Bureau of Human Resources Equity Initiatives

The Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) manages the outreach, recruiting, hiring, diversity development and training processes for the City of Portland. The City has become more diverse and more aware and has improved its processes to support its commitment to diversity development and equal employment opportunity, foundations upon which to build a competent and diverse workforce. The establishment of the Office of Equity and Human Rights reflects the intent to apply principals of Equity to City employees, to those applying for work with the City and those who are recipients of City services. BHR systems in support of the City's Equity Policy are:

<u>Focused Outreach</u>: The goal of outreach is to connect with people and encourage them to apply for City positions. Focused Outreach connects with specific underrepresented groups to help create a pool of diverse, viable applicants. While conventional methods for outreach (print media ads, emails and social media technology) are used, BHR recognizes the need to devise tactics that reach members of protected classes. These groups and individuals do not think of the City as an employer and/or may not consider themselves viable applicants for City employment. Cultural differences and/or differences in communication styles, require a more direct, personal approach to get them to apply for City jobs, i.e. a more <u>Focused Outreach</u>. These labor-intensive efforts disseminate information regarding open positions and information on how to apply for jobs with the City. Some presentations are designed to be general, others are related to specific positions and a subject matter expert is often available to answer questions. BHR conducts resume and cover letter writing sessions for community agencies upon request.

<u>Building an Applicant Pipeline</u>: BHR continues to build relationships with colleges, universities, training schools, high schools, professional organizations (e.g. engineers/lawyers), and Community Based Organizations to help generate greater diversity of applicants to City positions. BHR has trained some community based agency employees to provide information to help their clients apply for City jobs.

<u>Diversity Development</u>: In October of 2001, the Portland City Council passed resolution 36035 which charged BHR with leading and directing the City Wide implementation of the Diversity Development Strategic Plan and established a Citywide Diversity Development Coordination Committee. Rewritten in 2012 by members of the Citywide Diversity Committee it will soon come before Council for review and acceptance. This plan requires each bureau to develop its own Diversity Development Plan.

<u>Organizational Restructuring</u>: Restructure of the Employment and Development unit of BHR provides improved services to the City's Bureaus; allows for better communication and greater accountability particularly in the area of outreach. It expanded the responsibilities of Human Resource Analysts in recruiting members of protected groups, increasing their responsibility to identify recruitment sites and build relationships with agencies and institutions.

<u>Data Management:</u> BHR is responsible for managing the City's Affirmative Action Plan and related data. The AA Plan is one of the tools necessary for monitoring the participation of women and people of color in the workforce. The Citywide Diversity Committee Monitoring Team reviews the information contained in the Plan. BHR continues to look for ways to generate meaningful reports from existing systems such as NEO-GOV and SAP, to make better predictions and to better resolve issues that may occur in processes related to the responsibilities of the Bureau.

<u>Training</u>: BHR continues to provide Cultural Competence Training to employees of the City. A mandated program is designed for managers and supervisors and a voluntary program is designed for all other employees. Currently, training content is being reviewed for relevancy, appropriateness and fit with the City's Equity goals.

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Introduction

This report provides a summary of the results of an initial equity inventory survey completed by City of Portland bureaus in the fall of 2011. The Equity Inventory gathered information about City bureaus' practices from two perspectives – external service delivery to customers and internal practices within the bureau's organization and workplace:

- Bureaus' program and service assessments, data collection and use
- Bureaus' policies, programs and procedures
- Bureaus' internal or employee policies, programs and procedures
- Existing bureau information (plans, training)

This report was drafted by staff from the Office of Management and Finance and reviewed with a group of community members and City staff involved in the Creation Committee and other equity work.

Summary Report and Data Tables

This summary report of the survey results provides:

- An explanation of the purpose and background of the equity inventory
- The definition of equity provided for the bureaus completing the survey
- A description of the methodology used for equity inventory
- Recommendations as to next steps suggested by the initial data and discussed by a working group of community and City staff members.

Accompanying this summary report are the data tables comprised of the bureaus' responses to the survey questions:

Purpose of the Inventory

The purpose of the initial equity survey was to produce a baseline of data about the City of Portland's policies, programs, services and measures in the area of equity.

