18	271
Convene cross-	8.12% 22	11.07% 30	13.65% 37	13.28% 36	12.92% 35	12.92% 35	8.12% 22	8.86% 24	6.64% 18	4.43% 12	271

City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for City Employees)

departmental equity leadership and teams for better coordination and alignment.											
Standardize and centralize data resources and demographic mapping tools often used in equity work.	4.80% 13	9.23% 25	11.44% 31	8.86% 24	12.55% 34	10.70% 29	11.44% 31	13.28% 36	11.07% 30	6.64% 18	271
Build and maintain relationships and partnerships with regional and municipal equity leaders.	3.32% 9	4.06% 11	7.01% 19	7.75% 21	8.12% 22	8.12% 22	11.44% 31	13.28% 36	15.50% 42	21.40% 58	271
Manage the development and provision of trainings, workshops, and seminars to build knowledge and skills citywide.	3.32% 9	7.01% 19	8.12% 22	15.87% 43	9.59% 26	10.33% 28	12.18% 33	12.18% 33	11.07% 30	10.33% 28	271
Provide a strategic plan and direction for bureau-specific equity plans for each service area.	18.82% 51	13.28% 36	7.38% 20	8.86% 24	9.59% 26	8.49% 23	8.12% 22	7.38% 20	9.96% 27	8.12% 22	271
Adopt equity metrics with key performance indicators to audit and report on the outcomes of equity practices.	8.49% 23	9.23% 25	7.01% 19	8.49% 23	11.07% 30	11.07% 30	14.39% 39	12.18% 33	9.59% 26	8.49% 23	271

Q3 Are there additional roles or responsibilities that should be part of this position? If yes, please share in the space below. (Limit: 300 characters).

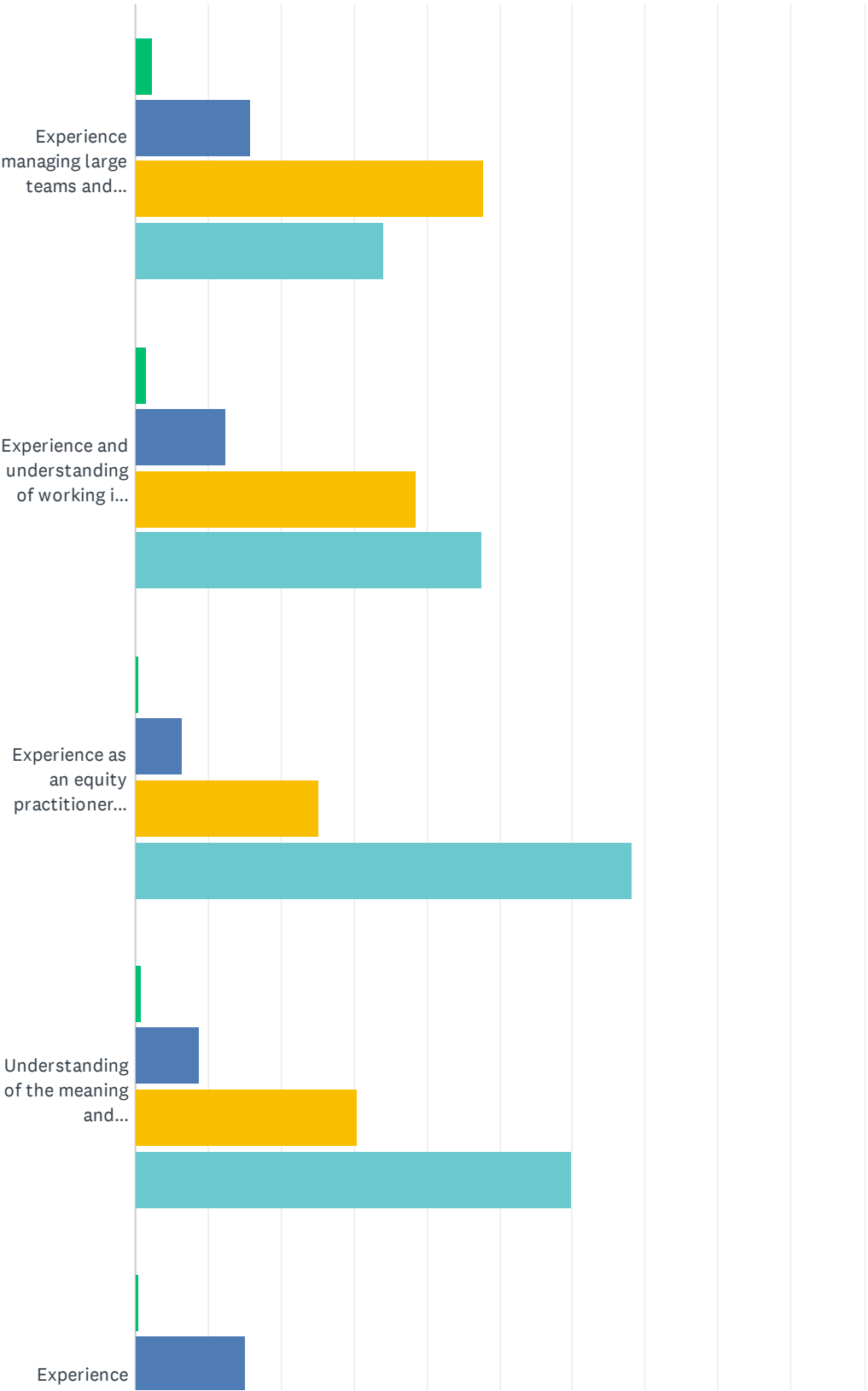
Answered: 93 Skipped: 192

Q4 Within the next five years, what equity-related outcomes or advancements would you like to see in the City of Portland? (Limit: 300 characters)

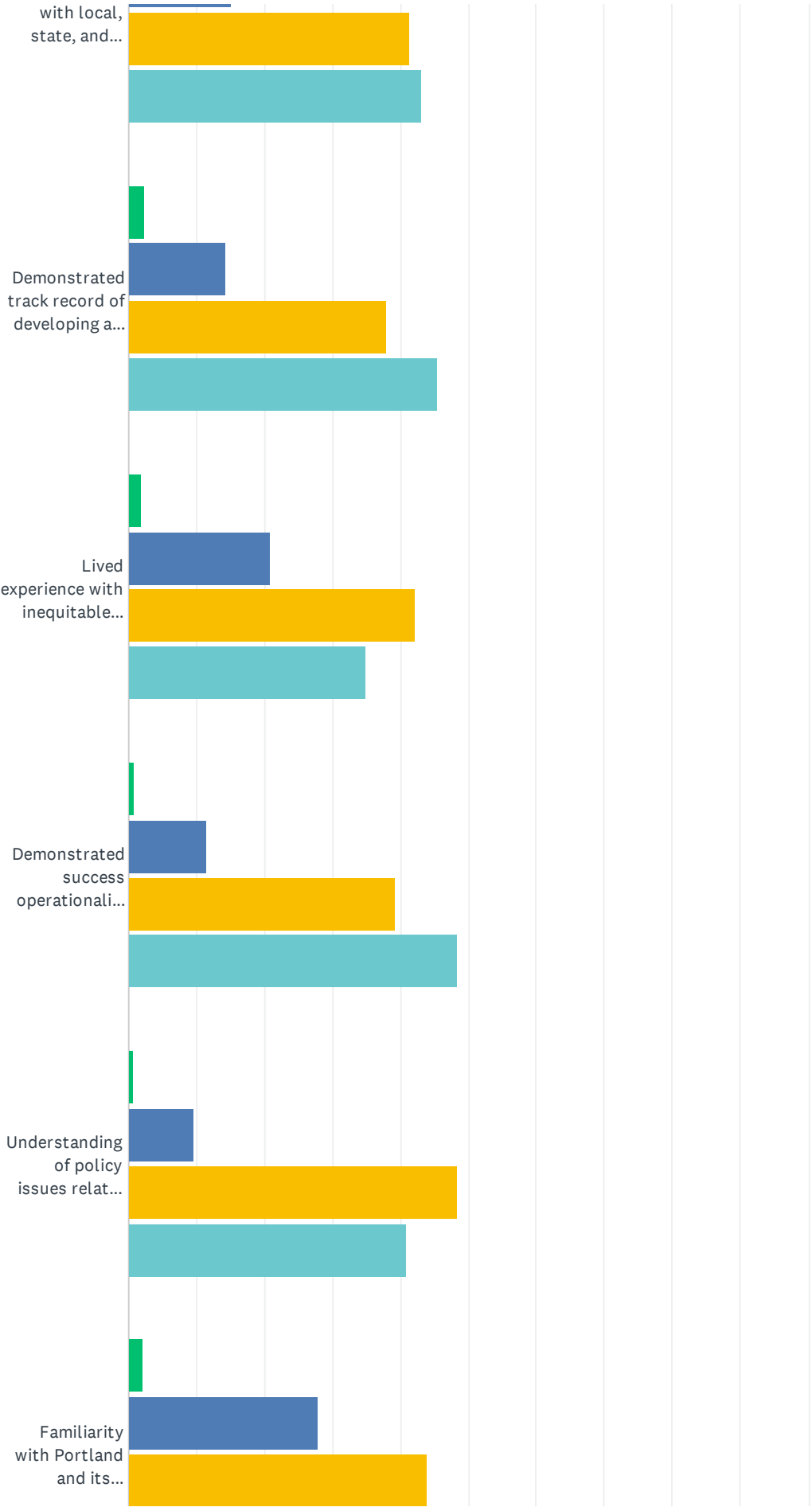
Answered: 171 Skipped: 114

Q5 How important is it for the City of Portland Equity Officer to have the following qualifications?

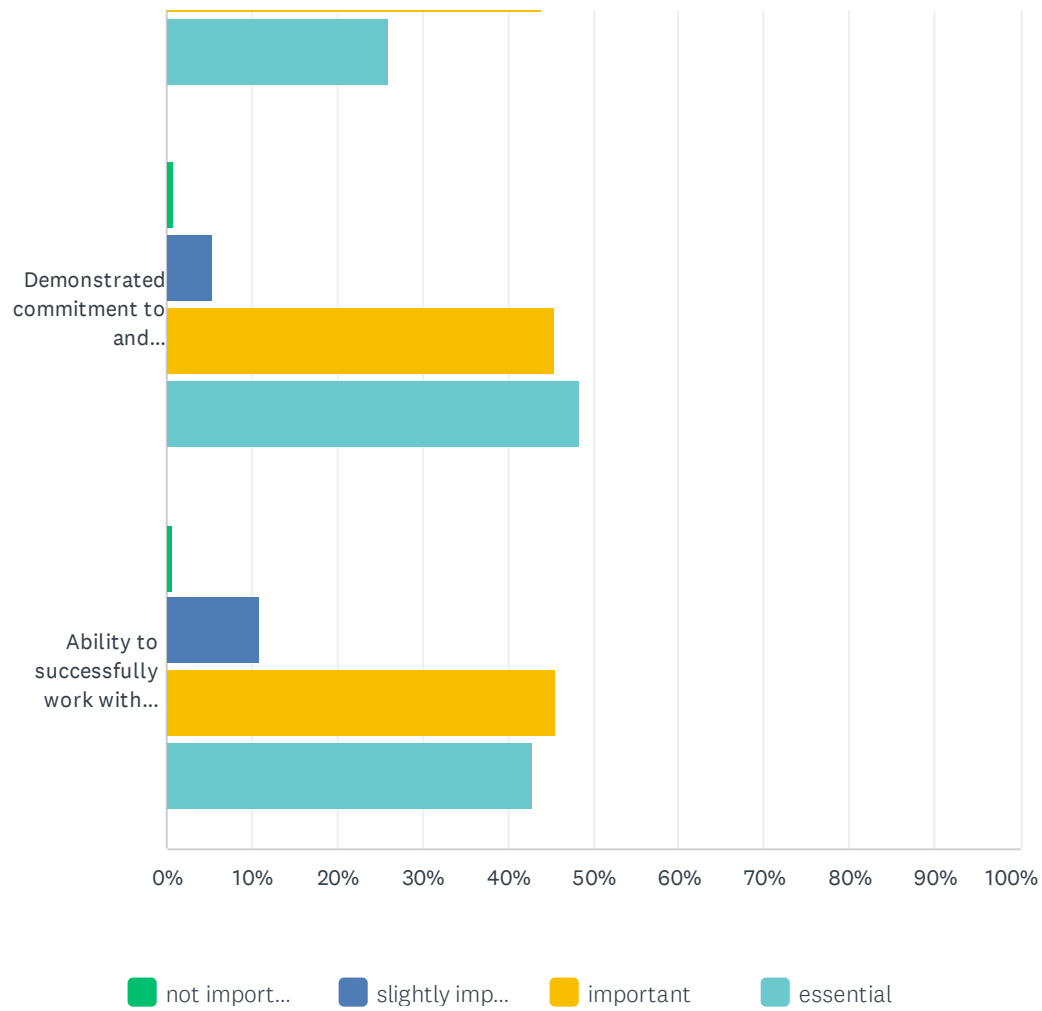
Answered: 271 Skipped: 14



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for City Employees)



