

**Metropolitan Nashville and
Davidson County, TN**

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Roadmap:

Policy Guidelines for Metro Nashville Equity

Mayor's Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion
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Author: Ashford Hughes, Former Chief Diversity Equity and Inclusion Officer
Metro Government of Nashville & Davidson County



Purpose

Metropolitan Nashville Government serves over 685,000 residents and employs over 9000 people. Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is at the core of providing high quality public service, continuous improvement and one Nashville for all. Our city faces common challenges. Departments in silos, significant financial constraints and outdated processes are obstacles that make equitable outcomes difficult to prioritize.

The purpose of this document is to provide the business case for equity as a component of excellence, guiding principles for leadership, policy recommendations, and resources to guide the work. Correcting known and measured disparities, beginning with race and gender, requires that decision making processes be guided and governed by an equity lens.

An equity lens is a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes focused at individual, institutional, and systemic levels, used to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation. The effective and universal use of an equity lens in Metro Government can lead to more equitable policies, programs and services.

The guidelines and goals outlined in this document are meant to guide Metro Nashville leaders in making Nashville the most equitable city in the nation.

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Metro Government of Nashville & Davidson County

The Diversity Equity and Inclusion Roadmap was developed The Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion in collaboration with Culture Shift Team, a Nashville-based diversity, equity and inclusion strategy and training and multicultural marketing consultancy.
cultureshiftteam.com



Executive Summary

Metro Government has as critical leadership role in ensuring that diversity, equity, and inclusion is a foundational part of Nashville's growth by promoting an environment characterized by dignity and mutual respect at all levels of government. Leadership by example begins with using an equity lens to ensure fully inclusive practices within the Mayor's office and across all Metro departments and committing to building a diverse and inclusive workforce which reflects the communities it serves.

Recent internal analysis and study has shown that systemic barriers exist which prevent marginalized groups from fully participating in Metro Government. These barriers create risks to quality of service for residents, community partners, and other key stakeholders.

The Metro Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, working with key internal and external stakeholders, has positioned Metro Government as a leading voice for greater equity in Nashville and should be codified within Metro Government. The mission and vision and the 8 key principles developed by the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion outlined in this roadmap should be fully adopted by Metro Government. They provide a guide to continue successful programs and implement new initiatives needed to reduce the equity gap between Nashville's most marginalized and affluent residents.

The successful implementation of this roadmap requires broad based support and collaboration across all Metro Government departments. Leaders should be held accountable to goals, and resources should be allocated to support greater workforce cultural agility training, more equitable procurement practices, better data tracking and analysis and more transparent communication. All of these mechanisms will be needed to ensure City Government recognizes and meets the needs of the constantly changing and increasingly diverse communities that create one Nashville.

Definitions

For the purposes of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Roadmap, the following definitions are used.

DIVERSITY

Difference. Can include life experiences, education, work style, personality, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status and class, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, ability, traditions, heritage, perspectives, as well as cultural, political, religious, and other affiliations.

EQUITY

Both a process and a product. The elimination of difference-based (race, gender, etc.) outcome gaps so that these differences do not predict one's success, improving outcomes for all. This approach centers on those who are historically marginalized and moves from a service-based approach toward focusing on institutional policies, institutions and structures that perpetuate disparities.

INCLUSION

The intentional act to include difference. Creating environments in which any individual or group is welcomed, respected, supported, and valued, with opportunity to fully participate.

Message from The Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion

The Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion was established in 2018 by Mayor David Briley, expanding the scope of work of The Office of Workforce Diversity and Inclusion. The addition of “equity” to the office was an important milestone for Nashville. Equity is the fair and just inclusion of all people into a society in which they can fully participate with equal voice, prosper and reach their potential. Equity is both a product and a process, centered on those who have been historically marginalized, and moves from a reactive, service-based approach toward an intentional focus on policies, institutions and structures.

The DEI Office has made tremendous strides toward equity for communities of color in the midst of changing administrations, multiple elections and challenging times. I am proud to highlight three key areas of success where community and city leaders came together to address needed changes in policy. First, the passage of our historic Equal Business Opportunity Policy, which aims to address the disparate number of contracts awarded to Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses. Secondly, we secured \$2.2 million in capital improvements for the C.E. McGruder Center to become a one-stop shop for economic opportunity in North Nashville. Third, we allocated \$25,000 to four of Nashville’s Black, Hispanic, and LGBT Chambers to support Nashville’s small business ecosystem.