Background on the Equity Inventory

This equity survey was initiated at the request of Mayor Sam Adams and Commissioner Amanda Fritz as a way to collect information about the City of Portland's work on equity. OMF convened a small work group to draft survey questions. These were submitted for review and edits to the Mayor, Commissioner, City Attorney's Office and to the Creation Committee. Two bureaus – Fire and the Office of Neighborhood Involvement – initially completed the online Equity Inventory survey and offered feedback on how to improve the survey's content and ease of use. As stated

above, all City bureaus participated in the equity inventory. The offices of the six elected officials were not part of the initial group of respondents.

The collection and analysis of bureau data in the Equity Inventory is taking place simultaneously with the creation and shaping of the Office of Equity and Human Rights under the direction of Mayor Adams, Commissioner Fritz, the Creation Committee and others. This initial survey is not intended to be comprehensive in scope nor is it likely to be the only opportunity City bureaus will have to identify, examine and build upon their efforts to address equity through their policies, programs and practices. It is hoped the findings from this initial survey will provide useful material from which the director and staff of the Office of Equity and Human Rights can begin their conversations with the City's bureau directors and staff.

Definition of Equity

The Equity Inventory provided a definition of equity that had been created through the Portland Plan Equity Initiative:

We have a shared fate—as individuals within a community and communities within society. All communities need the ability to shape their own present and future. Equity is both the means to healthy communities and an end that benefits us all. Equity requires the intentional examination of systemic policies and practices that, even if they have the appearance of fairness, may, in effect, serve to marginalize some and perpetuate disparities. Working toward equity requires an understanding of historical contexts and the active investment in social structures over time to ensure that all communities can experience their vision for success.

We make the promise of opportunity real when:

- All Portlanders have access to a high-quality education, living wage jobs, safe neighborhoods, a healthy natural environment, efficient public transit, parks and green spaces, decent housing, and healthy food.
- The benefits of growth and change are equitably shared across our communities. No one community is overly burdened by our region's growth.
- All Portlanders and communities fully participate in and influence public decision making.
- Portland is a place where your future is not limited by your race, gender, sexuality, disability, age, income, where you were born, or where you live.

<u>Methods</u>

The Equity Inventory project began in the summer of 2011, at the request of Mayor Adams and Commissioner Fritz. The Fire Bureau and the Office of Neighborhood Involvement beta tested the survey between August and September and provided feedback to improve the content and format of the survey. The Equity Inventory survey was distributed by email to City bureaus on October 26, 2011. Two briefing sessions were held to discuss the survey on November 3 and 8. City bureaus provided online or hardcopy responses between November 18 and December 2. The Office of Management and Finance compiled the data and drafted a preliminary summary on December 10. The raw data and summary report were discussed with members from the Creation Committee on December 15. The group reviewed the materials and provided comments and edits to the report through late December 2011.

Benefits and Lessons from the Initial Equity Inventory

The results of the Equity Inventory serve as a good first step in the City's dialogue on equity and the development of a shared understanding of equity issues and opportunities. The data collected achieved its primary objective – that of creating a baseline of information about City policies and practices for Council consideration and to refer to the Office of Equity and Human Rights. The survey also met its goal of being an instrument that could be replicated and the results shared with Portland's regional partners. For some City bureaus, the process of considering its policies and programs through an "equity lens" may have been a new experience while for others it was a continuation of their efforts to improve their organizations' effectiveness in the area of equity.

City bureaus can benefit from reviewing and discussing the overall results of the initial Equity Inventory. Bureaus have cited creative and effective examples of their policies, programs and efforts, many of which could be expanded upon, shared and/or replicated by other City bureaus. Many bureaus' responses show a depth and breadth of thought and practice in the areas of advancing equity and making progress against inequities. These examples of current City practices can be informative, as well, to the Creation Committee and to City Council.

Parameters of the Equity Survey

The equity survey was designed to be an inventory, not an assessment, of City bureaus' policies, programs and practices. Thus this summary report focuses on the range and types of bureaus' policies and programs; it does not attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of those policies and programs in achieving their objectives.

Likewise, it is important for the reader to keep in mind that the details of a bureau's efforts are not fully articulated in the survey responses in part because of the limitations of the question and answer structure of the survey tool. For example, a bureau can indicate that it uses community surveys as one means of data collection. But the survey tool didn't allow the bureau to elaborate on the type of community surveys it uses; which programs and services it is surveying about; which communities are surveyed and how; how frequently the community surveys are done, and so on. These and other questions would need to be explored through follow-up inquiry.