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for City Employees)



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for City Employees)

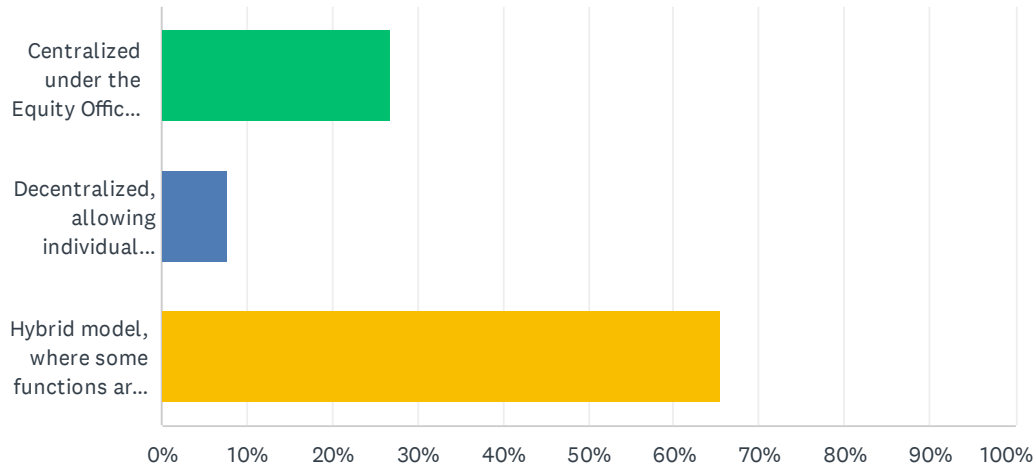
	NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	ESSENTIAL	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Experience managing large teams and operationalizing plans including budget and strategic planning.	2.26% 6	15.79% 42	47.74% 127	34.21% 91	266	3.48
Experience and understanding of working in and enacting structural or operational changes in government institutions.	1.50% 4	12.36% 33	38.58% 103	47.57% 127	267	3.80
Experience as an equity practitioner working with marginalized communities.	0.37% 1	6.37% 17	25.09% 67	68.16% 182	267	4.29
Understanding of the meaning and complexities of intersectionality.	0.76% 2	8.78% 23	30.53% 80	59.92% 157	262	4.10
Experience with local, state, and federal regulations, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Language Access, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).	0.37% 1	15.24% 41	41.26% 111	43.12% 116	269	3.70
Demonstrated track record of developing and implementing innovative approaches to advance equity.	2.26% 6	14.29% 38	37.97% 101	45.49% 121	266	3.72
Lived experience with inequitable practices and/or outcomes.	1.87% 5	20.90% 56	42.16% 113	35.07% 94	268	3.46
Demonstrated success operationalizing equity practices in large, complex systems to achieve measurable results.	0.75% 2	11.61% 31	39.33% 105	48.31% 129	267	3.84
Understanding of policy issues related to language access, LGBTQIA+ communities, data equity, and other policy issues affecting marginalized communities.	0.75% 2	9.70% 26	48.51% 130	41.04% 110	268	3.71
Familiarity with Portland and its historical relationship to equity, both in government and in community.	2.23% 6	27.88% 75	43.87% 118	26.02% 70	269	3.20
Demonstrated commitment to and effectiveness in advancing equitable structures, policies, and outcomes.	0.76% 2	5.30% 14	45.45% 120	48.48% 128	264	3.90
Ability to successfully work with community leaders and jurisdictional partners.	0.74% 2	10.78% 29	45.72% 123	42.75% 115	269	3.73

Q6 Are there additional qualifications that are important for this position? If yes, please share in the space below. (Limit: 300 characters)

Answered: 65 Skipped: 220

Q7 How should equity functions be integrated across service areas within the City of Portland?

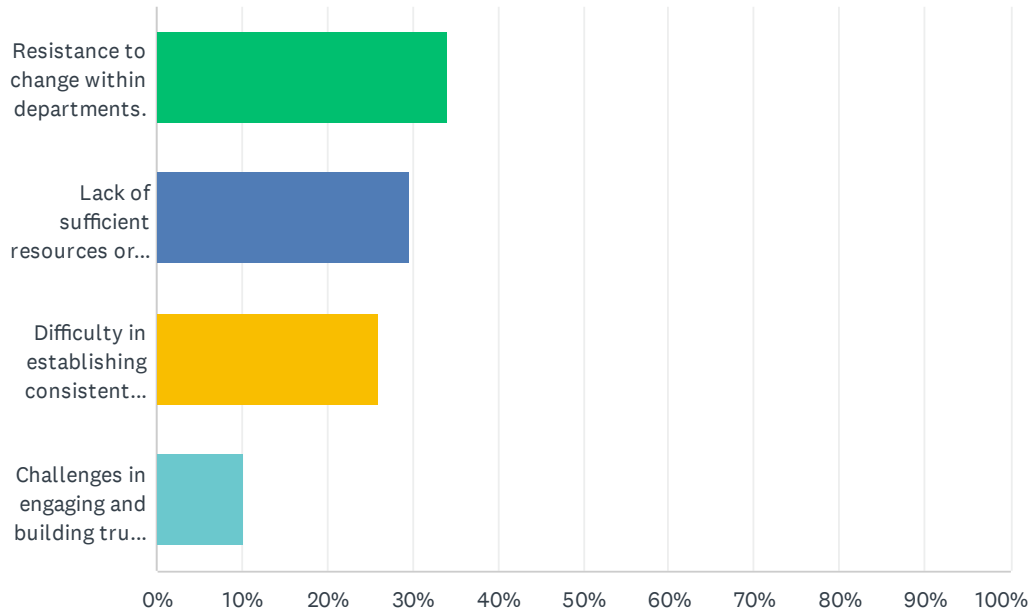
Answered: 264 Skipped: 21



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Centralized under the Equity Officer to support a unified approach across all departments.	26.89%	71
Decentralized, allowing individual bureaus and service areas to manage their own equity initiatives with guidance from the Equity Officer.	7.58%	20
Hybrid model, where some functions are centralized under the Equity Officer to support citywide outcomes, while other functions are managed by specific departments.	65.53%	173
TOTAL		264

Q8 What do you perceive as the biggest challenge in integrating equity functions across the city?

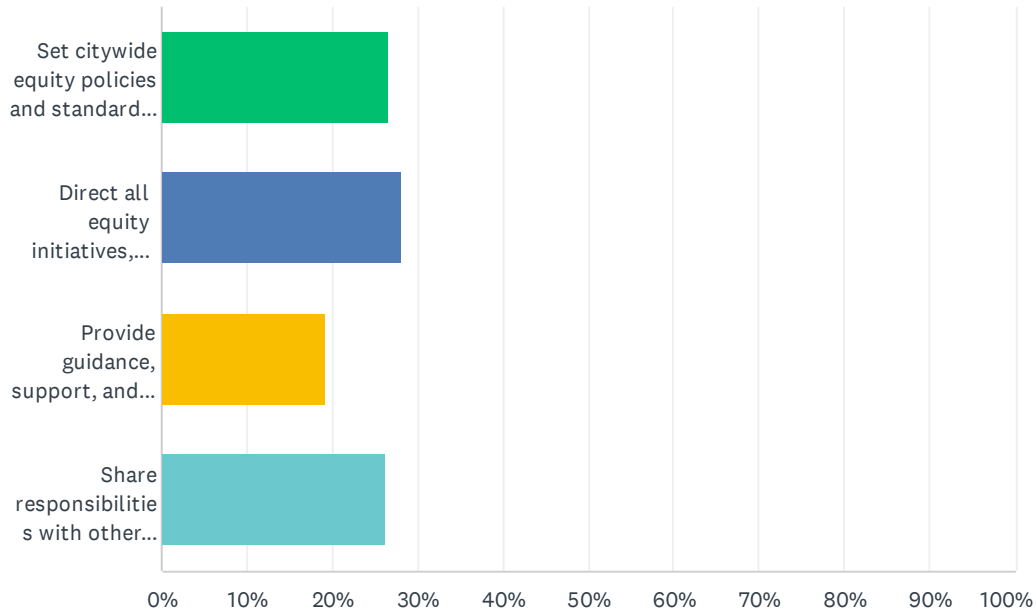
Answered: 243 Skipped: 42



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Resistance to change within departments.	34.16%	83
Lack of sufficient resources or funding.	29.63%	72
Difficulty in establishing consistent metrics and accountability.	25.93%	63
Challenges in engaging and building trust with diverse communities.	10.29%	25
TOTAL		243

Q9 Which level of authority do you believe is most critical for an incoming Equity Officer to effectively advance equity across the City of Portland?

Answered: 256 Skipped: 29



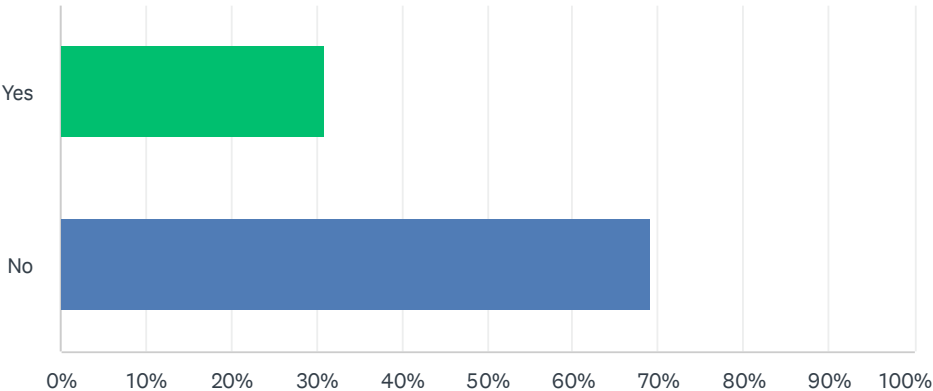
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Set citywide equity policies and standards, while departments maintain operational responsibility.	26.56%	68
Direct all equity initiatives, including providing centralized oversight of equity programs and practitioners.	28.13%	72
Provide guidance, support, and resources, with service area leaders retaining operational autonomy over equity initiatives.	19.14%	49
Share responsibilities with other city leaders and departments, coordinating overall equity efforts, including oversight of programs and practitioners.	26.17%	67
TOTAL		256

Q10 Do you have any additional thoughts on the Equity Officer position? If yes, please share in the space below. (Limit: 300 characters)

Answered: 60 Skipped: 225

Q11 Is your role primarily (50% or more) responsible for designing, coordinating, or implementing programs, policies, or practices aimed at addressing systemic disparities in service delivery or practices at the City?
[If "Yes", skip to Question 13]

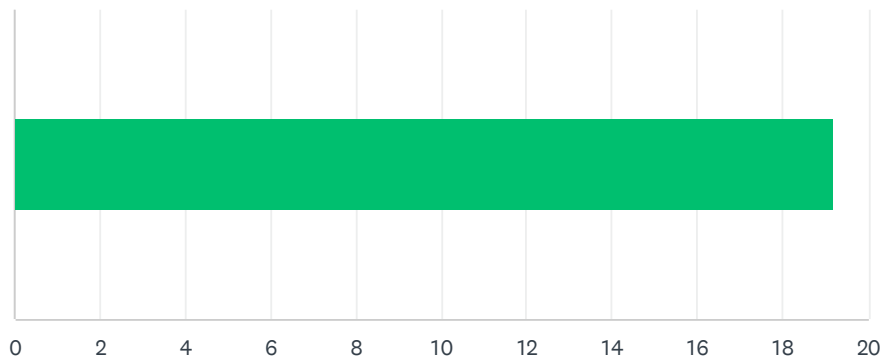
Answered: 259 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	30.89%	80
No	69.11%	179
TOTAL		259

Q12 If no, approximately what percentage of your role is responsible for designing, coordinating, or implementing programs, policies, or practices aimed at addressing systemic disparities in service delivery or practices?

