



Tempe®

EQUITY IN ACTION

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Equity is important to the City of Tempe because it cultivates a healthy and resilient city and connected community, where diverse opinions are sought out, heard, understood, and incorporated into decision-making.

In Spring 2018, the City of Tempe's Offices of Sustainability, Neighborhood Services, and Strategic Management and Diversity, in collaboration with Vitalyst Health Foundation, proposed the launch of Equity in Action. The goal of Equity in Action ("EiA") is to:

1. Create equitable engagement tools for public involvement plans
2. Create equity metrics for action and policy plans
3. Create programs, policies and infrastructure that reflect the diversity and values of Tempe
4. Create a framework to achieve equity in city decision-making processes
5. Create a replicable process of implementing projects that reflect diversity and inclusion

The City of Tempe issued two Request for Quotes ("RFQ") for Equity in Action in Easy English and Easy Spanish. Applications were due in September and November, respectively. Tempe's City Council allocated \$75,000 from its Innovation Fund towards Equity in Action. Vitalyst Health Foundation allocated \$65,000 to leverage the City's investment.

Equity in Action is comprised of ten coalition members. These members will give voice to specific, targeted populations. City Staff have formed an Equity in Action Committee. The following City departments have staff represented on the committee: Sustainability, Neighborhood Services, Police, Strategic Management and Diversity, City Manager's Office, City Clerk's Office, Communications and Media Relations, Arts and Culture, and Human Services.

Equity in Action seeks to collaborate between coalition members and City of Tempe staff at all levels of governance, whereby the City is able to implement a framework to achieve equity in city decision-making processes and create a replicable process of implementing projects that reflect diversity and inclusion.

The successful transfer of ownership of Equity in Action projects to City departments, as well as the adoption of its frameworks and engagement practices, will ensure that the City of Tempe is a state and national model of equity work within municipalities.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Origins of Equity in Action

Public involvement in city decision-making creates an open and transparent process to guide public projects, resulting in a shared community vision. Examples of Tempe's public projects open to public involvement include: service planning; capital improvements; infrastructure planning (ie. transportation and water); implementation planning (ie. urban core master plan); City code and zoning; communications and media relations; Tempe Accelerates; climate action planning; and, long-range planning. Therefore, in 2007, Tempe City Council adopted the Tempe Involving the Public Manual (revised 2015). That manual outlines how best to maximize the public's engagement in public and private planning activities. Furthermore, City Council adopted Strategic Performance Measure 2.15 under the **Strong Community Connections** Council Strategic Priority. That measure seeks to achieve ratings of "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with the "feeling invited and welcomed to participate in city-decision-making processes" greater than or equal to the national benchmark cities.¹

Effective public involvement includes 5 steps:

1. Assist the public in understanding a proposed project.
2. Seek and encourage the involvement of all community members.
3. Provide a variety of ways for the public to contribute ideas and offer feedback through all phases of a process.
4. Make processes accessible and engaging to interested community members.
5. Serve as an important tool in decision-making to be considered alongside professional/technical guidance, relevant data, and policy considerations.

Equitable public involvement, on the other hand, builds the capacity of city staff to understand the implications of race, culture, and socio-economic status on public processes. It creates processes that advance the City's opportunities to achieve equity in its communities.

Equity has been defined as the "just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential."² Equity gives all people a just and fair shot in life despite historic patterns of racial and economic exclusion. Equity is important to the City of Tempe because it cultivates a healthy and resilient city and connected community, where diverse opinions are sought out, heard, understood, and incorporated into decision-making.

Therefore, in Spring 2018, the City of Tempe's Offices of Sustainability, Neighborhood Services, and Strategic Management and Diversity, in collaboration with Vitalyst Health Foundation, proposed the launch of **Equity in Action**. The goal of Equity in Action ("EiA") is to:

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Recruitment of Equity in Action Members

The City of Tempe issued two Request for Quotes ("RFQ") for Equity in Action. The first was issued on July 2, 2019 (Solicitation No. 20-010); it had a submission deadline of September 24, 2019. A second RFQ was issued on October 22, 2019 (Solicitation No. 20-070); it had a submission deadline of November 5, 2019. RFQs were written in both Easy English and Easy Spanish.

City staff held both large forums and smaller meetings to announce the RFQs. Additionally, staff conducted one-on-one meetings with active Tempe activists to raise interest in EiA participation prior to RFQ issuance.