Each of these are historic firsts and it is vital that this work continues. To realize economic equity, inclusion, and sustainability for African Americans, Latinos, women and LGBTQ Nashvillians Metro Government must continue to focus on eliminating disparities embedded in our history and systems.

Together with Metro leaders and community partners, I established the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Roadmap, an equity-based policy blueprint, outlining priorities and policy recommendations to move the needle on equity. Using an equity lens that guides policymaking and procedure, Metro government can lead the charge to make Nashville one of the most equitable cities in the nation. By acting on these paramount social and economic imperatives that disrupt systems of inequity, Metro Government has the opportunity to enhance the quality of life for all Nashville residents.

Thank you, Nashville.



Ashford Hughes
Former Chief Diversity Equity and Inclusion Office
Metro Government of Nashville and Davidson County

Metro Nashville Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion



PURPOSE

The Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion was established to address known and measured disparities within the activities, processes and policies of Metro Government based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability status.



VISION

Metro Government is at the forefront of equity in governance. All city leaders set the standard for demonstrated commitment to equity by leveraging diversity, cultivating inclusion, measuring and ensuring equitable outcomes for all of its residents.



MISSION

Metro Government strives to reflect the diversity of the Nashville community in its hiring practices, contracting and economic development opportunities, and through the delivery of equitable programs, services, and policies by engaging best practice equity and inclusion techniques.

Fulfilling the vision and mission requires intentional and explicit integration of equity into decisions made about practices, policies, programs, budgets, contract awards, as well as talent recruitment, development and promotion.

Why Equity for Nashville

Nashville Next asserts that “by 2040, we expect to have no majority race or ethnicity in Nashville.”

“Historically, African-American and Hispanic Nashvillians have lower homeownership rates and worse health outcomes. They live in lower performing school zones and have lower graduation rates.”

According to a 2019 Brookings Institute study of inclusive economic growth in Nashville, employment rates have increased for all Nashville residents over the past decade, “but the wage gap has widened between whites and people of color.”

Median earnings have decreased by nearly 10% for Nashville’s African American community and “too few jobs offer workers pathways to the middle class.”

Within Metro Government procurement, the 2018 Disparity Study, published by Griffin & Strong PC (GSPC), indicated that African Americans, Asians, Hispanics and women saw statistically significant underutilization in contracting. “In other words, the groups indicated were not utilized by Metro Nashville to the extent that would be expected based on their availability in the relevant market.”

GSPC was able to determine that the disparity in public contracts won by Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses was explicitly linked to a business owners’ race, ethnicity or gender.

With “structural and unconscious bias limiting some workers from fully participating in the modern economy,” we know that achieving economic inclusion will lead to higher economic growth for all. It is crucial that we work together to address these disparities in equity.

Metro Diversity Equity & Inclusion Timeline

2017

The Kaleidoscope Group consulting firm conducted the Metro Workplace Survey and employee interviews

Griffin & Strong PC consulting firm conducted a comprehensive Metro Nashville Disparity Study of a 5-year period

Griffin & Strong PC consulting firm conducted the Metro Nashville Minority Enterprise Growth And Needs Study

2018

Jan 2018

The Kaleidoscope Group issued the Metro Nashville Diversity & Inclusion Assessment and Recommendations Report

June 2018

Griffin & Strong PC consulting firm issues the Metro Nashville Minority Enterprise Growth And Needs Study

Sept 2018

Griffin & Strong PC issued the Metro Nashville Disparity Study Final Report.

2019

Sept 2019

Brookings Institute issued Greater Nashville's Moment: Achieving inclusive economic growth

Over the course of the last two years, several studies have been conducted to determine the state of equity in Nashville. These studies have been used to inform this document, including proposed policy changes aimed at the elimination of disparities in business opportunity in the Metro Nashville.



8 Principles for Equity in Metro Nashville Government & Implementation

8 Principles for Equity

The following 8 Principles lay out a comprehensive and achievable vision for equity in government. Based on research, model practices from peer cities, and community feedback, each guiding principle addresses a key area of investment where government should focus efforts and, if achieved, will provide for a more equitable Nashville.

Along with the 8 Principles, policy guidelines are provided to establish specific metrics for benchmarking, tracking progress, measuring achievement and maintaining a continuous improvement process toward the goal of equity.

Implementation

In order for the Roadmap for Equity to be effective, it should be used as a guideline to develop a Metro Strategic Equity Action Plan, with timelines for implementation. This work should be done in concert with the Metro Diversity Advisory Committee, Metro Human Relations Commission, Metro Human Resources, the Minority Business Advisory Council, the Mayor's Council on Gender Equity, the Mayor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities and key community stakeholders.