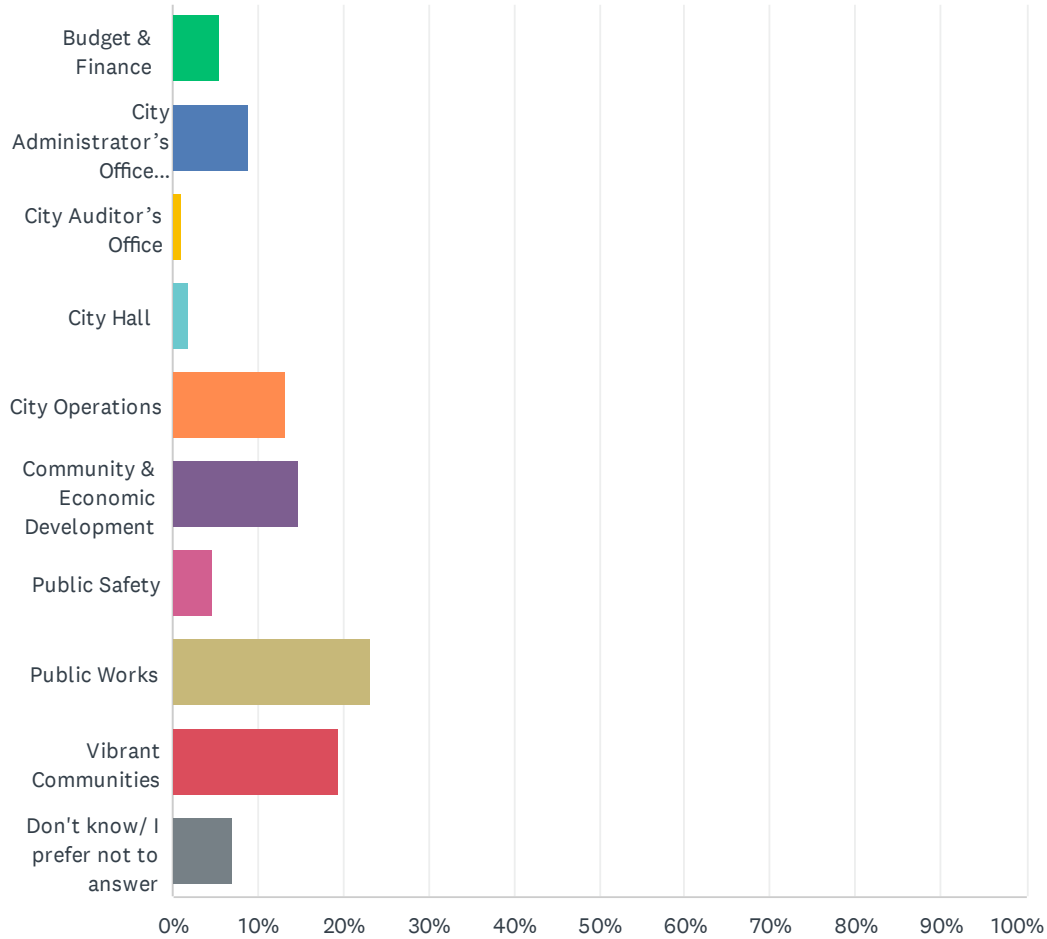
Answered: 171 Skipped: 114



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	19	3,285	171
Total Respondents: 171			

Q13 What is your service area or departmental area? Find out what service area you are in: [HERE](#).

Answered: 257 Skipped: 28

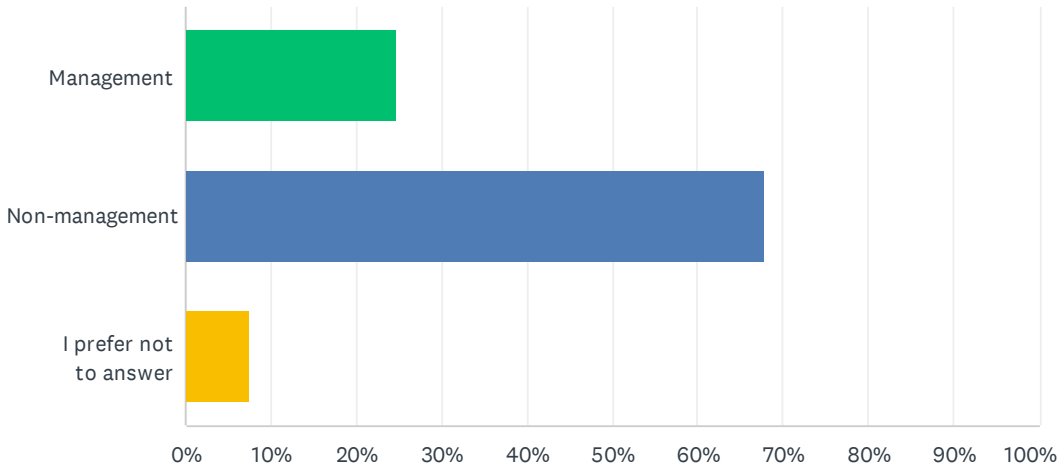


City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for City Employees)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Budget & Finance	5.45%	14
City Administrator's Office (includes Assistant City Administrator's Office)	8.95%	23
City Auditor's Office	1.17%	3
City Hall	1.95%	5
City Operations	13.23%	34
Community & Economic Development	14.79%	38
Public Safety	4.67%	12
Public Works	23.35%	60
Vibrant Communities	19.46%	50
Don't know/ I prefer not to answer	7.00%	18
TOTAL		257

Q14 Is your position:

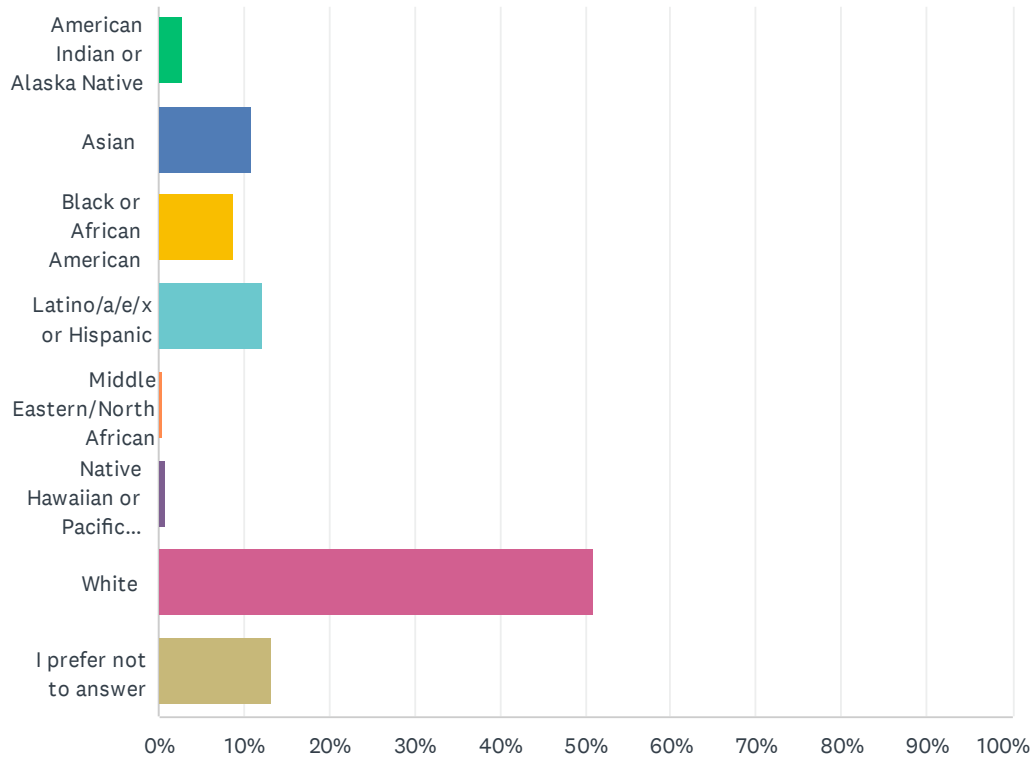
Answered: 255 Skipped: 30



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Management	24.71%	63
Non-management	67.84%	173
I prefer not to answer	7.45%	19
TOTAL		255

Q15 Which of the following describes your racial or ethnic identity? Please list additional or other identifies in the space provided.

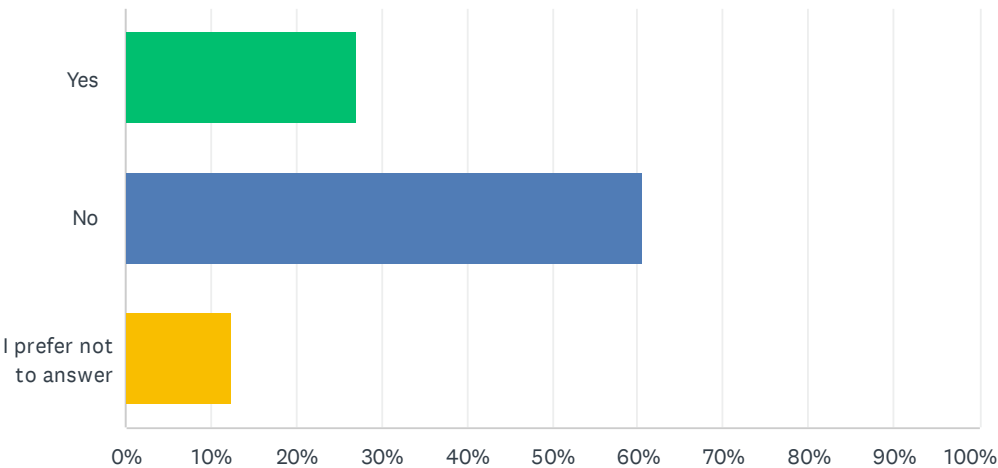
Answered: 249 Skipped: 36



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.81%	7
Asian	10.84%	27
Black or African American	8.84%	22
Latino/a/e/x or Hispanic	12.05%	30
Middle Eastern/North African	0.40%	1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.80%	2
White	51.00%	127
I prefer not to answer	13.25%	33
TOTAL		249

Q16 Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community?

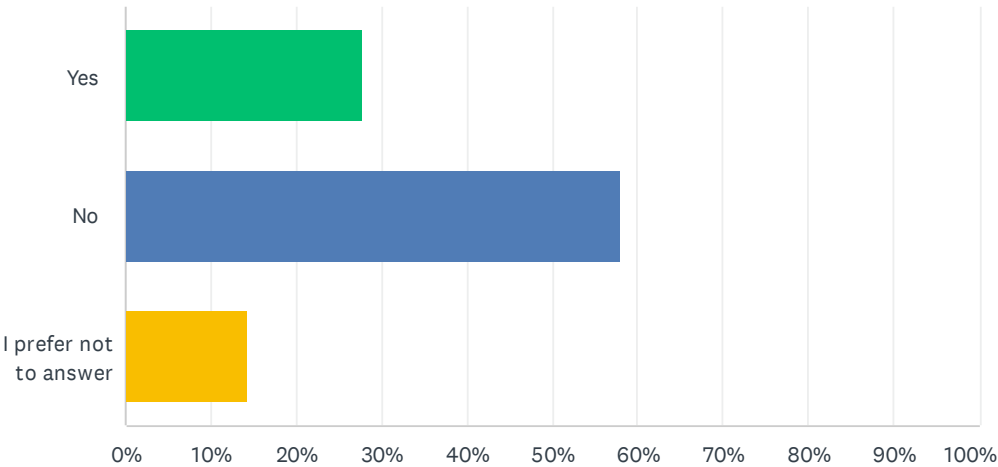
Answered: 259 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		27.03%	70
No		60.62%	157
I prefer not to answer		12.36%	32
TOTAL			259

Q17 Do you identify with having or living with a disability? Please select one.

