CITY OF EVERETT
Planning

STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Everett Planning Commission
FROM: Rebecca McCrary, Long Range Planning Manager
DATE: June 17, 2022
MEETING DATE: June 21, 2022
SUBJECT: Centering and Advancing Equity in Our Work

OVERVIEW

To serve the public interest, plans and regulations must serve and benefit all residents in a community in ways that reduce or eliminate inequity. The periodic update to the city's comprehensive plan will be conducted with an equity lens and will include analysis, discussion, and policies addressing equity, inclusion, and environmental justice. At the planning commission's June 21 meeting, staff will provide a brief introduction to principles and techniques to help us center and advance equity in our work.

BACKGROUND

The City of Everett strives each day to meet the vision of "One Everett: A connected and engaged community built on trust, inclusion and equity.", including specific actions detailed in Mayoral Directive 2020-02 (see Exhibit B)

Diversity Wheel

The city's Equity Manager, Kay Barnes, created the Diversity Wheel (see Exhibit A) as a tool to help us think about diversity as it relates to our own identity and life experiences. This is intended to help city staff and volunteers build trust and foster inclusion with each other and our community, and to keep equity in the forefront.

Equitable Engagement

State law requires a public participation program that provides for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive plans and development regulations. The procedures must provide for broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives, opportunity for written comments, public meetings after effective notice, provision for open discussion, communication programs, information services, and consideration of and response to public comments (RCW 36.70A.140).

A public participation program can rightly be judged by how well it reaches individuals and communities that are least 'in the know' or have traditionally been left out of the planning and decision-making processes. Staff are working to develop, evaluate, test, and implement participation strategies to reach all residents of the city, hear and carefully consider feedback, and ultimately align the plan with the input received. See Exhibit C for guidance and resources supporting equitable engagement.

An Equitable Plan

The 2021 state legislature passed legislation and budget provisos to advance equitable and inclusive planning, including HB 1220, which updated the requirements for comprehensive plan housing elements:

> Each comprehensive plan shall include a plan, scheme, or design for each of the following:

> (2) A housing element ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods that:
>
> (e) Identifies local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing, including:
>
> (i) Zoning that may have a discriminatory effect;
>
> (ii) Disinvestment; and
>
> (iii) Infrastructure availability;
>
> (f) Identifies and implements policies and regulations to address and begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies, plans, and actions;
>
> (g) Identifies areas that may be at higher risk of displacement from market forces that occur with changes to zoning development regulations and capital investments; and
>
> (h) Establishes antidisplacement policies, with consideration given to the preservation of historical and cultural communities as well as investments in low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income housing; equitable development initiatives; inclusionary zoning; community planning requirements; tenant protections; land disposition policies; and consideration of land that may be used for affordable housing. (RCW 36.70A.070)

As part of the comprehensive plan update, staff will use historic research, data analysis and mapping, community engagement findings, and best planning practices to inform planning, decision-making and implementation that impacts equity considerations in Everett.

Key issues for Everett will include housing supply and affordability, housing choices, gentrification and displacement, shared prosperity in economic development, reducing inequities in access to transportation, education, healthy food, and other amenities, reducing inequities in exposure to pollution, transportation-related injuries and deaths, dangerous heat, and other hazards.

See Exhibit C for guidance and resources supporting an equitable plan.

REQUEST OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Review the Diversity Wheel and Mayoral Directive handouts (Exhibits A and B) prior to the planning commission's meeting on June 21, and review as many of the equity resources in Exhibit C as possible (a great activity for Juneteenth weekend!). Come prepared with questions, observations, and points of discussion.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: Diversity Wheel
Exhibit B: Mayoral directive 2020-02
Exhibit C: Equity resources