8 Principles for Equity in Metro Nashville Government

1 Leadership Commitment

Metro Government should be at the forefront of equity in governance, providing leadership toward equitable outcomes for all its residents. Metro Government should demonstrate organizational commitment to DEI by adopting the following goals.

2 Workforce Development

Nashville's workforce should reflect its diverse populations in order to meet the needs of the constantly changing and increasingly diverse communities it serves. Metro Government should attract, recruit, develop, promote and retain a diverse government workforce at all levels and create a work culture that encourages and celebrates collaboration, fairness and open contribution of all employees and community members.

3 Promotion of Cultural Proficiency

Metro Government should promote organizational and community cultural proficiency by training, facilitating strategic partnerships and establishing workplace expectations of cultural proficiency.

4 Best Practices for Equal Business Opportunity

Towards economic equity, Metro Government should establish practices and policies that further increase opportunities for Minority and Women-Owned Businesses to earn business. Metro Government should be a convener of Nashville business community leaders to ensure equitable business outcomes.

5 Equity for Nashville Residents: Inclusive Customer Service

Metro Government should ensure that services provided to Davidson County residents are equally accessible and inclusive, creating a resident-centric system of service delivery. Department leaders should assess existing structures and create departmental infrastructure to ensure equity.

6 Intentional Inclusive Communication

Towards economic equity, Metro Government should establish practices and policies that further increase opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses to earn business. Metro Government should be a convener of Nashville business community leaders to ensure equitable business outcomes.

7 Performance Data Tracking

Metro Government should engage in effective performance measurement to track achievement of established goals and establish formal vehicle for reporting diversity indicators.

8 Review Data to Improve Strategy

Metro government should establish a continuous improvement review process to identify gaps and disparities and to prioritize areas of focus, redefining strategies as necessary to ensure outcomes are achieved.



1. Leadership Commitment

Metro Government should be at the forefront of equity in governance, providing leadership toward equitable outcomes for all its residents. Metro Government should demonstrate organizational commitment to DEI by adopting the following goals.

- Codify office and role of Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, providing appropriate staffing and budget to demonstrate Metro's commitment to equity for all residents
- Develop Equity Lens for DEI departmental assessment, to fully evaluate current diversity structures and guide decision making for all programs, activities and policies
- Ensure full and timely compliance with all laws, regulations and executive orders related to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion
- Establish consistent message of diversity, equity and inclusion in all communication from leadership
- Establish process and procedure for ensuring that appointments to various Boards and Commissions are representative of Nashville's diversity
- Strengthen Diversity Advisory Committee by including external stakeholders and expanding scope of work to include support and guidance of equity goals and establishment of internal Equity Champions
- Leverage Equity Champions to establish and lead employee resource groups
- Include specific equity indicators and benchmarks as a part of the budget process (workforce, procurement)
- Lead effort to develop departmental DEI goals, progress measurement and transparent reporting to ensure continuous improvement process toward goal of Metro Nashville equity

2. Workforce Development

Nashville's workforce should reflect its diverse populations in order to meet the needs of the constantly changing and increasingly diverse communities it serves. Metro Government should attract, recruit, develop, promote and retain a diverse government workforce at all levels and create a work culture that encourages and celebrates collaboration, fairness and open contribution of all employees and community members.

- Engage Metro Human Resources, Metro Human Relations Commission and Diversity Advisory Committee around the goal of achieving a Metro workforce that reflects the greater Nashville community and promotes a positive and inclusive work environment
- Retain consultant with expertise in Human Resources and DEI to guide the planning
- Examine City recruitment, selection and hiring practices. Identify areas for potential implicit bias and needs for improvement
- Examine employee benefits with all families and lifestyles in mind (including childcare, flex schedules, maternity and paternity leave, etc.) and make recommendations for policy changes
- Engage Metro HRC and Mayor's Council on Gender Equity to establish internal leadership development pipelines of diverse candidates for advancement and leadership positions
- Develop supervisor training which emphasizes a) best practices for diverse candidate recruitment and selection; b) creating an inclusive work environment with equitable opportunities for advancement c) tactics for retaining valuable employees who may be offered other external employment
- Engage Metro HRC and Human Resources Department to examine Metro Charter to determine what opportunities exist to include equity language and key performance indicators in Metro job descriptions and performance review





3. Promotion of Cultural Proficiency

Metro Government should promote organizational and community cultural proficiency by training, facilitating strategic partnerships and establishing workplace expectations of cultural proficiency.