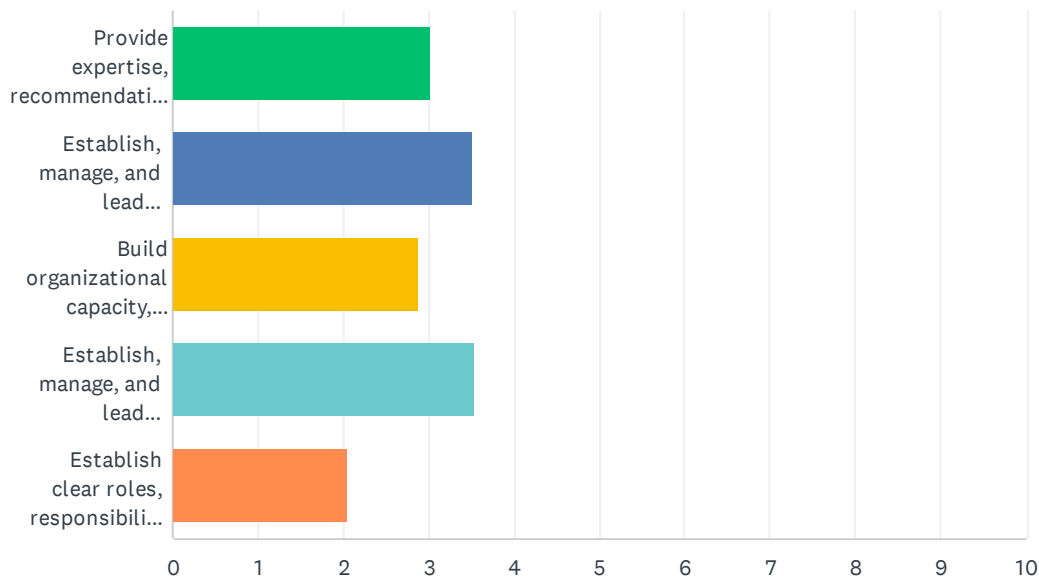
Answered: 260 Skipped: 25



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.69%	72
No	58.08%	151
I prefer not to answer	14.23%	37
TOTAL		260

Q1 The following are common roles and responsibilities of equity officers in different jurisdictions across the United States. Prioritize the following list based on what you think are the most important areas for the City of Portland's Equity Officer to focus on: [Rank the following list with your top priority ranked as number 1]

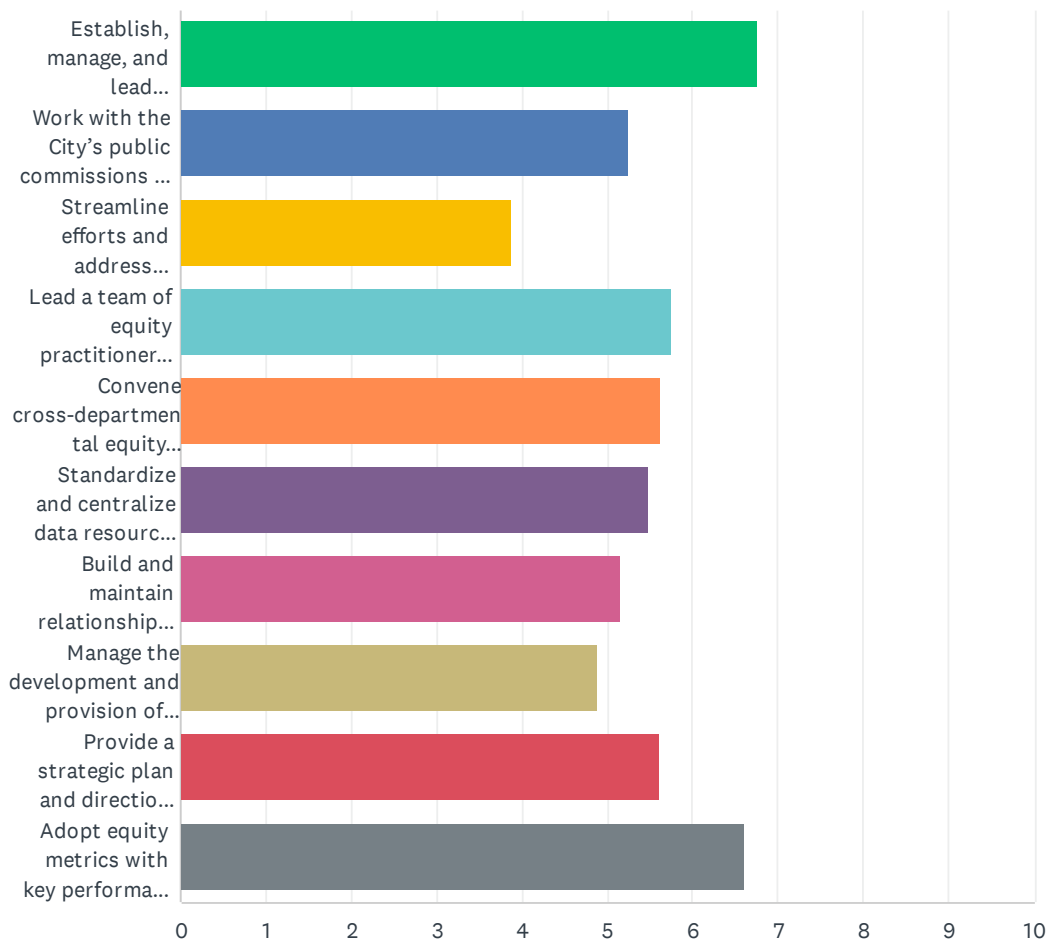
Answered: 41 Skipped: 1



	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Provide expertise, recommendations, and leadership to support the pursuit of equity objectives citywide.	21.95% 9	21.95% 9	14.63% 6	19.51% 8	21.95% 9	41	3.02
Establish, manage, and lead collaboration in implementing accountability measures for monitoring and evaluating progress, outcomes, and community impact citywide.	24.39% 10	31.71% 13	24.39% 10	9.76% 4	9.76% 4	41	3.51
Build organizational capacity, skills, and resources needed to advance equity objectives citywide.	14.63% 6	21.95% 9	19.51% 8	24.39% 10	19.51% 8	41	2.88
Establish, manage, and lead collaboration in implementing standards, policies, and a strategic vision to advance equity citywide.	34.15% 14	21.95% 9	12.20% 5	26.83% 11	4.88% 2	41	3.54
Establish clear roles, responsibilities & authorities for equity practitioners and teams to advance the practice of equity citywide.	4.88% 2	2.44% 1	29.27% 12	19.51% 8	43.90% 18	41	2.05

Q2 Many additional responsibilities and requirements of a city government can be part of an equity officer's job. Prioritize the following list based on what you think should be included as one of the primary roles of the City of Portland's Equity Officer: [Rank the following list with your top priority ranked as number 1]

Answered: 38 Skipped: 4



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for Community Organizations and Groups)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Establish, manage, and lead collaboration in implementing clear procedures, guidelines, and definitions of equity for shared usage and understanding citywide.	15.79% 6	15.79% 6	5.26% 2	13.16% 5	21.05% 8	13.16% 5	7.89% 3	2.63% 1	5.26% 2	0.00% 0	38
Work with the City's public commissions and committees to develop and incorporate equity-focused goals, policies, and/or strategies.	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	10.53% 4	2.63% 1	13.16% 5	7.89% 3	13.16% 5	13.16% 5	13.16% 5	7.89% 3	38
Streamline efforts and address redundancies among equity-related efforts citywide.	2.63% 1	0.00% 0	5.26% 2	10.53% 4	10.53% 4	5.26% 2	18.42% 7	10.53% 4	13.16% 5	23.68% 9	38
Lead a team of equity practitioners and define the scope of City equity roles, including partnerships with the Bureau of Human Resources, employee resource groups, and bureau-specific equity committees.	7.89% 3	7.89% 3	18.42% 7	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	18.42% 7	5.26% 2	5.26% 2	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	38
Convene cross-	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	15.79% 6	7.89% 3	2.63% 1	15.79% 6	10.53% 4	15.79% 6	7.89% 3	5.26% 2	38

City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for Community Organizations and Groups)

departmental equity leadership and teams for better coordination and alignment.											
Standardize and centralize data resources and demographic mapping tools often used in equity work.	7.89% 3	7.89% 3	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	18.42% 7	13.16% 5	2.63% 1	15.79% 6	7.89% 3	7.89% 3	38
Build and maintain relationships and partnerships with regional and municipal equity leaders.	5.26% 2	13.16% 5	10.53% 4	10.53% 4	5.26% 2	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	10.53% 4	13.16% 5	13.16% 5	38
Manage the development and provision of trainings, workshops, and seminars to build knowledge and skills citywide.	7.89% 3	7.89% 3	2.63% 1	18.42% 7	7.89% 3	5.26% 2	10.53% 4	10.53% 4	13.16% 5	15.79% 6	38
Provide a strategic plan and direction for bureau-specific equity plans for each service area.	10.53% 4	13.16% 5	10.53% 4	10.53% 4	10.53% 4	5.26% 2	10.53% 4	5.26% 2	7.89% 3	15.79% 6	38
Adopt equity metrics with key performance indicators to audit and report on the outcomes of equity practices.	21.05% 8	18.42% 7	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	2.63% 1	5.26% 2	13.16% 5	10.53% 4	7.89% 3	2.63% 1	38

Q3 Are there additional roles or responsibilities that should be part of this position? If yes, please list in the space below. (Limit: 300 characters)