EXHIBIT A: DIVERSITY WHEEL

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) momentum for change

DIVERSITY WHEEL

Building community connections and inclusivity

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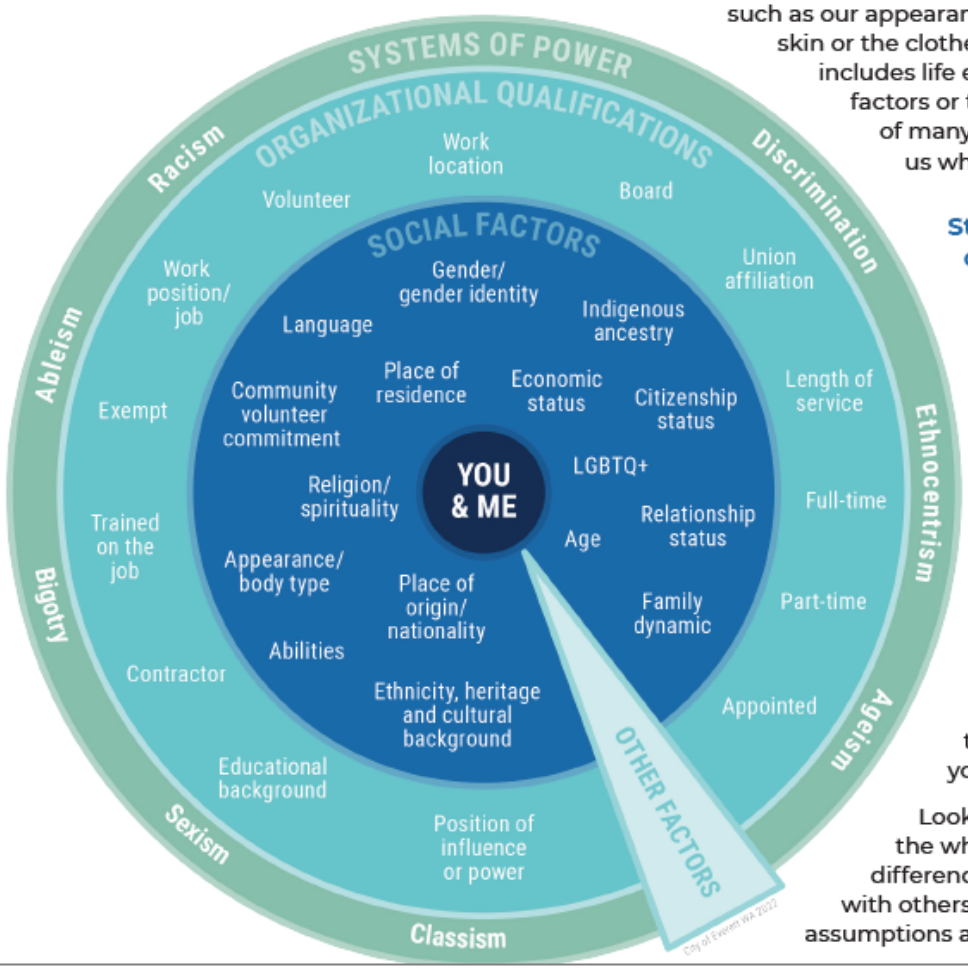
Our vision: "One Everett: A connected and engaged community – built on trust, inclusion and equity."

Key to achieving that vision is creating awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the attributes and experiences that make each of us unique. This tool was created to help City staff and volunteers build trust and foster inclusion with each other and our community. The five-step process explores the factors that shape our life experience and biases, and how they may be similar or different from others. Follow these steps to promote better relationships and communication with community, co-workers and volunteers.

Step 1: Consider your diversity. What makes you unique?

Understanding diversity starts with understanding ourselves, and what make us unique. Take a moment to reflect on the qualities that make you YOU. How are you special? What makes you different? This can include external factors, such as our appearance, the color of our skin or the clothes we wear. It also includes life experiences, social factors or the intersectionality of many things that make us who we are.



Step 2: Use the diversity wheel and find your personal story.

The diversity wheel represents some of the many dimensions of diversity within our organization and community. There are many attributes that make up a person's identity and more could be added to this wheel. Feel free to do that work on your copy.