After each submission deadline, designated City staff evaluated the submissions to select EiA award recipients. There were 8 submissions in the first round RFQ. Of those submissions, the following award recipients were named: LISC Phoenix, Amy Mitchell, Peer Solutions, Valerie Sanchez, and Sarra Tekola. In the second RFQ, all applicants were awarded. Those awarded are: Carmen Umeres Caceres, Victor Jimenez, Alejandra Martinez, Christina Pucci, and Danielle Nieto.

Awardees will be paid on a fixed-rate basis of \$25 per hour to participate in **3 Phases** of collaboration, spanning over 2 years. These phases are:

1. Initial Community Engagement
2. Equity Community Engagement Framework
3. Implementation Projects

Budget

Tempe's City Council allocated \$75,000 from its Innovation Fund towards Equity in Action. These funds will be allocated as follows: \$50,000 (pilot project implementation), \$25,000 (participant stipends and project management)

Vitalyst Health Foundation allocated \$65,000 to leverage the City's investment. Their funds will be allocated towards consultants, supplies and project implementation.

Roles

Equity in Action Coalition Members: Equity in Action is comprised of **ten coalition members**. These members will give voice to specific, targeted populations: non-English-speaking residents; non-college graduates; youth; parents with children; low-income residents; African American and Latino communities; Indigenous communities; Asian communities; people who live in the Town of Guadalupe and Pascua Yaqui Tribes; and, neighborhoods/communities in the geographic locations of North Tempe Town lake (near the Boys and Girls Club Northeast) and surrounding areas of Thew Elementary and Gililand Middle School. Coalition members must live or work in Tempe and represent the targeted populations (as described above), live in the specified neighborhoods (as described above), or have experience in community engagement or equity practices.

City of Tempe Staff: City Staff have formed an **Equity in Action Committee**. The following City departments have staff represented on the committee: Sustainability, Neighborhood Services, Police, Strategic Management and Diversity, City Manager's Office, City Clerk's Office, Communications and Media Relations, Arts and Culture, and Human Services. The role of the city staff committee is to develop the overall framework for EiA; support and educate coalition members on policy and city government processes; coordinate meetings and administrative logistics; and, facilitate effective implementation of the 5 goals of EiA (as described above).

Vitalyst Health Foundation: Vitalyst Health Foundation is an independent, non-partisan public health foundation. One of its four priorities is to partner with municipalities to promote healthy community design and policies. The role of Vitalyst Health Foundation in EiA is to provide technical assistance that will provide training, facilitation, consultant services, project management, implementation support, and the creation of an EiA community engagement toolkit.

Consultants: Consultants Sharifa Rowe and Stephanie Luz Cordel will serve as consultants for EiA. Their role is to facilitate all meetings and trainings in Phases 1 through 3. In **Phase 1**, the consultants will seek to build a bridge between existing City of Tempe community engagement practices and idealized goals for EiA. A series of facilitated conversations in this phase will help determine internal readiness; establish a shared understanding of equity; and, develop a learning framework. In **Phase 2**, the consultants will seek to build strategies and techniques to ensure all residents have a voice in city decision-making (including determining which equity metrics can be included in Tempe's Involving the Public Manual). Finally, in **Phase 3**, the consultants will seek to test the ideas and effectiveness of proposed metrics.

Timeline

2018: Groundwork for Equity in Action – research, grant writing, Council presentation and request for funds, development of marketing and outreach strategy

2019: Participant Development – creation, solicitation and award of RFQs, staff enrollment and training, EiA program framing

2020 through 2022: Phases 1 through 3 (as described above and below) – collaboration between coalition members and City of Tempe staff at all levels of governance

III. TEMPE SNAPSHOT

One of the seven City of Tempe Values is diversity. As stated on the City's website, "we promote diversity in the workforce to meet the needs of a diverse community. We recognize that with diversity comes strength." The mission of the Strategic Management and Diversity Office is "to advance an

inclusive, innovative, transparent, and data-driven organization to create a world class city for our community and our region.”

City of Tempe Demographics³

City of Tempe demographics can be found on the US Census website. Though the nation is currently undergoing a census count, all information below is based upon the most recent, available information, as categorized by the US Census.⁴

Population Count: 192,364

Under 18 years old: 14.9%

Over 65 years old: 10%

Female: 47%

Male: 53%

American Indian/Alaska Native: 2.7%

Asian: 8.9%

Black/African-American: 6.5%

Hispanic/Latino: 22.4%

White (not Hispanic/Latino): 56.8%

Homeownership: 40.1%

Median gross rent: \$1,114

High School Graduate or Higher: 92.5%⁵

Bachelor’s Degree or Higher: 44.6%⁶

Median Household Income: \$54,210

Persons in Poverty: 21.3%

Households with Computer: 94.2%

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription: 86%

17,037 **Business Firms** were counted in 2012. Of those, 5,439 were counted as women-owned and 3,326 were counted as minority-owned. Not all firms self-identified.