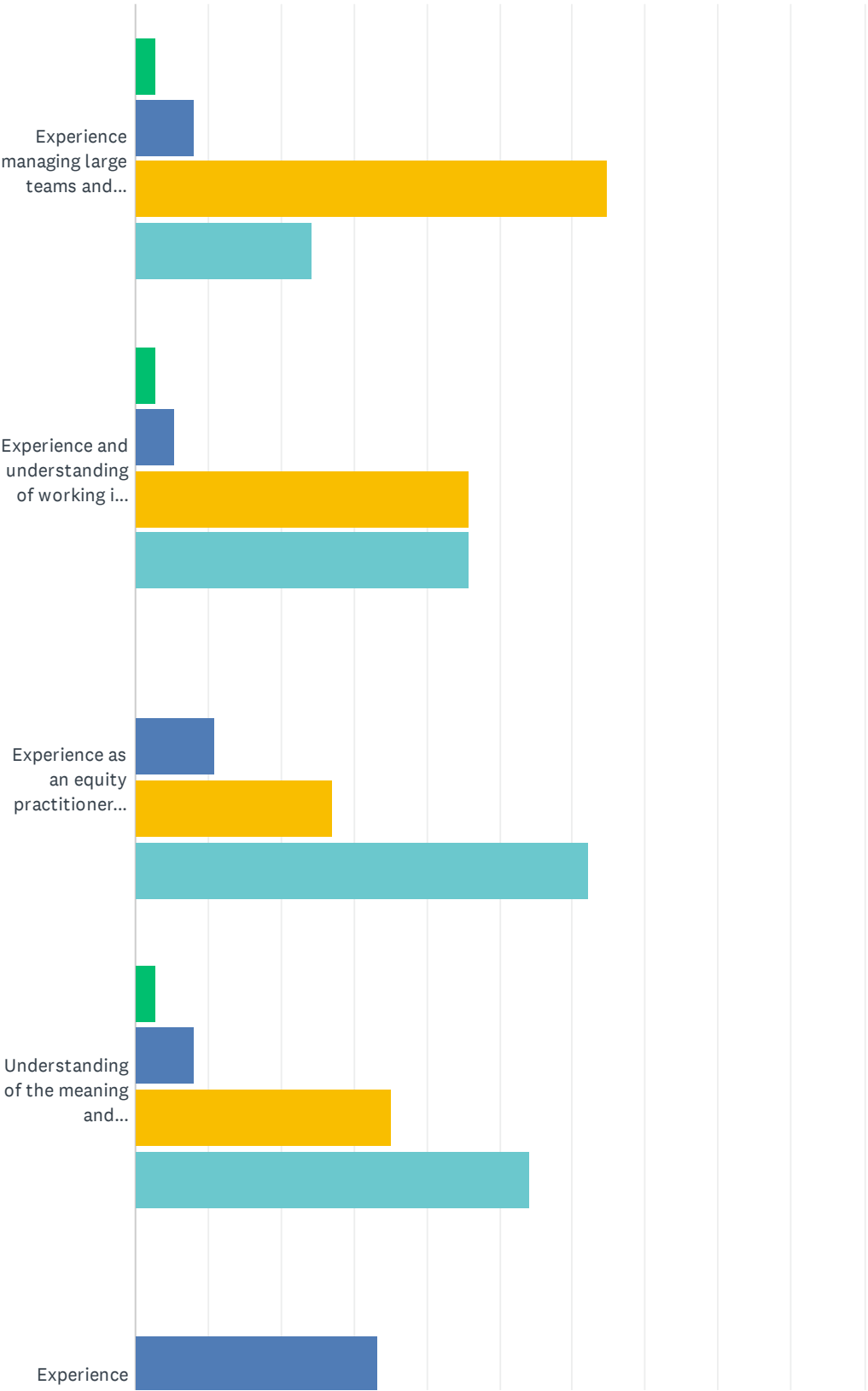
Answered: 13 Skipped: 29

Q4 Within the next five years, what equity-related outcomes or advancements would you like to see in the City of Portland? (Limit: 300 characters)

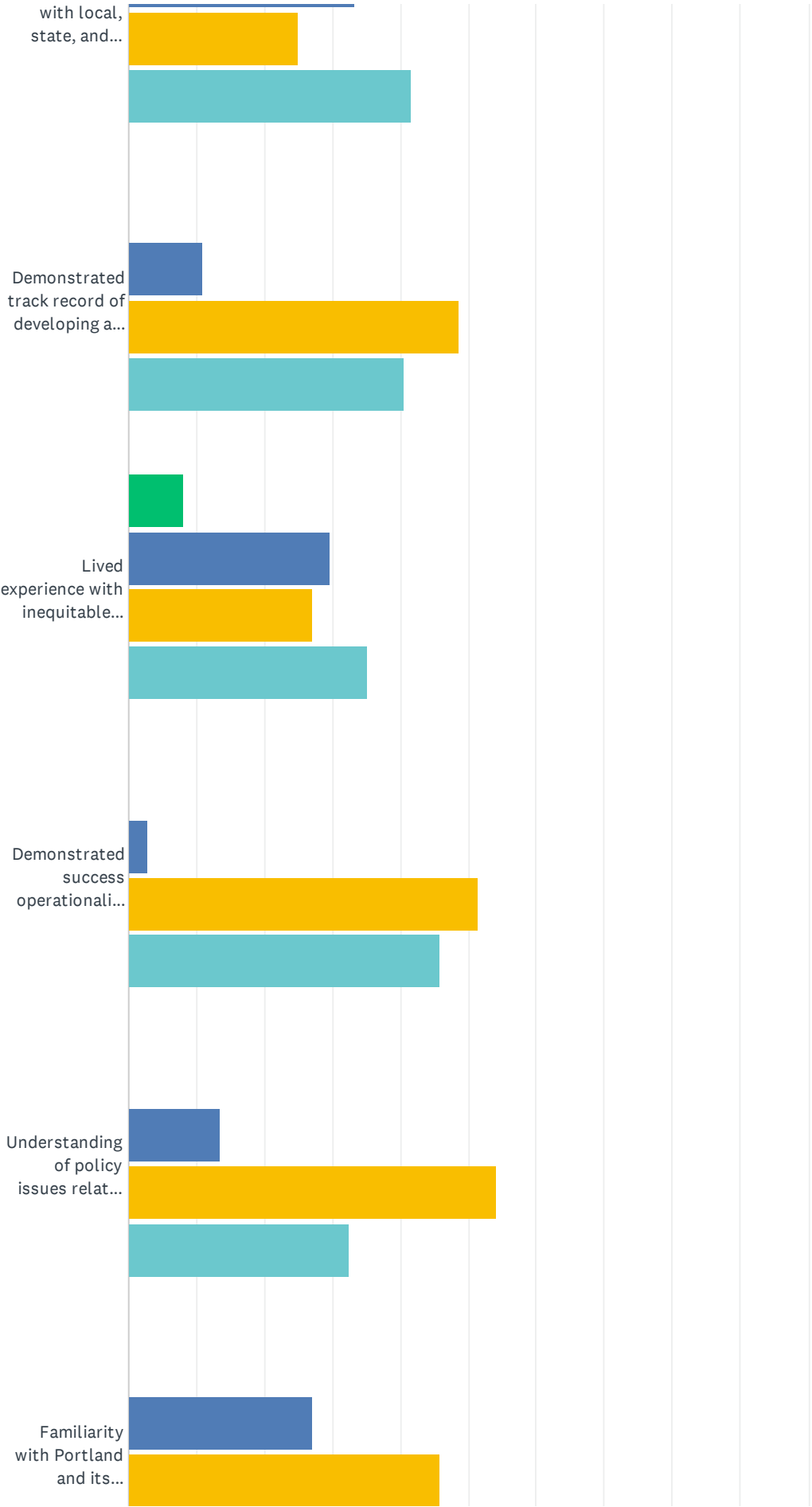
Answered: 21 Skipped: 21

Q5 How important is it for the City of Portland Equity Officer to have the following qualifications?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 5



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for Community Organizations and Groups)



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for Community Organizations and Groups)



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for Community Organizations and Groups)

	NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	ESSENTIAL	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Experience managing large teams and operationalizing plans including budget and strategic planning.	2.70% 1	8.11% 3	64.86% 24	24.32% 9	37	3.35
Experience and understanding of working in and enacting structural or operational changes in government institutions.	2.70% 1	5.41% 2	45.95% 17	45.95% 17	37	3.81
Experience as an equity practitioner working with marginalized communities.	0.00% 0	10.81% 4	27.03% 10	62.16% 23	37	4.14
Understanding of the meaning and complexities of intersectionality.	2.70% 1	8.11% 3	35.14% 13	54.05% 20	37	3.95
Experience with local, state, and federal regulations, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Language Access, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).	0.00% 0	33.33% 12	25.00% 9	41.67% 15	36	3.50
Demonstrated track record of developing and implementing innovative approaches to advance equity.	0.00% 0	10.81% 4	48.65% 18	40.54% 15	37	3.70
Lived experience with inequitable practices and/or outcomes.	8.11% 3	29.73% 11	27.03% 10	35.14% 13	37	3.24
Demonstrated success operationalizing equity practices in large, complex systems to achieve measurable results.	0.00% 0	2.70% 1	51.35% 19	45.95% 17	37	3.89
Understanding of policy issues related to language access, LGBTQIA+ communities, data equity, and other policy issues affecting marginalized communities.	0.00% 0	13.51% 5	54.05% 20	32.43% 12	37	3.51
Familiarity with Portland and its historical relationship to equity, both in government and in community.	0.00% 0	27.03% 10	45.95% 17	27.03% 10	37	3.27
Demonstrated commitment to and effectiveness in advancing equitable structures, policies, and outcomes.	0.00% 0	10.81% 4	29.73% 11	59.46% 22	37	4.08
Ability to successfully work with community leaders and jurisdictional partners.	0.00% 0	11.11% 4	33.33% 12	55.56% 20	36	4.00

Q6 Are there additional qualifications that are important for this position? If yes, please share in the space below. (Limit: 300 characters)

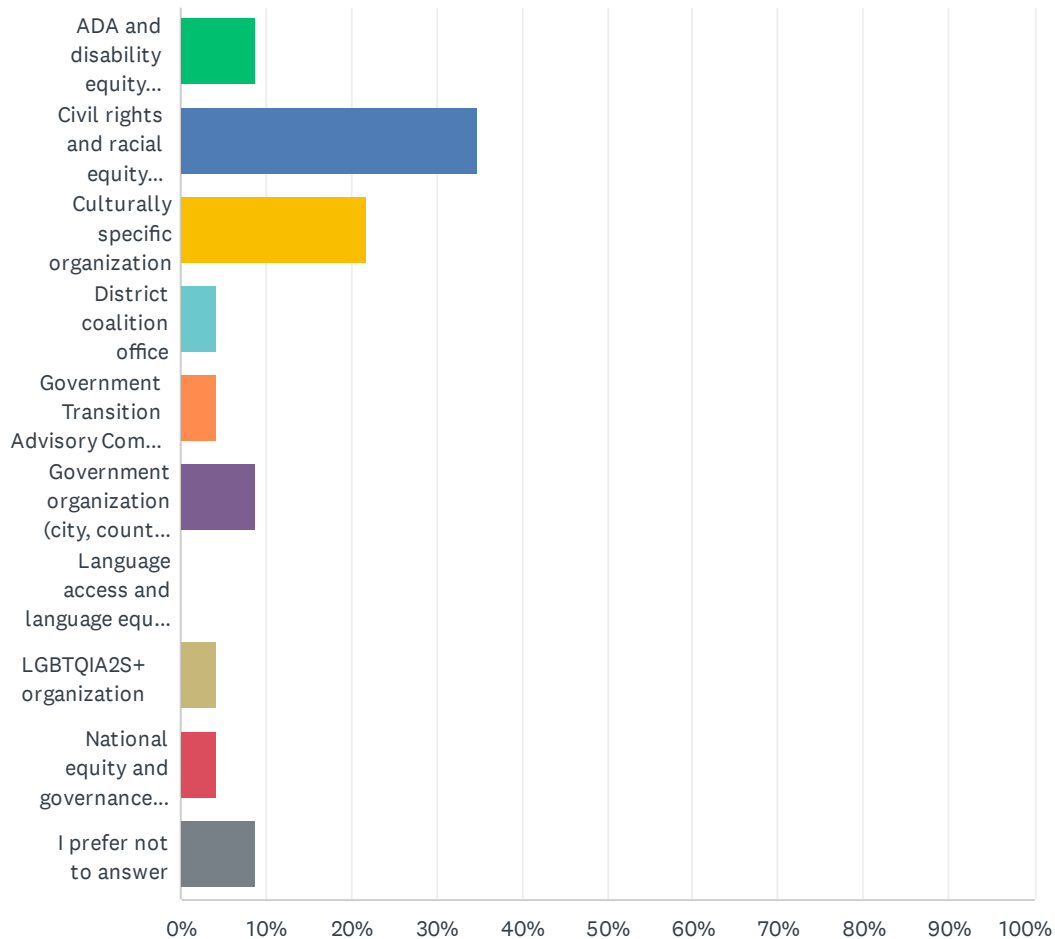
Answered: 9 Skipped: 33

Q7 Do you have any additional thoughts on the Equity Officer position? If yes, please share in the space below. (Limit: 300 characters)

Answered: 8 Skipped: 34

Q8 Which of the following describes the type of organization/group you represent? Please list additional or other descriptions in the space provided.