Look at each section in the wheel to explore your differences and similarities with others, and reflect on your assumptions and behaviors:

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EXHIBIT A – DIVERSITY WHEEL

Remember:

- Words have power
- Biases can exclude people
- Be mindful in your interactions and with others
- It's not enough to say that you didn't intend to be hurtful; it's the actual impact that matters regardless of intentions

When you welcome all, you:

- Listen
- Are aware of your own advantages and disadvantages and how you can use them to make a difference
- Check your assumptions to unlearn biases and stereotypes
- Stand beside and walk with others

Terms

Ableism: discrimination in favor of able-bodied people

Ageism: prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age

Bigotry: prejudice against a person on the basis of their membership of a particular group. For example, prejudice against members of the LGBTQ+ community

Classism: prejudice against or in favor of people belonging to a particular social class

Discrimination: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex

Ethnocentrism: the attitude that one's own group, culture, ethnicity or nationality is superior to others

Racism: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or group based on their race or ethnicity

Sexism: prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex

Intersectionality: the crossover of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group

- **In the center of the wheel** is the individual – me and you, which is influenced and shaped by our experiences. What do we favor or disfavor?
- **Second circle** represents social factors that influence your life experiences. What impacts your life and how you think about others?
- **Third circle** represents the work environment, and the factors or culture that add to how you experience your work or gathering space.
- **Outermost circle** represents the "-isms" or overarching systems of power that indirectly and directly impact your life and can separate people who don't look, talk or act alike. Where do these exist in your life?

Step 3: Take a look at the outermost circle and reflect on the assumptions or biases that intersect with your lived experience, social interactions or organizational encounters.

Be aware of them and how it could impact the decisions made. Ask yourself:

- Would you treat a person or group differently (positive or negative) based on what you assume you know or based on things you do know? Examples include abilities, skin color or gender.
- What experiences or assumptions drive these biases?

Think deeply about your responses and keep your findings in mind while having conversations with others.

Step 4: Think about inclusion and how you can make your work environment, board or community meetings more inclusive and welcoming for everyone.

An inclusive environment is one where everyone has a sense of belonging and feels respected, valued and seen for who they are as individuals. Ask yourself:

- How inclusive is your work environment now and how can it be more inclusive?
- Who is most impacted by a discussion or decision? Are they being meaningfully included in the conversation?
- What policies or practices are barriers to inclusion?
- Who is responsible for making changes that ensure inclusion?
  - How will you communicate the need for change?
  - How will you follow-up or hold this party accountable?

Step 5: Commit to referring to and applying this tool daily.

Inclusivity, equity and diversity is an ongoing practice for everyone. Using this tool will help us have productive and engaging communication, and build trust and inclusion with each other, and within our community.

For more information, contact Equity Manager Kay Barnes at 425.257.7038 or kbarnes@everettwa.gov.

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EXHIBIT B: MAYORAL DIRECTIVE 2020-02

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Mayor's Office

Mayoral directive 2020-02: Building unity, addressing racism and promoting equity for all

This directive builds and expands upon the work completed through directive 2018-03: community engagement and inclusion.

Everett is a beautiful and diverse city, with more than 112,000 residents speaking nearly 90 different languages at home. The strength and vitality of our community comes from our rich diversity of cultures, experiences and faiths. I am committed to ensuring Everett remains a welcoming, inclusive and safe community for all who live, work and visit here.

Since 2018, we have made meaningful progress in our efforts to achieve our vision of "One Everett. A connected and engaged community built on trust, inclusion and equity." We formed an interdepartmental engagement team, which continues to evaluate City programs and events for their engagement effectiveness. We have made changes to our recruitment and hiring practices to make them more accessible. We have created a new youth advisory board, which advises me and my team on decisions that will impact their futures. These accomplishments are meaningful. Yet, much work remains to dismantle institutional barriers to success that impact marginalized communities, including our Black, Indigenous, people of color, LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, and low-income households.

Many opportunities remain:

- Participation in city government has historically been dominated by a small percentage of the city's population, primarily from more affluent areas of the city. We have an opportunity to broaden our reach into all communities and more effectively engage with all Everett residents, especially those historically underrepresented.
- We have an opportunity to diversify our City workforce so that it better reflects the rich diversity of our community, and specifically to diversify managerial positions. Nearly 90 percent of the City's roughly 1,060 employees identify as white, compared to 85 percent of Everett's overall labor force.
- We have an opportunity to work to embed equity as an explicit government principle in all City departments to assess how City operations, including policies and procedures, impact all Everett residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cassie Franklin, mayor of Everett, hereby direct City of Everett staff to pursue the following three initiatives:

Mayoral directive 2020-02
Issued Sept. 22, 2020

EXHIBIT B – MAYORAL DIRECTIVE 2020-02

1. **Initiative 1: foster engagement and mutual understanding with the Black, Indigenous people of color community (BIPOC), as well as other marginalized communities.**
    a. Build common understanding and long-term meaningful relationships with communities through listening sessions, needs assessments, and engaging with organizations and leaders.
    b. By Dec. 31, 2021 and with community input: develop a best-practices guide for improving and expanding City engagement with BIPOC and other historically-marginalized communities. This should include an understanding of the best communications modes and models for reaching different segments of the population, languages spoken, and relevant cultural sensitivities and norms.