Another parameter that frames the context within which the responses in the equity inventory should be considered is the fact that different City bureaus have different core services and customers. This difference in bureaus' focus has implications for if and how a bureau may collect data the types of data collected and how it informs the development of policies and programs. Some bureau missions address public safety and others, water and environmental services for example, by their nature are intended to be provided equitably across the city. In other cases, there are bureaus that provide a range of services and programs to different groups of customers, residents, and businesses in Portland, including Parks & Recreation, Bureau of Development Services, Planning and Sustainability, Office of Neighborhood Involvement, and the Portland Housing Bureau. Finally, for a handful of bureaus (e.g. City Attorney's Office, Office of Government Relations and the Office of Management and Finance) the primary customers are other City bureaus.

some of these internal bureaus do play a key role in providing information and services that facilitate analysis and/or delivery of equitable services, such as OMF's geographic budget mapping and the Office of Government Relations' legislative priorities.

Limitations of the Initial Data

The initial Equity Inventory was conducted in a de-centralized manner. It was up to each bureau director to determine who on his/her staff should complete the survey; how the bureau's information should be collected and how to interpret the terms used in the survey, including equity itself. The online instructions for the equity inventory encouraged respondents to review the definitions of equity from the Portland Plan's Equity Initiative; read a handout entitled Fair Employment Practice Synergist Model, created by Robert E. Phillips at Multnomah County; visit Commissioner Fritz' web site regarding the Office of Equity's Frequently Asked Questions section and read a brief discussion of Equity and the Portland Plan, written by Judith Mowry of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement.

Because there was no single, commonly-understood and accepted definition of equity that all bureaus could reference, it can be assumed that bureaus interpreted and responded to the survey questions in fundamentally different ways. The lack of a shared vocabulary highlights the need for continued dialogue to develop a common vocabulary, and as well, highlights the importance of taking a cautious approach to using this survey data to draw conclusions about the bureaus' efforts and accomplishments in the area of equity. In other words, because of the limitations on the data, the results of this initial Equity Inventory can and should serve only as a starting point – the baseline of information the survey was designed to produce. The following section identifies recommendations for potential next steps, to explore and build upon this baseline data.

Recommendations

- **Recommendation #1**: Provide the report and data tables to the Office of Equity and Human Rights for use by the new director and staff as background information, preparatory to meetings with City bureaus.
 - **Rationale**: The report will give specific information on each bureau's view of equity and its current efforts in providing equitable services to the public. The Director will have information generated by the bureau as to its interest and focus. This may prove helpful in starting a positive relationship between a new director and other bureau heads.
- **Recommendation #2**: Share the results of the Equity Inventory with City bureaus and elected officials as a way to build upon and/or emulate different City efforts.

Rationale: The results of the inventory contain information that can help to inform a discussion between the City Council and the bureau directors that will help to direct the efforts and effectiveness of bureau programs.

Rationale: A dialogue by bureaus on successful bureau practices may prove synergistic and enhance the development of new and effective programs.

• **Recommendation #3**: We encourage the use of this initial set of results as the first step in a crucial, ongoing dialogue on equity with the City Council and City bureaus.

Rationale: Because the Inventory reveals such a wide range of differences in interpreting the questions and because there is a lack of a consistent language to be used in a discussion of equity, data from the initial equity inventory may not be comparable, should not be aggregated, and should not be used in budget-making decisions. There are no viable grounds for making comparisons between bureaus and/or drawing conclusions from the results. The group's concern is that reading too much into this data may easily result in an unintended consequence of putting bureau directors in a defensive position vis-à-vis both their responses and their efforts which have been developed before the establishment of the Office of Equity and Human Rights and outside of a clear definition of equity and of the City's expectations and goals in this area. This could, without intending to, frustrate the equity dialogue in the City, setting it back, rather than moving it forward.

• **Recommendation #4:** City Council, bureau leadership and key staff should commit to building capacity to do the work, through training, collaboration and consultation.

Rationale: The City's capacity as an organization to develop and implement strategies that effectively address inequities and move toward equity depends on the skill level and commitment of its leaders and line staff. Not only does the City have a legal obligation to implement Civil Rights Title VI Policy and other legislative requirements, but the City's commitment and vision must extend far beyond the legal commitments externally imposed.

Initial Findings

Part 1 – Bureaus' Programs and Service Assessments, Data Collection and Use

Tools to Inventory and Assess Bureaus' programs, performance, services and levels of services

- The majority of bureaus reported performing needs assessments (59%), using community surveys (76%), internal surveys (82%) or performance measures (88%).
- Less than half (47%) of the bureaus indicated they collect data on program participants.
- Other tools cited by bureaus include one-on-one discussions with residents and business owners; individual customer contact feedback surveys; and meetings with neighborhood and business associations.