Answered: 23 Skipped: 19



City of Portland Equity Officer Survey (for Community Organizations and Groups)

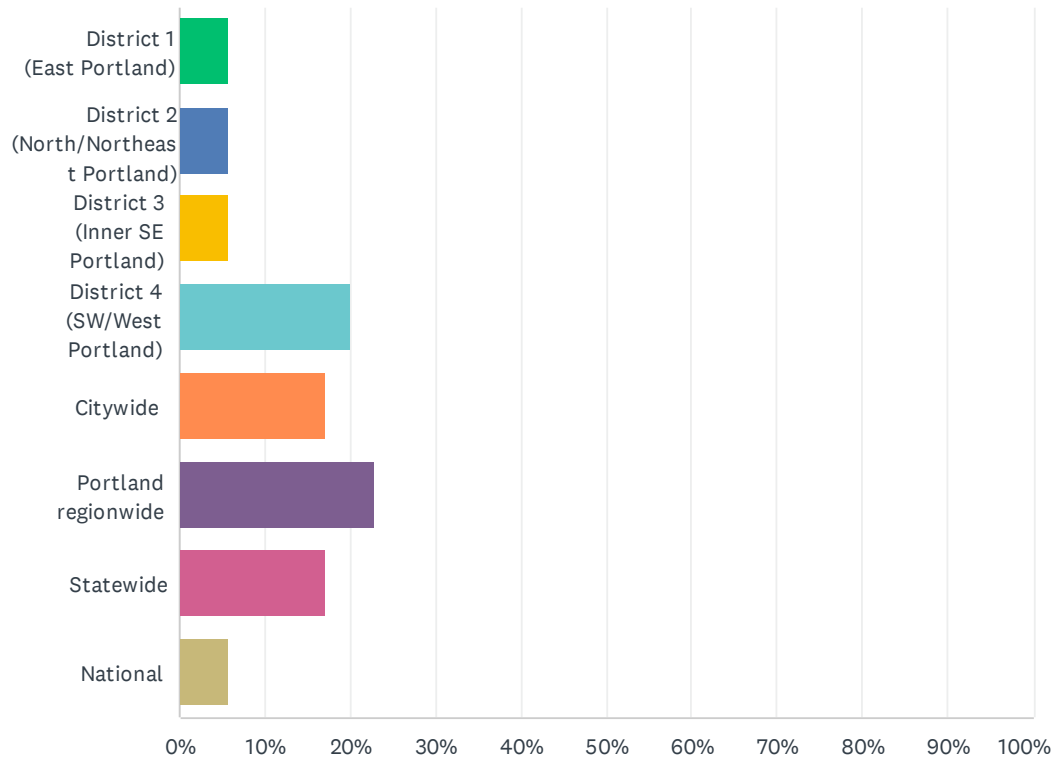
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
ADA and disability equity organization	8.70%	2
Civil rights and racial equity organization	34.78%	8
Culturally specific organization	21.74%	5
District coalition office	4.35%	1
Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC)	4.35%	1
Government organization (city, county, state, etc.)	8.70%	2
Language access and language equity organization	0.00%	0
LGBTQIA2S+ organization	4.35%	1
National equity and governance focused organization	4.35%	1
I prefer not to answer	8.70%	2
TOTAL		23

Q9 Other than those listed in question 8, are there additional communities or populations your organization represents? If yes, please describe below.
[Limit: 300 characters]

Answered: 13 Skipped: 29

Q10 What geographic area does your organization or group serve? To find what City of Portland district an address is located in, go to www.Portlandmaps.com.

Answered: 35 Skipped: 7



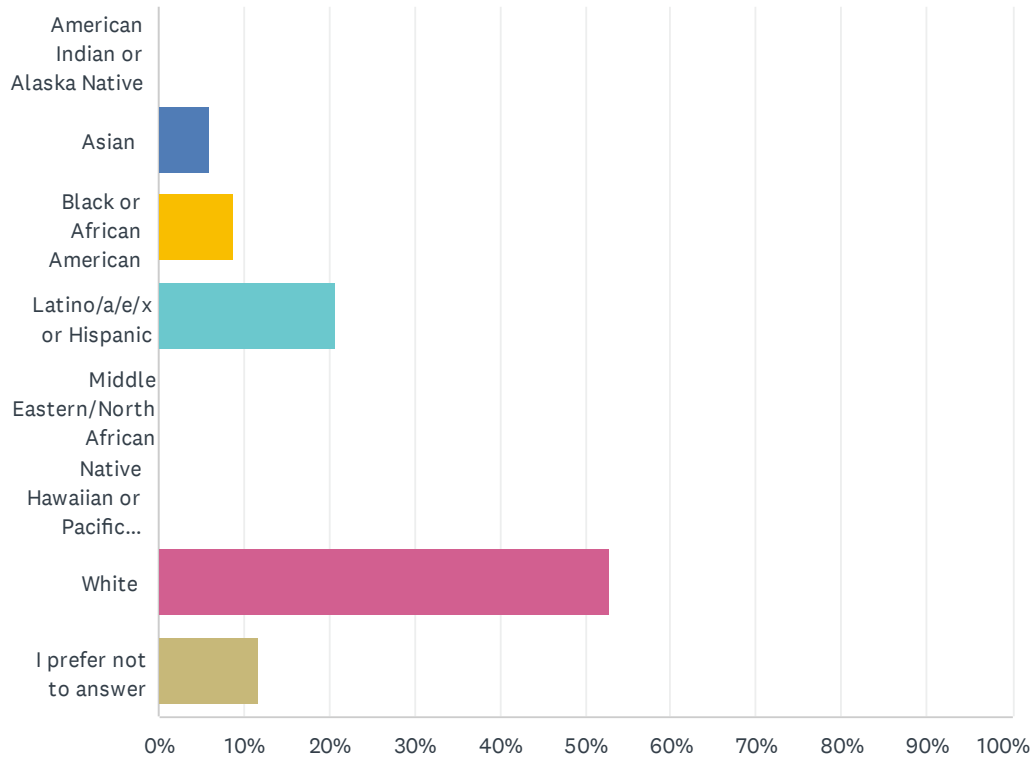
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
District 1 (East Portland)	5.71%	2
District 2 (North/Northeast Portland)	5.71%	2
District 3 (Inner SE Portland)	5.71%	2
District 4 (SW/West Portland)	20.00%	7
Citywide	17.14%	6
Portland regionwide	22.86%	8
Statewide	17.14%	6
National	5.71%	2
TOTAL		35

Q11 Describe what experience your organization has in engaging with the City of Portland in its equity work. (Limit: 300 characters)

Answered: 23 Skipped: 19

Q12 Which of the following describes your racial or ethnic identity? Please list additional or other identifies in the space provided.

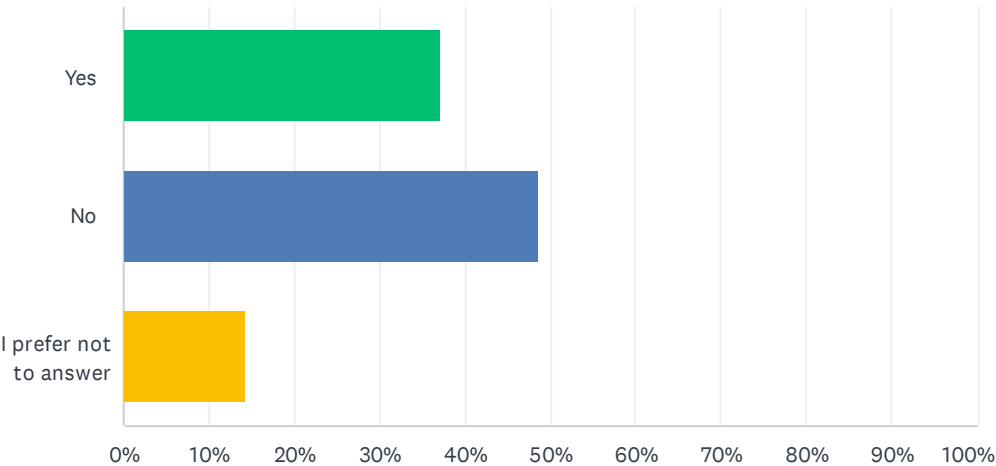
Answered: 34 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.00%	0
Asian	5.88%	2
Black or African American	8.82%	3
Latino/a/e/x or Hispanic	20.59%	7
Middle Eastern/North African	0.00%	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
White	52.94%	18
I prefer not to answer	11.76%	4
TOTAL		34

Q13 Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community?

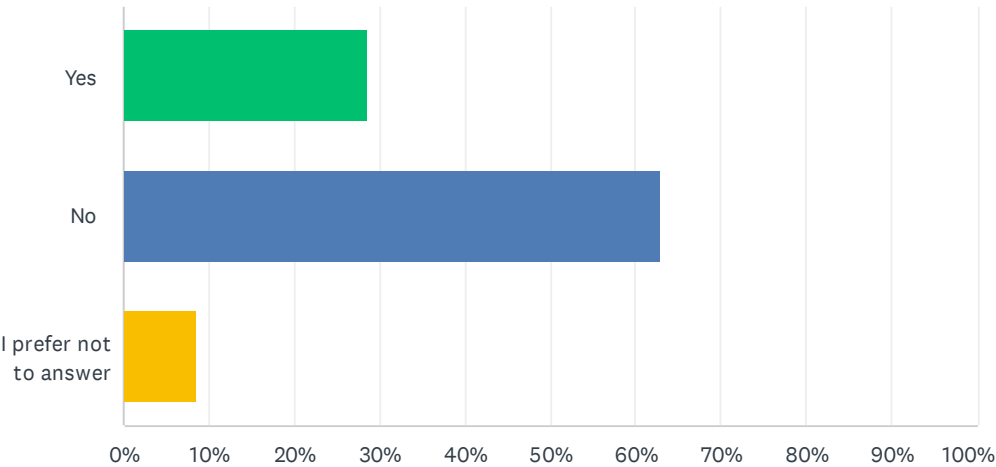
Answered: 35 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		37.14%	13
No		48.57%	17
I prefer not to answer		14.29%	5
TOTAL			35

Q14 Do you identify with having or living with a disability? Please select one.

Answered: 35 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		28.57%	10
No		62.86%	22
I prefer not to answer		8.57%	3
TOTAL			35

Appendix C: Preliminary Summary of Survey Responses

Preliminary Summary of Themes from Equity Officer Surveys (10/10/24)

Themes Across Both Surveys

DESIRED EQUITY OUTCOMES FOR THE CITY (Q4)	
Employee Responses =	Community Organization Responses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measurable Equity Outcomes and Accountability: Clear, measurable metrics with transparent tracking and accountability mechanisms. 2. Hiring, Retention, and Representation: Increase workforce diversity and representation in leadership, improving retention (especially for BIPOC employees). 3. Collaboration and Unified Equity Policies Across City Leadership and Bureaus: Consistent and cohesive equity practices across city leadership and departments; increased and effective collaboration between departments and offices. 4. Disability Access, Accommodations, and ADA Compliance: Ensure ADA compliance, improve accommodations and accessibility for disabled employees, inclusive communication for neurodiverse individuals. 5. Language Access and ADA Compliance: Ensuring meaningful language access services and is a recurring theme, which includes shared translation resources. 6. Equitable Decision-Making and Accountability: Equity audits, stronger representation of underrepresented groups in decision-making processes, and data-driven performance metrics. 7. Training and Resources for Equity: There is a demand for more comprehensive equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) training, capacity and resources to achieve goals. 8. Diverse and Inclusive Leadership: More diverse leadership, particularly from marginalized groups such as 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equitable Hiring Practices and Leadership Representation: Implement equitable hiring processes; increase presence of BIPOC staff in decision-making roles, build pipeline of diverse future leaders in the city. 2. Prioritization of Equity and Anti-Racism Across Bureaus: Align bureaus in prioritizing equity and anti-racism efforts, addressing workplace characteristics of White Supremacy Culture, and fostering cross-bureau collaboration. 3. Housing Equity and Affordability: Increase availability of low-income housing in high-rent areas, improve homeownership rates for Black and Brown communities, broaden housing equity objectives beyond home purchasing. 4. Policing and Public Safety Reform: Hold police accountable for racial bias, auditing police training programs, and raising awareness of implicit bias in public safety to ensure equity in outcomes. 5. Citywide Strategic Equity Plan and Accountability: Create citywide equity plan that aligns across service areas while allowing for innovation. Establish accountability measures within the city's infrastructure to track progress on equity initiatives. 6. Inclusion of Marginalized and Underrepresented Groups: Recognize and provide services for linguistically and culturally specific groups, such as Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing individuals, as well as increasing literacy and employment