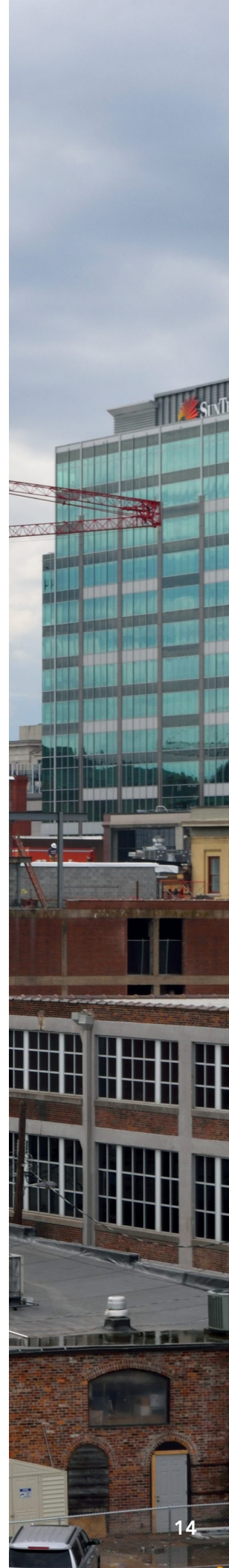
- Engage Metro Human Resources around examining Metro Charter with the goal of codifying DEI and cultural proficiency training requirements and frequency
- Establish a diversity, equity and inclusion core competency and develop employee training curriculum
- Overhaul content and delivery of current diversity awareness training to become more interactive and engaging, expanding the scope of DEI concepts
- Leverage Equity Champions to promote cultural proficiency in departmental strategic and business planning, program design and service delivery planning
- Establish partnerships with community organizations that promote cultural proficiency to garner input on program and service delivery planning
- Leverage and promote the expertise of the Mayor's Office of New Americans and the My City Academy program to support cultural proficiency goals

4. Best Practices for Equal Business Opportunity

Towards economic equity, Metro Government should establish practices and policies that further increase opportunities for Minority and Women-Owned Businesses to earn business.

Metro Government should be a convener of Nashville business community leaders to ensure equitable business outcomes.

- Support the Equal Business Opportunity Program to review program compliance and effectiveness on at least a semiannual basis
- Support and enhance the impact of the Minority Business Advisory Council to promote Minority- and Women-Owned Business inclusion in Metro procurement and the larger Nashville business ecosystem
- Utilize the Minority Enterprise Growth and Needs Study to better craft a Metro business capacity building program and support system to remove barriers to business inclusion for MWBE growth and development in Davidson County and Middle Tennessee
- Develop mechanisms for increasing outreach to MWBEs to promote awareness of business opportunities, training and mentorship with the goal of increasing capacity and MWBE inclusion at the prime contractor level
- Continue to financially support the Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce, the Nashville Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Tennessee Latin American Chamber of Commerce and the Nashville LGBT Chamber in their efforts to engage, build capacity and promote inclusion of MWBE and LGBT-owned businesses





5. Equity for Nashville Residents: Inclusive Customer Service

Metro Government should ensure that services provided to Davidson County residents are equally accessible and inclusive, creating a resident-centric system of service delivery. Department leaders should assess existing structures and create departmental infrastructure to ensure equity.

- Assess City-wide Language & Interpretation Services structure and develop a plan to ensure comprehensive and consistent access for linguistic minorities
- Leverage departmental Equity Champions to work with departmental leadership to ensure that all programs and services are effectively serving residents of all backgrounds and needs
- Ensure that law enforcement and first responders are trained to understand techniques for responding to foreign-born and limited-English populations, and are equipped with access to language and cultural competency supports
- Work with Mayor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities to ensure that it is able to fully satisfy its mission of promoting awareness of the contributions, potential, and needs of individuals with disabilities and their families and advocating for policies and practices which promote self-determination and independence of persons with disabilities and their families
- Engage Nashville residents around understanding ongoing and emerging needs with the goal of providing best in class government customer services
- Work with the HRC to expand the scope of Neighbor 2 Neighbor training for Neighborhood Associations to promote interconnectedness and resource sharing among residents

6. Intentional Inclusive Communication

Metro Government should develop open lines of communication regarding diversity initiatives which include respectful, honest and results-oriented dialogue with employees, other stakeholders and the community.

Every individual has beneficial input and a contribution to bring to the table.