2. **Initiative 2: improve inclusion, equity and diversity at the City and create a culture of anti-racism, which actively addresses barriers to opportunities for all.**
    a. The City's interdepartmental engagement team will continue to serve as equity champions for the City, as well as efforts to evaluate the City's current practices around inclusion, equity and diversity. The team will work closely with the Chief's Community Advisory Committee, the Diversity Advisory Board and the Civil Service Commission, and as well as other City departments and community organizations as relevant.
    b. Expand on the work of the City's Youth Advisory Board by supporting youth, and especially bringing forth the voices of young people traditionally underrepresented or missing from conversations, and youths of color and LGBTQ+. Nurture an environment where young people feel valued and have clear paths to opportunity. Create a network of adult allies with diverse experience to foster mentorship and serve as a resource to youth to help them gain the knowledge, training and skills necessary to be civically engaged and career ready.
    c. By Dec. 31, 2021: create a recruitment plan to build a workforce more representative of the diverse community we serve. This plan should include strategies for eliminating racial and other disparities within the hiring and recruitment process, as well as a training program for City recruitment teams. It should also include metrics to measure and communicate diversity, inclusion and engagement progress within the City workforce. This plan will incorporate the Everett Police Department's recruitment priorities to diversify its force.
    d. By Dec. 31, 2021: develop and implement a staff training program to engage and educate staff on how to begin to identify or eliminate barriers to equity and improve outcomes for all.
    e. Everett Police Department will continue to build on its training program on implicit bias and incorporate state curriculum on the history of race and policing.

3. **Initiative 3: identify and address inequities and bias in City systems, policies and data.**
   a. By June 30, 2021: form a City policy team to systematically review and transform City policies and procedures to actively address racism and ensure equity across all city policies, prioritizing those most needing revision or elimination. This team will also develop a set of equity values and principles to be factored into every future City policy.
   b. By June 30, 2021: create and operationalize a toolkit to integrate clear consideration of equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs and budgets. This toolkit will be both a product and a process used to develop strategies and actions that reduce inequities and improve outcomes for all groups.
   c. The Police Chief's Community Advisory Board will begin reviewing community complaints and internal investigations involving allegations of bias-based policing, excessive force and unlawful arrest. The board will also review any changes to policies associated with bias-based policing, use of force and use of deadly force. This will not only serve to improve our complaint processes, but will provide more transparency for the community when it comes to our investigative procedures related to complaint review and our policies affecting use of force.

A report summarizing progress on these initiatives, as well as metrics that will be used to gauge impact and success, will be delivered to me twice per year.

Dated this 22nd day of September 2020

Cassie Franklin
Mayor, City of Everett

EXHIBIT C: EQUITY RESOURCES

There are a lot of equity resources out there. Staff have read a lot of them and provide the following key resources to support the planning commission's role in centering and advancing equity in our work.

Puget Sound Regional Council

- **VISION 2050 Equity-Related Policies and Actions**
  Seven-page compendium of policies and actions in VISION 2050.
- **VISION 2050 Planning Resources – Considerations for Equitable Engagement**
  Brand new six-page guide to equitable engagement techniques and considerations.
- **VISION 2050 Planning Resources**
  Webpage with planning resources on several topics, including equity.

Association of Washington Cities

- **Equity Resource Guide – Tools and Case Studies for Washington Cities**
  Forty-page guide highlights policy opportunities to advance equity. See chapters 2 (housing) and 3 (transportation and infrastructure) and the resource guide for the most applicable provisions.

American Planning Association

- **Social Equity Knowledgebase**
  Webpage with planning resources that provide background, policy guidance, and examples of local plan recommendations and zoning standards for social equity from across the country.