Demographic Data Collected and/or Used

The survey asked two questions about demographic data - first, what kinds of demographic data does the bureau collect and second, what kind of demographic data does the bureau use (in addition

to what it collects). The bureaus' uses of the data were virtually the same, whether they collected the data itself or used data from other sources.

- Almost 60% of bureaus collect or use some types of demographic data about the people they serve.
- Of those that do collect/use such data, most bureaus' information includes characteristics of race, ethnicity, gender, disability status; and socio-economic status/source of income.
- Very few bureaus collect data about national origin (4), gender identity (2), and sexual orientation (3).
- Other sources of demographic data cited by bureaus include Census Bureau, Equity Atlas, program audits, Portland Public Schools data, and community partner assessments.

Bureaus' Use of Data

- Almost 60% (10 bureaus) reported using the demographic data in planning for new programs and services and/or to assess current programs and services.
- Six bureaus (35%) indicated they use the data for impact analysis (which was defined in the survey as an examination of the impact of policy or service decisions in terms of who benefits and who is burdened).

Part II - Bureaus' Policies, Programs and Procedures

Bureau Policies to address Issues of Equity

- The majority of bureaus (65%) specifically cited their mission statements, vision and values statements and/or their strategic plans as key policy documents.
- Many bureaus commented that their policies and commitment are to provide City services equitably to all of its customers.
- OMF cited its responsibilities for Citywide policies including the ADA Memorandum; Civil Rights Title VI Policy, Fair Contracting Strategy and other procurement policies.

Bureau Programs and Services focused on Issues of Equity

- Programs and services that address low-income individuals and groups were the most frequently listed by the bureaus. Examples include fee waiver programs in BDS, a safety net loan program in BES, and the utility safety net program in Water.
- Bureaus also cited programs and services focused on non-traditional, at-risk and/or disabled communities and individuals. Some examples of these are programs to engage youth of color and immigrant/refugee youth; a grant program to enhance cable technology services to under-served communities; and procurement efforts to expand City contracting with minority-owned, women-owned, and/or emerging small businesses.

Bureau Procedures, Practices or Methods of Service Delivery to achieve Equity Goals

- Language translation services were the most frequently cited by bureaus.
- Many bureaus cited their efforts at public outreach to and engagement with diverse, nontraditional and/or underserved communities, including participation in advisory or citizen boards.
- Bureaus also mentioned a range of approaches and programs to recruit diverse individuals for City employment.

Part III - Bureaus' Internal/Employee Policies, Programs and Procedures

Internal Bureau Policies to address Issues of Equity

- As with their external policies, the majority of bureaus cited their mission statements, vision and values statements and/or their strategic plans as key policy documents to address equity in their respective workplaces.
- A few bureaus cited their diversity committees.
- Many bureaus noted their policies and commitment to a diverse workforce in terms of recruitment, training, and promotional opportunities.

Internal Bureau Programs and Services to address Issues of Equity in the workforce

- Bureaus cited diversity programs and a wide range of employee groups as means to address different aspects of equity in their organizations.
- Participation in City-wide or bureau specific diversity, cultural competency, and equity training was a frequent response by bureaus.

Internal Bureau Procedures, Practices or Methods in Service Delivery to achieve Equity Goals in the Workforce

Bureaus most often cited efforts at recruitment and hiring, and employee training.

Existing Bureau Information

This section of the survey asked bureaus to identify some of the standard City documents and training related to equity including Affirmative Action Plans, Diversity Plans, Cultural Competency Training, and accessibility efforts.

- Most bureaus (82%) reported having submitted Affirmative Action and Diversity plans to the Bureau of Human Resources (BHR).
- BHR requested these in plans in 2008 and 2005 respectively, which is when most bureaus completed them.
- A few bureaus do annual updates, but several noted they are awaiting direction from BHR

on future plans.

- Roughly three-quarters of the bureaus reported that their employees and managers have attended HRAR 2.02 training on the prohibition against workplace harassment, and discrimination.
- Half of the bureaus report that their managers have completed cultural competency training.
- 75% of the bureaus said they have designated one or more employees as an equity, ADA, diversity and/or EEO staff person.
- Fewer than half (41%) of bureaus said they track ADA accessibility, accommodation, translation and/or interpretation requests.