- Develop City-wide mechanism for community and employee engagement surrounding key functions of Metro Government, including DEI initiatives, budgeting process, etc. with the goal of consistent communication, transparent reporting and timely follow up
- Develop policies to ensure that all information officers establish processes for linguistically proficient and culturally relevant media and public information dissemination
- Prioritize communication surrounding departmental progress toward DEI goals, highlighting key accomplishments





7. Performance Data Tracking

Metro Government should engage in effective performance measurement to track achievement of established goals and establish formal vehicle for reporting diversity indicators.

- Move forward on Metro Diversity Equity and Inclusion Roadmap recommendations, creating the Metro Strategic Equity Action Plan and developing associated timelines for implementation and tracking progress
- Develop a review cycle to track progress on key performance indicators and determine ongoing appropriateness and effectiveness of goals, targets, and strategies with the in the Metro Strategic Equity Plan
- Engage Metro HRC, Metro Diversity Advisory Committee, and established employee resource groups to garner feedback about effectiveness of Metro DEI efforts
- Survey employees regarding compliance and effectiveness of workplace DEI efforts
- Establish publicly available DEI logic models for each Metro department, ensuring transparency around benchmarks and goals
- Establish publicly available DEI dashboards tracking progress toward goals
- Engage Metro HRC and Human Resources Department to examine Metro Charter to determine what opportunities exist to include equity key performance indicators in Metro job descriptions and performance reviews

8. Review Data to Improve Strategy

Metro government should establish a continuous improvement review process to identify gaps and disparities and to prioritize areas of focus, redefining strategies as necessary to ensure outcomes are achieved.

- Conduct departmental assessments to evaluate existing DEI structures compliance and effectiveness, assessing current DEI efforts and establish mechanisms for measuring achievement of goals
- Develop a methodology and process for collecting and incorporating feedback from various stakeholders including city leadership, employees, and the community to inform continuous improvement
- Monitor the achievement of goals established in Metro Strategic Equity Action Plan by creating a DEI dashboard with metrics as a tool for reporting
- Issue annual report on progress toward goals to all stakeholders
- Engage with Metro HRC, Diversity Advisory Committee and Mayor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities around annual review of Strategic Equity Action Plan





Conclusion

Nashville is at a crossroads, buoyed by dramatic population growth, economic development, and positive PR into one of the fastest growing metro areas in the United States. With this growth, and the changing ethnic demographics that come with it, Metro Government has an opportunity to reframe the discussion and policy around equity, particularly racial equity, for generations to come.

The principles and guidelines outlined in this roadmap describe the model practices and tools needed to create an atmosphere that values diversity, promotes inclusion, and achieves a vision for greater access and equity for all Metro Nashville residents. Successful implementation of this roadmap requires support and collaboration across all Metro Government departments and an open and transparent dialogue with both internal and external stakeholders.

Institutionalizing these efforts and creating infrastructure and accountability within Metro Government is a critical step toward achieving Metro Government's goal of one Nashville, with diversity, equity, and inclusion at the foundation of its operations and services.



APPENDIX 1.0: Equity Lens Sample: City of Seattle



Racial Equity Toolkit

to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues

The vision of the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative is to eliminate racial inequity in the community. To do this requires ending **individual racism**, **institutional racism** and **structural racism**. The Racial Equity Toolkit lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity.