Additional demographic information has been collected from the **City of Tempe Community**

Survey issued by the Strategic Management and Diversity Office.⁷ City of Tempe contracted with ETC Institute (“ETC”) to conduct this survey. In 2019, ETC received 1,087 survey responses (a statistically valid amount) with a 95% level of confidence and +/- 3% precision rate. Some of this data is reflected below:

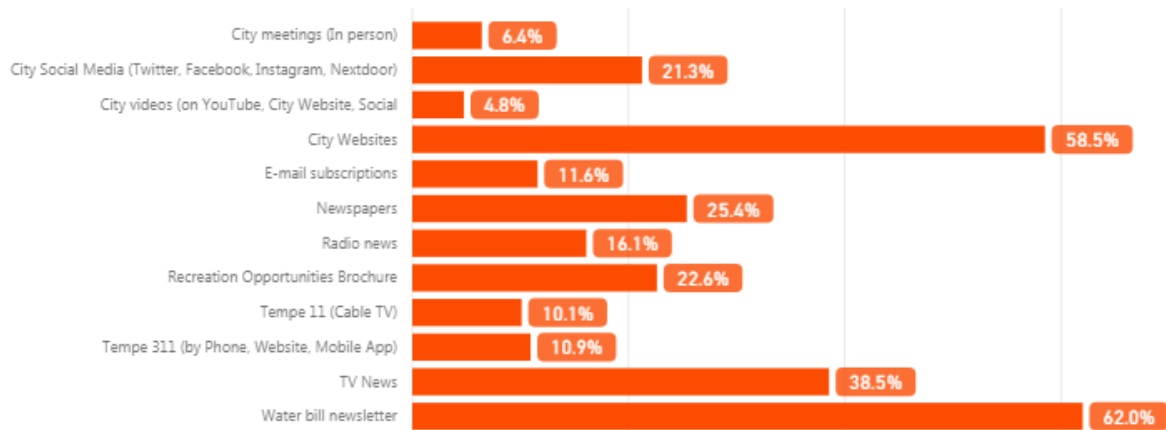
Own Smart Phone: 90.2% Yes (v. 86% in 2018, 83% in 2017); 9.8% No (v. 13% in 2018, 15% in 2017)

Self-identify with Disability: 17.2% Yes (v. 18% in 2018, 15% in 2017); 82.8% No (v. 81% in 2018, 85% in 2017)

Use Public Transit in the Last Year: 49.4% Yes (v. 53% in 2018, 54% in 2017); 50.6% No (v. 45% in 2018, 46% in 2017)

Primary Language: 95.7% English (v. 94% in 2018, 95% in 2017); 3.7% Spanish (v. 4% in 2018, 3% in 2017); 0.6% Other (v. 1% in 2018, 1% in 2017)

The following graph, taken from the 2019 Community Survey, reflects respondents’ current means of getting City of Tempe information:



Civic Engagement Demographics

The City of Tempe is in Arizona’s **9th Congressional District**. According to the 2020 State of Arizona Voter Registration Report, below is the demographic data for active voter registrants in the entire 9th District:⁸

Democrat: 153,848

Libertarian: 4,910

Republican: 126,979

Other: 150,372

According to the Maricopa County Recorder’s Office, the demographics for **Tempe** specifically are:⁹

Democrat: 38,221

Republican: 24,160

Libertarian: 1,125

Other: 30,404

Currently, there is no tracking or data measurement of the demographics of those attending City Council meetings.

City of Tempe Boards and Commissions Demographics

The City of Tempe has 28 Boards and Commissions. Twenty of them require Tempe residency for all or certain positions; eight of them do not. In 2018, the City Clerk’s Office updated the Boards and Commission application to include *optional* demographic information.