<p>BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, immigrants, and people with disabilities, with a focus on leadership development and retention strategies.</p> <p>9. Broadened Equity Lens: Expand definition of equity beyond race and LGBTQIA+ issues to include neurodiversity, disabilities, class, and other intersectional factors, ensuring that equity work is more inclusive and comprehensive.</p> <p>10. Workforce Development and Entry-Level Opportunities: Improve workforce development strategies, create more entry-level opportunities and clearer pathways for retention.</p>	<p>opportunities for low-income BIPOC youth.</p> <p>7. Participatory Budgeting and Community Engagement: Participatory budgeting process for residents, especially marginalized groups, greater control over portions of the city budget, ensuring a more inclusive decision-making process.</p>
ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR POSITION (Q10-Employee; Q7-Comm Org)	
Employee Responses	Community Organization Responses
<p>Top themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authority and Accountability in Equity Leadership: The Equity Officer must have the authority to hold city leadership accountable for implementing equitable practices and maintaining a diverse workforce across all bureaus, with the power to enforce change. 2. Integration of Equity Across Departments: Equity initiatives should be embedded throughout all city departments, with every employee held to the same standards, rather than concentrating responsibility solely on one role or office. 3. Use of Equity Metrics and Data: A focus on equity metrics is essential for driving meaningful change. Data is crucial for evaluating progress and ensuring transparency in equity practices across the city. 4. Assessment and Flexibility in Equity Programs: There is a need for an ongoing assessment of current equity practices to identify strengths and weaknesses. While centralizing equity efforts is important, flexibility is 	<p>Top themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commitment to Advancing Equity with Data and Enforcement: Strong desire for a leader who is fully committed to dismantling institutionalized racism, prioritizing equity, and using data to drive change. The position should have enforcement power to ensure goals are met across bureaus. 2. Concerns About Bureaucracy and Government Waste: Some commenters express frustration with government inefficiency, high taxes, and view the establishment of an equity office as unnecessary or wasteful, fueling opposition from conservative viewpoints. 3. Collaboration and Relationship Building: There is a call for the equity office to move beyond advisory roles, gain real authority to make changes, and foster stronger partnerships with neighborhood associations and other local entities to support grassroots efforts.

<p>needed to adapt to the unique needs of different service areas.</p> <p>5. Internal Equity and Workforce Wellbeing: The Equity Officer should prioritize internal equity, employee wellbeing, and maintaining open communication channels to create a diverse, empowered workforce that is engaged in equity initiatives.</p>	
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Employee Survey Findings

Equity-related outcomes for the City (Q3)

Respondents identified many equity-related outcomes and advancements the City should prioritize over the next 5 years. Responses fell within the following categories:

1. **Measurable Equity Outcomes and Accountability:** There is a call for clear, measurable equity metrics with transparent tracking and accountability mechanisms. This ensures that initiatives lead to real improvements for marginalized communities, with standards applied both citywide and in specific bureaus.
2. **Hiring, Retention, and Representation:** Emphasis is placed on increasing workforce diversity, improving retention (especially for Black, Native American, and other employees of color employees), and ensuring representation in middle and upper management that reflects the city's demographics.
3. **Collaboration and Unified Equity Policies Across City Leadership and Bureaus:** Many want consistent and cohesive equity practices across city leadership and departments, eliminating fragmented efforts and ensuring that equity work is impactful and aligned throughout the city. There is a strong call for closer collaboration between the Office of Equity, Bureau of Human Resources (BHR), and department leadership. This includes aligning goals in hiring practices, policy development, and staff support, especially for marginalized employees, including those identifying as BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, and/or living with disabilities.
4. **Disability Access, Accommodations, and ADA Compliance:** There is a significant focus on ensuring ADA compliance in city facilities, improving accommodations for disabled employees, enhancing physical accessibility in public spaces, fostering inclusive communication for neurodiverse individuals, and maintaining centralized ADA programs citywide, including ADA training.
5. **Language Access and ADA Compliance:** Ensuring meaningful language access services and is a recurring theme, which includes shared translation resources.
6. **Equitable Decision-Making and Accountability:** Comments highlight the need for equity audits, stronger representation of underrepresented groups in decision-making processes, and data-driven performance metrics to hold city departments accountable for achieving equity goals.
7. **Training and Resources for Equity:** There is a demand for more comprehensive equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) training for both staff and leadership, supported by sufficient resources, staffing, and funding to achieve these goals.

8. **Diverse and Inclusive Leadership:** A recurring theme stresses the need for more diverse leadership, particularly from marginalized groups such as BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, immigrants, and people with disabilities, with a focus on leadership development and retention strategies for long-term inclusivity.
9. **Broadened Equity Lens:** A call to expand the definition of equity beyond race and LGBTQIA+ issues to include neurodiversity, disabilities, class, and other intersectional factors, ensuring that equity work is more inclusive and comprehensive.
10. **Workforce Development and Entry-Level Opportunities:** There is a desire for better workforce development strategies, especially to create more entry-level opportunities and clearer pathways for retention. This includes addressing the needs of older employees, disabled workers, and new parents.

Hybrid structure preferred to advance equity practice citywide (Q7)

When asked about the structure that best supports integration of equity functions within and across service areas, 66% of respondents expressed a **strong preference for a hybrid model**, with some core functions centralized and managed directly by and under the oversight of the Equity Officer, while other functions are managed at the departmental or program level.

A little over a quarter of respondents (27%) preferred a fully centralized model, where the Equity Officer would lead a unified approach across all departments. Many emphasized the importance of centralized resources and standards, noting that without centralized oversight, some bureaus have failed to comply with equity initiatives. A stronger centralized approach is seen as essential to preventing inequities and mismanagement.

To ensure the success of the Equity Officer and equity practices in a hybrid structure, City Leadership must clearly define and enforce authority, communication, and accountability. Leadership and the Equity Officer should balance centralized oversight for citywide goals with the flexibility needed for bureau-specific efforts that require specialized expertise.

Additional considerations to set the hybrid structure up for success include:

1. **Increase Accountability and Transparency:** Establish clear, centralized oversight to ensure bureaus are held accountable for meeting equity goals and to prevent conflicting actions across departments.
2. **Centralize Resources and Standards:** Centralize key resources, legal standards, and monitoring, but provide flexibility for bureaus to adapt these to their specific needs and demographics.
3. **Create a central equity support team:** Form a central equity team that offers resources, sets minimum standards, and provides guidance and partnership to bureaus, helping them enhance their equity efforts.
4. **Prevent Bureau Mismanagement:** Strengthen centralized oversight to prevent certain bureaus from neglecting or failing to comply with equity initiatives, ensuring consistency and fairness across the city.
5. **Tailored Equity Implementation:** Equity work should be adaptable, recognizing that different bureaus have unique challenges and workforce needs. A one-size-fits-all approach won't work, and the system needs to accommodate bureau-specific equity requirements.

Biggest challenges in integrating equity functions across the city (Q8)

From the four options provided, respondents selected “**resistance to change**” (34%) and “**lack of sufficient resources or funding**” (30%) as the biggest challenges to integrating equity functions at the City. Additional comments (60 text responses) were provided, which highlight the challenge of **lack of political will and leadership accountability** for enforcing equitable practices and policies. Many respondents emphasize poor leadership on equity, lack of clear authority, and resistance to change as major obstacles, indicating a widespread issue of failing to hold both leadership and staff accountable for making meaningful progress on equity initiatives. This is compounded by a dysfunctional system with ambiguous roles, a decentralized approach, and inadequate funding for equity efforts.

**comment: “Racism and lack of a shared understanding of its definition, how it functions, and what is required to dismantle our racist systems”*

**comment: “not sure “integrating equity functions” should be the goal. The goal should be ensuring city programs and services are delivered equitably. Integrating some equity functions may help with reaching that goal but I don’t think it should be the point of departure. Equity is something that must be embedded throughout all the city’s work—it’s not a separate thing that can be pulled out.”*

Additional thoughts to help set Equity Officer (Q10)

The comments highlight the urgent need for a dedicated Equity Officer with broad authority to hold city leadership accountable, particularly among the Directors of City Agencies (DCAs), Assistant City Administrators (ACAs), and bureau directors. This role should prioritize the consistent implementation of equitable policies across all departments, moving beyond a checkbox mentality. It is crucial for the Equity Officer to have significant experience in dismantling institutional racism and fostering a safe and welcoming environment for all employees, as well as establishing robust equity metrics to track progress.

There is a shared belief that equity responsibilities must be integrated into every city employee's role rather than resting solely on one individual or one office. While centralized oversight is vital for a unified vision and accountability, flexibility is also important due to the diverse nature of city operations. The Equity Officer should conduct a comprehensive assessment of current equity practices, identifying strengths and areas for improvement to inform future strategies. Adequate resources and authority are necessary for the Equity Officer to effectively support initiatives and prioritize internal equity and staff wellbeing. Transparency is also critical, with calls for annual reports to assess the state of equity in the city and hold all areas accountable. Ultimately, the comments reflect a clear vision for an Equity Officer who is not only a leader in equity practices but also deeply integrated into the culture of the city, working alongside all employees to effect meaningful change.

Top themes from the comments include:

1. **Authority and Accountability in Equity Leadership:** The Equity Officer must have the authority to hold city leadership accountable for implementing equitable practices and maintaining a diverse workforce across all bureaus, with the power to enforce change.

2. **Integration of Equity Across Departments:** Equity initiatives should be embedded throughout all city departments, with every employee held to the same standards, rather than concentrating responsibility solely on one role or office.
3. **Use of Equity Metrics and Data:** A focus on equity metrics is essential for driving meaningful change. Data is crucial for evaluating progress and ensuring transparency in equity practices across the city.
4. **Assessment and Flexibility in Equity Programs:** There is a need for an ongoing assessment of current equity practices to identify strengths and weaknesses. While centralizing equity efforts is important, flexibility is needed to adapt to the unique needs of different service areas.
5. **Internal Equity and Workforce Wellbeing:** The Equity Officer should prioritize internal equity, employee wellbeing, and maintaining open communication channels to create a diverse, empowered workforce that is engaged in equity initiatives.

Community Survey Findings

Equity-related outcomes for the City (Q3)

Respondents identified many equity-related outcomes and advancements the City should prioritize over the next 5 years. Responses fell within the following categories:

1. **Equitable Hiring Practices and Leadership Representation:** Implementing equitable hiring processes and increasing the presence of BIPOC staff in decision-making roles, along with building a pipeline of diverse future leaders in the city.
2. **Prioritization of Equity and Anti-Racism Across Bureaus:** Ensuring that all bureaus are aligned in prioritizing equity and anti-racism efforts, addressing workplace characteristics of White Supremacy Culture, and fostering cross-bureau collaboration.
3. **Housing Equity and Affordability:** Increasing the availability of low-income housing in high-rent areas, improving homeownership rates for Black and Brown communities, and broadening housing equity objectives beyond home purchasing.
4. **Policing and Public Safety Reform:** Holding police accountable for racial bias, auditing police training programs, and raising awareness of implicit bias in public safety to ensure equity in outcomes.
5. **Citywide Strategic Equity Plan and Accountability:** Creating a citywide equity plan that aligns across service areas while allowing for innovation. Establishing accountability measures within the city's infrastructure to track progress on equity initiatives.
6. **Inclusion of Marginalized and Underrepresented Groups:** Recognizing and providing services for linguistically and culturally specific groups, such as Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing individuals, as well as increasing literacy and employment opportunities for low-income BIPOC youth.
7. **Participatory Budgeting and Community Engagement:** Establishing a participatory budgeting process to give residents, especially marginalized groups, greater control over portions of the city budget, ensuring a more inclusive decision-making process.

These outcomes highlight a broad focus on equitable practices, housing, public safety reform, accountability, and community engagement in the city's equity efforts.