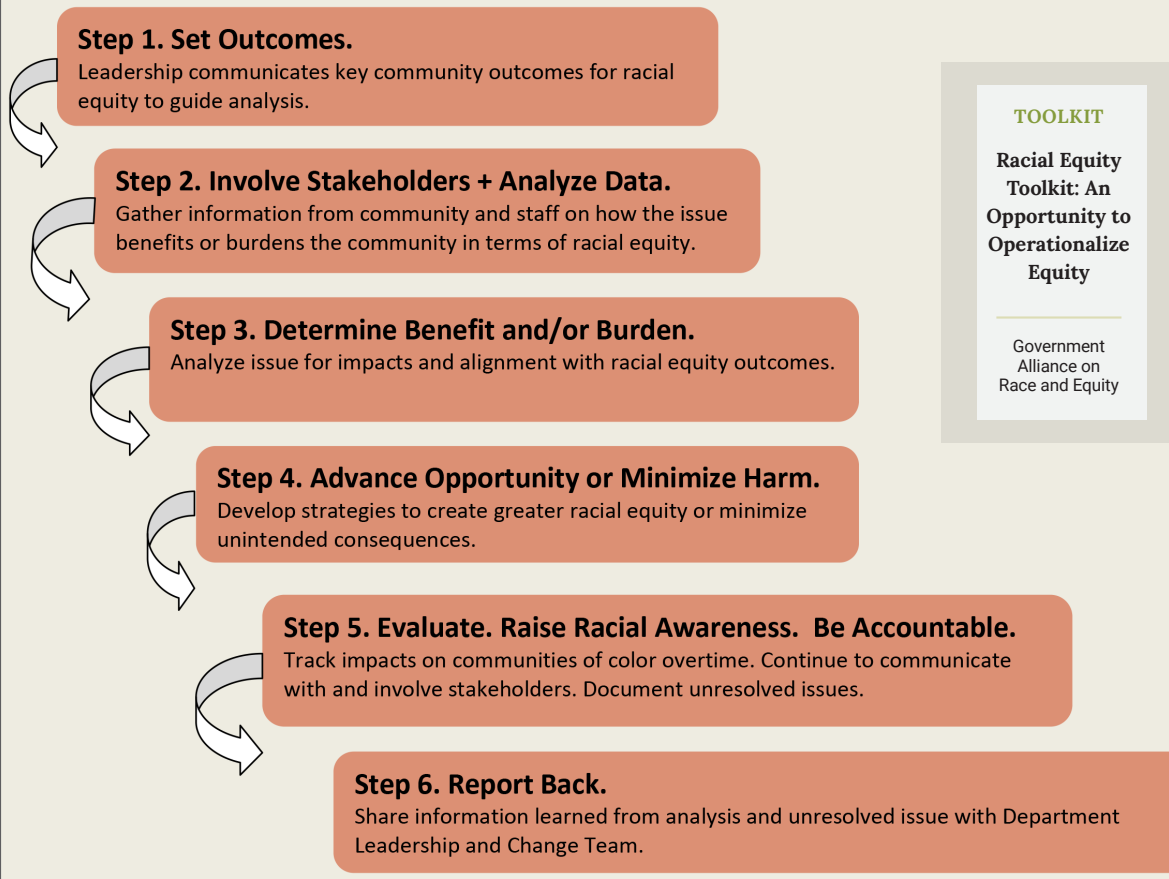
When Do I Use This Toolkit?

Early. Apply the toolkit early for alignment with departmental racial equity goals and desired outcomes.

How Do I Use This Toolkit?

With Inclusion. The analysis should be completed by people with different racial perspectives.

Step by step. The Racial Equity Analysis is made up of six steps from beginning to completion:



APPENDIX 1.1:

Equity Lens Sample: City of Portland

The Racial Equity Toolkit

The Racial Equity Toolkit lays out an iterative process and a set of questions to assess impacts on racial equity and make changes.