A snapshot of the recently collected demographic information of Commissioners and board members is reflected below:¹⁰

Category	Responses	% of Total
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	3%
African American	4	6%
Hispanic	6	8%
Native American	2	3%
Caucasian	53	75%
Multi/other	1	1%
Not answered	3	4%
Female	35	49%
Male	33	46%
Nonconforming	0	0%
Prefer not to Answer	0	0%
Not answered	3	4%
I or someone I care for has a disability	12	17%
I or someone I care for does not have a disability	54	76%
Not answered	5	7%
20 – 40 years old	20	28%
41 – 50 years old	16	23%
51 – 60 years old	14	20%
61 – 70 years old	10	14%
71+ years old	7	10%
Not answered	4	6%
TOTAL Number of Members appointed after application change	71	

Municipal Equality Index

The Municipal Equality Index (“MEI”) examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ people who live and work here. Cities are rated based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement, and the city leadership’s public position on equality. In 2019, 506 cities were rated on 49 different criteria. Tempe was 1 of only 88 cities that achieved the maximum score of 100. Additionally, the City of Tempe has achieved MEI All Star status as a city dedicated to equality despite restrictive state laws. Tempe has achieved the highest MEI score for the 6th consecutive year.

IV. NATIONAL SNAPSHOT

Municipal Efforts

The City of Tempe is not the first city in the United States to implement a model similar to Equity in Action. But, there are very few who have.

In 2010, the **City of Seattle, Washington** became the first city in the U.S. to formally take on institutional racism through its Racial and Social Justice Initiative (“RSJI”), housed in the city’s Office of Civil Rights. The RSJI has created a Racial Equity Toolkit to assess policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues

through an equity lens. The toolkit guides you through each step with questions and opportunities to explore issues of concern. The toolkit outlines 6 steps for racial equity work:

1. Set key community outcomes for racial equity;
2. Involve stakeholders to gather and analyze information about how the issue burdens or benefits the community;
3. Identify the benefit or burden in terms of the community outcomes for racial equity;
4. Create strategies to improve racial equity or minimize harm;
5. Document impacts on communities, keep stakeholders engaged in communication, and record unresolved issues; and
6. Report back lessons learned and unresolved issues to management.

Seattle's RSJI also developed a Community Survey that helps the City better understand communities of color's relationship to government, economic opportunities, housing, police, public schools, courts, and other public services. Another effort by RSJI entails an Employee Survey to gauge employee awareness, engagement, and perspective on effectiveness of equity work within the city administration. Lastly, RSJI offers a robust educational menu of courses for employees to receive training in equity, racism, inclusive outreach, and organizational change.

The **City of Providence, Rhode Island** instituted an Equity in Sustainability initiative. The initiative was the result of a partnership between the Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island, Groundwork Rhode Island, and the City of Providence's Office of Sustainability. This project team established the Racial and Environmental Justice Committee ("REJC"), made up of people of color representing frontline communities in the city. The work began with anti-racism trainings, which presented a racial equity analysis for city and community members. The REJC then assessed the needs and priorities of community members and researched best practices for equitable sustainable community development.

The result was the creation of *Recommendations for a Just and Racially Equitable Providence*, which was adopted by the Office of Sustainability in September 2017 and is now known as the "Just Providence Framework." This framework serves as a model for prioritizing equity at all levels of local government. Within the first year, the initiative sought to create a framework to begin to address and remedy deep-rooted environmental inequities along racial lines in the City of Providence.

In 2015, the **City of Portland, Oregon** established citywide racial equity goals and strategies.¹¹ Three goals and six strategies were set forth:

1. Equity Goal #1: End racial disparities within city government, so there is fairness in hiring and promotions, greater opportunities in contracting, and equitable services to all residents.
2. Equity Goal #2: Strengthen outreach, public engagement, and access to City services for communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities, and support or change existing services using racial equity best practices.
3. Equity Goal #3: Collaborate with communities and institutions to eliminate racial inequity in all areas of government, including education, criminal justice, environmental justice, health, housing, transportation, and economic success.

Their strategies include: 1) Use a racial equity framework; 2) Build organizational capacity; 3) Implement a racial equity lens; 4) Be data driven; 5) Partner with other institutions and organizations; and, 6) Operate with urgency and accountability.

As a result of these goals and strategies, the city required each department/bureau to establish a Five-Year Racial Equity Plan by 2016. Plans were implemented by concurrently utilizing the city's Racial Equity Tool ("RET"). The RET integrates explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets. It helps to develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities and improve success for all groups. The RET incorporates new processes of decision-making and participation that build community capacity, foster meaningful engagement and genuine

participation in the decision making process, and delivery of service that better represents communities' needs and priorities.