Additional thoughts on the Equity Officer position (Q7)

Here are some top themes from the additional comments shared about what will be important for the officer position:

1. **Commitment to Advancing Equity with Data and Enforcement:** There is a strong desire for a leader who is fully committed to dismantling institutionalized racism, prioritizing equity, and using data to drive change. The position should also have enforcement power to ensure equity goals are met across bureaus.
2. **Concerns About Bureaucracy and Government Waste:** Some commenters express frustration with government inefficiency, high taxes, and view the establishment of an equity office as unnecessary or wasteful, fueling opposition from conservative viewpoints.
3. **Collaboration and Relationship Building:** There is a call for the equity office to move beyond advisory roles, gain real authority to make changes, and foster stronger partnerships with neighborhood associations and other local entities to support grassroots efforts.



Citywide Practices: Equity Project Preliminary Recommendations



November 5, 2024 – City Leadership Team Meeting

Desired Outcomes for Today

To launch recruitment:

- **Affirm overarching objectives to provide a shared direction for the City's equity work and officer recruitment.**
- **Agreement on the position's roles and responsibilities**
- **Agreement on process to determine the position title**

To further advance and support the equity practice:

- **Agreement on reporting structure**
- Start discussions on what that looks like in operation

Sources of Feedback for Preliminary Recommendations

- Comparative analyses of other cities
- Review of the City's existing equity policies and practices
- Survey responses
 - City employees (285 responses)
 - Community organizations (42 responses)
- Internal stakeholder interviews:
 - one-on-one (20 people)
 - small groups (29 people)

Preliminary Recommendations

1

DIRECTION

**Affirm
overarching
objectives to provide a
shared direction for the
City's equity work and
officer recruitment.**

2

IMPACT

**Focus the officer's
scope and authority
on high-impact areas
and initiatives.**

3

STRUCTURE

**Adopt a hybrid
model with clear
decision-making
and reporting
accountabilities.**

#1. Leadership affirm overarching objectives to provide a shared direction for the City's equity work and officer recruitment.

- **Unify efforts and establish, manage, and lead collaboration** in having clear **equity standards** for consistency across service areas and bureaus.
- **Strengthen accountability and performance tracking** to measure and report on equity outcomes with clarity and transparency.
- **Build organizational capacity** by providing training and tools to enhance ability to analyze and implement actions and decisions resulting in equitable outcomes.
- **Address disparities** related to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability using an intersectional approach.
- **Foster collaboration and partnerships** between City leadership, Office of Equity and Human Rights, equity practitioners, and community stakeholders.
- **Ensure regulatory and policy compliance** by integrating equity considerations into operations, ensuring adherence to local, state, and federal laws and standards.





#2. Focus the officer's scope of work and authority on high-impact areas and initiatives.

- Provide clarity on the key roles, responsibilities, and authority of the position.
- Include Officer as part of high-impact and executive-level teams with access and influence in citywide decision-making.
- Ensure title has consistency and parity with City's current practices and/or standards for similarly held positions overseeing other areas of the organization.

Proposed Roles & Responsibilities

DIRECT AND ACT	CONSULT AND ACT	ACT ON INSTRUCTION	SHARED LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Office of Equity and Human Rights, overseeing staff and workgroups. • Provide expertise and leadership to advance citywide equity goals. • Build relationships with city leaders and equity practitioners to align efforts. • Develop partnerships with regional leaders to support broader equity goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead a unified approach to equity in alignment with citywide objectives. • Strengthen accountability through consistent progress tracking and reporting. • Build capacity by overseeing resources, training, and support for city staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of equity policies from City Council or City Administrator. • Assist citywide initiatives as directed. • Liaise with commissions and committees to incorporate equity goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide bureaus and service areas in development and implementation of equity plans and outcomes, including offering support and collaboration. • Ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. • Implement initiatives addressing disparities using an intersectional approach.

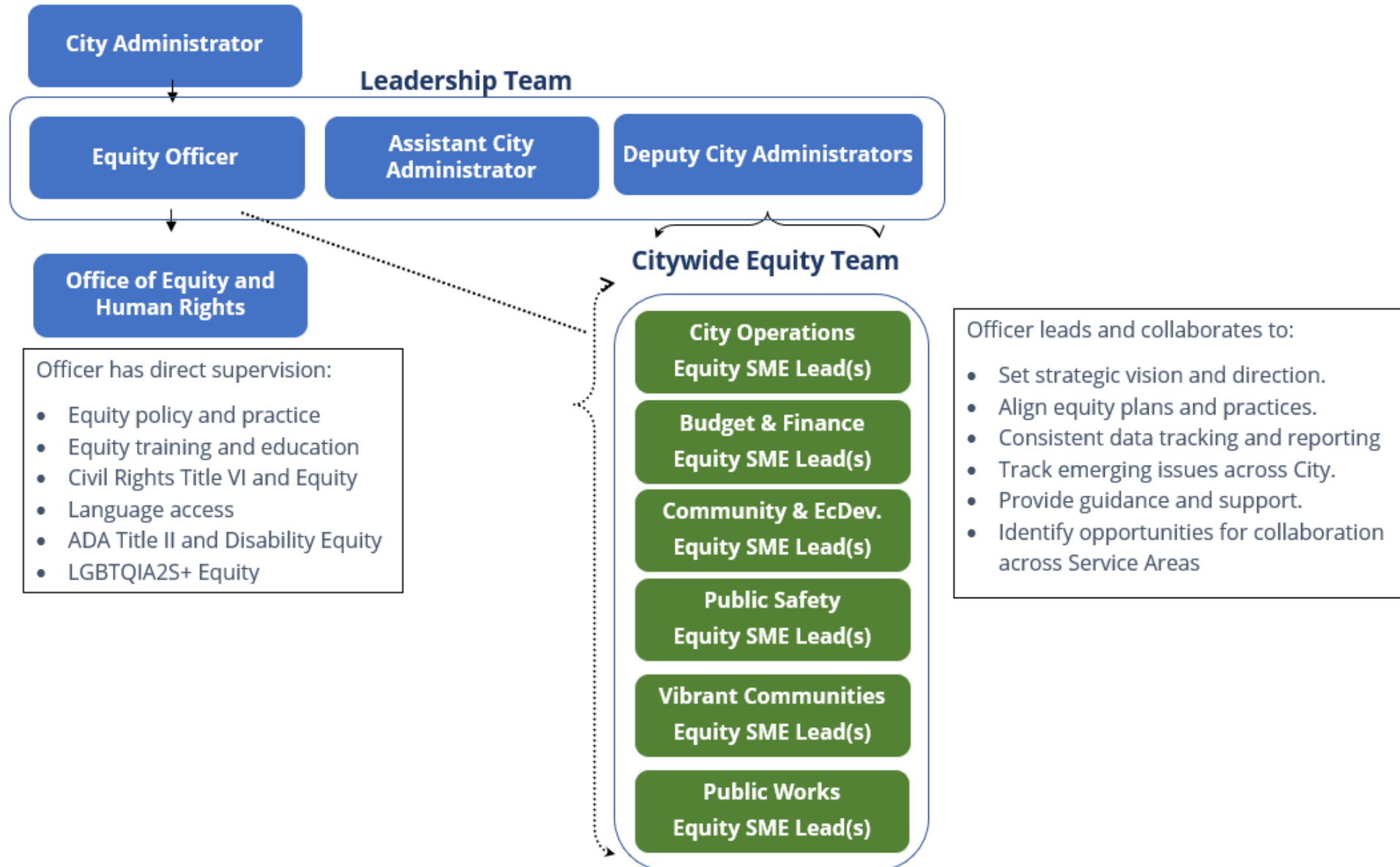
* *Equity Officer, City Administrator, Assistant City Administrator, Deputy City Administrators, Bureau Directors, Other Officers, City Attorney, City Auditor*

#3. Adopt a hybrid model with clear decision-making and reporting accountabilities.

- A hybrid structure balances centralized oversight with decentralized implementation
- Allows for uniformity AND flexibility to effectively operationalize equitable practices.
- Clarity on decision-making and dual accountability relationships is critical to the success of a hybrid structure.



Example – For Discussion Purposes Only



Recommended Structure

- Equity Officer reports to the City Administrator.
- Equity Officer is part of the City Leadership Team and other citywide decision-making groups.
- Equity Officer directly supervises the Office of Equity and Human Rights and the major work groups and functions.
- Deputy City Administrators (DCAs) & Assistant City Administrator (ACA) will select Service Area Equity SME Leads to be on a **Citywide Equity Team**.
- Officer convenes and leads this team with focus on citywide strategic vision, policies and practices.
- Dual accountabilities among Equity Officer, DCAs, and Citywide Equity Team.

Example – For Illustrative Purposes Only

	Equity Officer	Office of Equity & Human Rights	City Admin.	ACA & DCAs	Citywide Equity Team	Directors	Equity Managers	City Attorney	City Auditor
1. Policy and Standards Development									
Set Citywide Equity Standards	R	R	A	C	R	I	I	C	I
Develop Equity Policies & Procedures	R	R	A	C	R	I	C	C	I
Develop Compliance Standards	R/C	R/C	A	C	C	I	I	R	I
Support Regulatory Compliance (e.g. ADA Title II and Civil Rights Title VI)	R/C	R/C	A	C	C	R	I	R	I
2. Implementation and Operational Oversight									
Lead Equity Training & Capacity Building	R	C	A	I	C	I	C	I	I
Implement Equity Initiatives	R	C	A	C	C	C/I	R/C	C	I
Coordinate Citywide Operational Alignment	R	C	A	R	R	I	C	I	I
3. Accountability, Engagement, and Reporting									
Conduct Audits and Compliance Checks	C	C	A	I	I	I	C	R	R
Track Performance Metrics and Outcomes	R	R	A	C	C	C	C	C	I
Report on Equity Progress	R	R	A	C	C	I	R	C	I



Next Steps

- Nov. 18 Equity Project Team prepares **DRAFT** project report that includes these recommendations and leadership's feedback, will include final job description and recruitment timeline.
- Nov. 18-22 Share with equity stakeholders for review.
- Nov. 27 Final project report submitted to Leadership Team.
- Dec. or after Job posting released.

Appendix E:

Equitable Hiring Guidelines for Citywide Practices

- Recruitment for these positions will comply to BHR's Recruitment and Hiring Policies ([HRAR-3.01 - Recruitment Processes](#) and other applicable policies)
- Guidelines developed with input of consultant Camille Trummer and Office of Equity's 2018 "Strategic Planning Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report" by Kristina Smock Consulting.
- Cover the areas of:
 - Approach
 - Recruitment
 - Selection Process
 - Hiring and Retention

Approach

Job Description and Required Competencies

- Inclusive and Plain Language
- Focus on Competencies
- Express Commitment to City's core values, including clearly stating its commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion
- Pay Equity and Transparency
- Highlight Benefits

Recruitment

Application Process, Outreach and Promotion

- Preview Application + Interview Process
- Accessibility
- Unbiased Recruitment
- Outreach and Promote: Partnerships, Community Networks, and Diverse Recruitment Platforms:
 - *Including but not limited to: Partners in Diversity, Business for a Better Portland, Wild Diversity, The HBCU Career Center, Foundation List, Mac's List*

Selection Process

Panels and Questions

- Diverse Panels – Staff and Community Members (perspectives and expertise representing different areas and backgrounds)
- Bias Awareness and Cultural Competency Training for Panelists
- Structured Interviews
- Questions Focused on Equity, Cultural Competency and Emotional Intelligence
- Scoring Rubrics / Scorecards
- Transparent Decision-making

Hiring and Retention

Onboarding

- Inclusive Onboarding
- Integration
- Ongoing Support

Proposed Timeline

Position	Recruitment	Selection Process	Hiring and Onboarding
Communications Officer	October	November	December
Engagement Officer	October	November	December
Equity Officer	Mid-November to Mid-December	January	February

Questions

1. How should the interview panels be comprised (e.g. number of panelists, types of representatives) for the officer positions?
2. Are there other networks and/or outreach methods that the City should use to promote these positions?