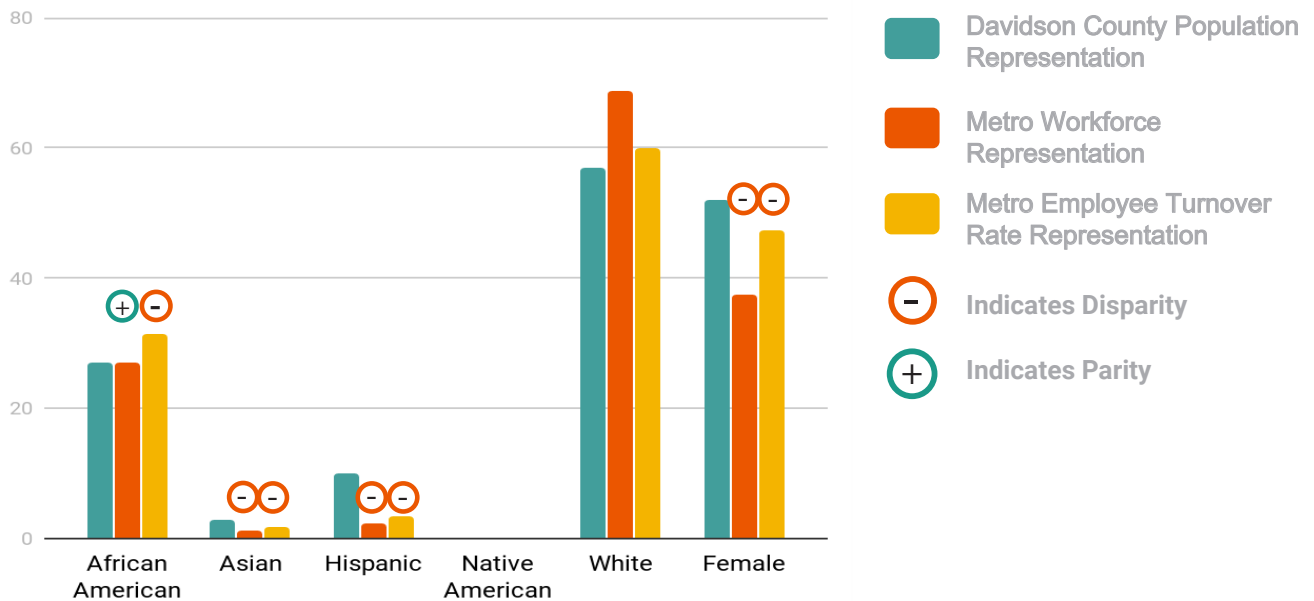
- 1. Set Equitable Outcomes.** Leadership communicates equitable outcomes to guide the analysis.
Purpose: Orient and commit the process to equity-focused goals.
- 2. Collect and Analyze Data.** Research and collect data on racial disparities and identify those most impacted
Purposes: Change the information informing the proposal to identify disparities and those most impacted.
- 3. Understand Historical Context.** Research the history of racial injustice relevant to this proposal to better understand the root causes of disparities and which communities were most impacted.
Purpose: Inform/change the analyst's historical frame of reference.
- 4. Engage Those Most Impacted.** Commit to more meaningful strategies for engagement, identify which communities of color may be impacted by the proposal, engage impacted communities in decision making and develop community ownership of the proposal.
Purposes: Change the user's relationship with those most impacted, shift power, and change the information informing the proposal.
- 5. Develop Racially Equitable Strategies & Refine Outcomes.** Identify potential impacts, who benefits and who is burdened, commit to strategies that advance racial equity and mitigate harm, and refine the proposal's outcomes.
Purpose: Create a proposal for change.
- 6. Implement Changes.** Make a plan for implementation and identify what resources are needed to eliminate/decrease disparities and make necessary changes to the proposal.
Purpose: Establish commitment and support for changes.
- 7. Evaluate / Accountability / Report Back.** Develop a system of evaluation including ongoing community partnerships and opportunities to make further changes.
Purpose: Create accountability and measure change.

APPENDIX 2.0: Disparities Data

The following data, from the 2018 Diversity and Inclusion Assessment conducted by The Kaleidoscope Group consulting firm, demonstrates key disparities affecting Metro Nashville Government employees, specifically African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and Women.

EQUITY IMPERATIVE: METRO WORKFORCE

Losing Talent: Employee turnover of women and people of color is disproportionately higher than their overall rate of representation in the Metro workforce.



Source Data: 2018 Diversity and Inclusion Assessment Conducted by Kaleidoscope Group 2018.

APPENDIX 2.1: Disparities Data

The following data, from 2018 Metro Nashville Tennessee Disparity Study Conducted by Griffin & Strong P.C. consulting group demonstrates key disparities affecting Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses (MWBEs). During the five year period of the study, MWBEs accounted for 30% of the vendors in the Master Metro Vendor File, but won only 17% of prime contracts. Conversely, Non-MWBEs represented 70% of vendors in the Master Metro Vendor File, but won a disproportionate 83% of prime contracts.

This data only addresses vendors registered as Metro vendors, not the total number of supplier businesses available in Davidson County.

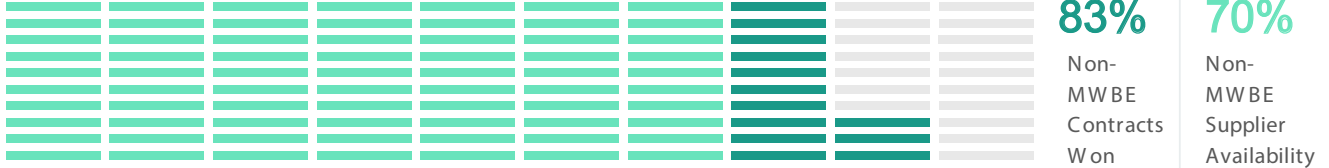
EQUITY IMPERATIVE: SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

The disparity in contract allocation amounts to a **\$377,173,467 loss** in business opportunity for MWBEs.