Equity Tools

Beyond other Equity in Action city models, there are several tools that have been developed to help guide municipalities in integrating equity into city planning processes.

The **American Planning Association** ("APA") offers planning resources on aging, food systems, historic and cultural resources, housing, neighborhood collaborative planning, smart growth, compact mixed use development, and more.

The **Government Alliance on Racial Equity** ("GARE") is an organization that generates tools and resources for governments interested in shifting institutions and government decision-making towards racial inclusion. Their tools help build internal equity teams, train staff in equity, develop equity metrics, outline equitable procurement and hiring practices, and provide lessons learned from case studies of GARE network governments engaging in equity work.

The **Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board** ("MPRB") has taken a deep dive into equity and offers guiding statements, criteria for capital project scheduling, park and trail equity metrics, racial equity information sessions to staff. This work funnels into their Racial Equity Plan which outlines priorities, timelines, accountability, and performance measures. The MPRB further engages in measures to address workforce diversity and equity training and created a Community Outreach Department to build relationships with underserved communities.

V. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

To prepare for onboarding of Equity in Action, the staff committee will develop learning materials to help the coalition understand the current processes utilized by the City to involve the public, or "Government 101." The EiA team will also present to City Directors to explain the purpose of EiA. Individually, the EiA team will survey the needs of directors to identify opportunities for the coalition to investigate and apply an equity lens in a pilot project(s).

Next, the Development Plan includes Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the original Equity in Action Scope of Work proposal, facilitated by consultants Sharifa Rowe and Stephanie Luz Cordel. Phase 1 is the "Initial Community Engagement Phase", meant to build relationships among everyone working on the Equity in Action project. Training on equity to understand barriers to inclusion during City planning projects will be provided. The group will closely explore "societal issues" such as "white supremacy," "disenfranchisement," "racism," "sexism," and more. These group sessions will help the team get to know each other, get to a collective understanding of what is equity in action, and identify current barriers to public participation in city planning processes. Lastly, the group will discuss what an "equitable community engagement framework" could entail that would help improve inclusion in government decision-making.

Phase 2 of the Equity in Action Scope of Work, the "Equitable Community Engagement Framework," builds on the conversations from Phase 1 to create strategies, techniques, and metrics to include in the "Tempe's Involving the Public" manual. The coalition will work with the EiA team to review current planning practices and develop new ideas for improving inclusion in city decision-making. The outcomes of this phase include coalition recommendations for improving the TIP manual, synthesis of feedback on current plans and planning processes, and a draft Equitable Community Engagement Framework. During the third and final phase, "Implementation Projects" will be the focus of the coalition and EiA staff. Here, the implementation projects will be selected through one of three pathways. **See Attached.** Once an implementation project is selected, the coalition and EiA team will apply the

Equitable Community Engagement Framework and test out the approach developed in Phase 2, in coordination with City Directors.

The participation of City Directors is essential for the effective and successful implementation of piloted projects and the future sustainability of equity work. Staff will survey directors for their perspectives on the opportunities and vulnerabilities associated with equity work, including the identification of potential projects that are ready for immediate implementation and those projects that require additional groundwork. Throughout the entirety of the process, EiA staff will update and inform the City's directors on the progress of piloted projects and identify the appropriate departmental leads to maintain and further any equity frameworks established.

The culmination of EiA will result in the successful transfer of the framework's ownership to City departments. In this way, department leaders and staff will be equipped with replicable, sustainable tools that ensure diversity and equitable engagement in department programs and policies.

VI. MARKETING STRATEGIES

Prior: Equity in Action was marketed to community members through the RFQ process, including community meetings, one-on-one conversations, social media, and email blasts.

During: Continued support of EiA will occur as a result of the coalition's community engagement effort and the committee's ongoing dialogue and collaboration with department leaders. Committee staff also foresees presenting to City Council on the status of EiA and piloted projects.

After: The successful implementation of EiA will yield results similar to those seen in Seattle, Rhode Island and Portland, thereby elevating the City of Tempe's exposure as a state and national model of equity work within municipalities.

VII. RISKS

Equity in Action can only be as successful as the City's ability to understand and incorporate the framework established by the EiA coalition. Failure to recognize the importance of equity work not only weakens the City's intended impact but also nullifies the work done by the coalition. Therefore, it is incumbent on City directors and staff to actively and intentionally participate in the Project Implementation process so that department's opinions and perspectives are incorporated into all suggestions. Such comprehensive involvement will ensure that pilot projects, and future equity work, is measured, effective and championed by all.