Minority - or Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE)

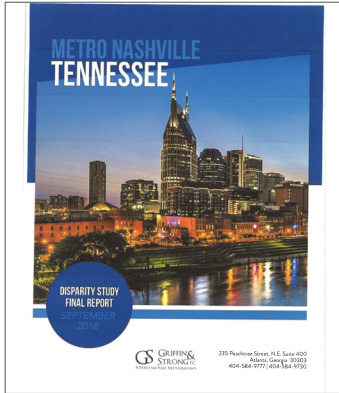


Non-MWBE



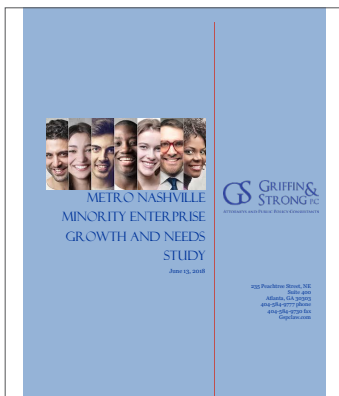
Source Data: 2018 Metro Nashville Tennessee Disparity Study Conducted by Griffin & Strong P.C. Covers a five year period.

APPENDIX 3.0: Tools & Resources



Disparities Data: 2018 Metro Nashville Disparities Study

The 2018 Disparities Study by Griffin & Strong PC indicates statistically significant disparities on the basis of gender and race, as well as suggested goals and actions to move equity forward in Metro Nashville government's procurement and contracting processes for equal business opportunity.



Disparities Data: 2018 Metro Nashville Minority Enterprise Growth and Needs Study

2018 Metro Nashville Minority Enterprise Growth and Needs Study identified MBE firms in Davidson County, both those certified with Metro and those not certified. The study determined that MBEs are available and qualified to win Metro contracts, but were under-resourced or inexperienced in the public contracting process.



Disparities Data: 2018 Metro Nashville Diversity & Inclusion Assessment and Recommendation Report

The 2018 Metro Nashville Diversity and Inclusion Assessment and Recommendation Report by The Kaleidoscope Group outlines key opportunities to improve a culture of inclusion, representation, and equal opportunities for talent development and promotion within Metro Government.

APPENDIX 3.1:

Tools & Resources: Nashville on the National Stage

Through The Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Nashville has been a part of the following national cohorts developed to promote equity in US cities.

National League of Cities Equitable Economic Development Fellowship

National League of Cities (NLC), PolicyLink and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) jointly support the Equitable Economic Development Fellowship. This cohort, which includes Austin, Baltimore, Louisville, Nashville, Phoenix and Sacramento, collaborates in developing creative strategies to ensure economic policies and programs benefit all members of their communities. The fellowship empowers cities to learn from each other and build a path toward a more equitable future.

During the year-long fellowship, each city selects an issue or project aimed at spurring inclusive economic growth. Economic development experts from across the country provide technical assistance, leadership training and make recommendations to help the cities reach their goals. The cities will designate fellows within their communities to travel to the other participating cities for peer learning and the sharing model practices.

Living Cities and The Citi Foundation City Accelerator on Inclusive Procurement

Living Cities and The Citi Foundation City Accelerator initiative on Inclusive Procurement brings together a cohort of 10 cities that work together over a year period to pursue a range of projects to find innovative, effective, locally-tailored strategies to leverage public purchasing power to develop firms owned by people of color. The cohort is aimed as creating an ecosystem of support services for minority-owned businesses to increase their opportunities to gain city contracts. The cities included in the 2019 cohort include Boston, Cleveland, El Paso, Houston, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Nashville, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and South Bend.

Annie E. Casey Foundation & PolicyLink Southern Cities for Economic Inclusion

The Annie E. Casey Foundation & PolicyLink Southern Cities for Economic Inclusion brings together a cohort of seven cities dedicated to advancing economic equity for low-income communities and communities of color. Comprised of city officials and staff, local philanthropy, and business and community partners from Atlanta, Asheville, Charlotte, Memphis, Nashville, New Orleans and Richmond, the group shares best practices and learns from experts. Together, they work to identify and address the unique historical, political, and legal obstacles to achieving economic inclusion in the South; namely, the region's deeply entrenched legacy of racism and segregation, as well as the structural limitations imposed by state laws that strip cities of the authority to advance economic inclusion policies.

Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)

GARE is a national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. GARE provides best practices, tools and resources to build and sustain current equity efforts and build a national movement for racial equity. Nashville has been engaged with GARE for three years, participating in their Equity Summit in collaboration with PolicyLink. Both GARE and PolicyLink provide economic equity and inclusion technical assistance for city governments seeking to address racial equity disparities.

Reference Pages

The Annie E. Casey Foundation: aecf.org
Government Alliance on Race and Equity: racialequityalliance.org
Living Cities: livingcities.org
National League of Cities: nlc.org
PolicyLink: policylink.org
Urban Land Institute: uli.org

