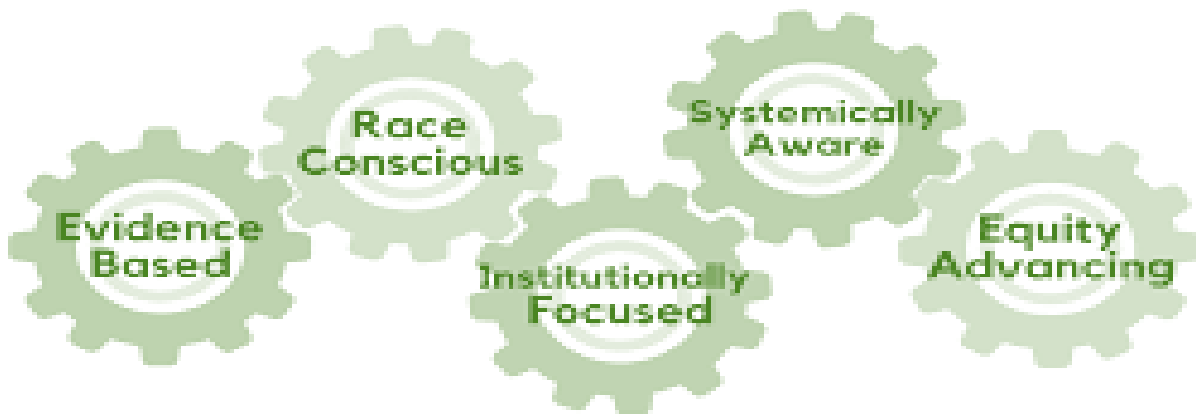


# Racial Equity Forward



**CITY OF OAKLAND**  
Department of Race and Equity

## 2019 – 2020 Accomplishment Report



## Department Information

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<b>Positions:</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Staff:</b>	Darlene Flynn, Director Ayanna Allen, Exec. Assistant Jacque Larrainzar, Program Analyst III
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**Vision:** To create a city where racial diversity has been maintained, racial disparities have been eliminated and racial equity has been achieved.

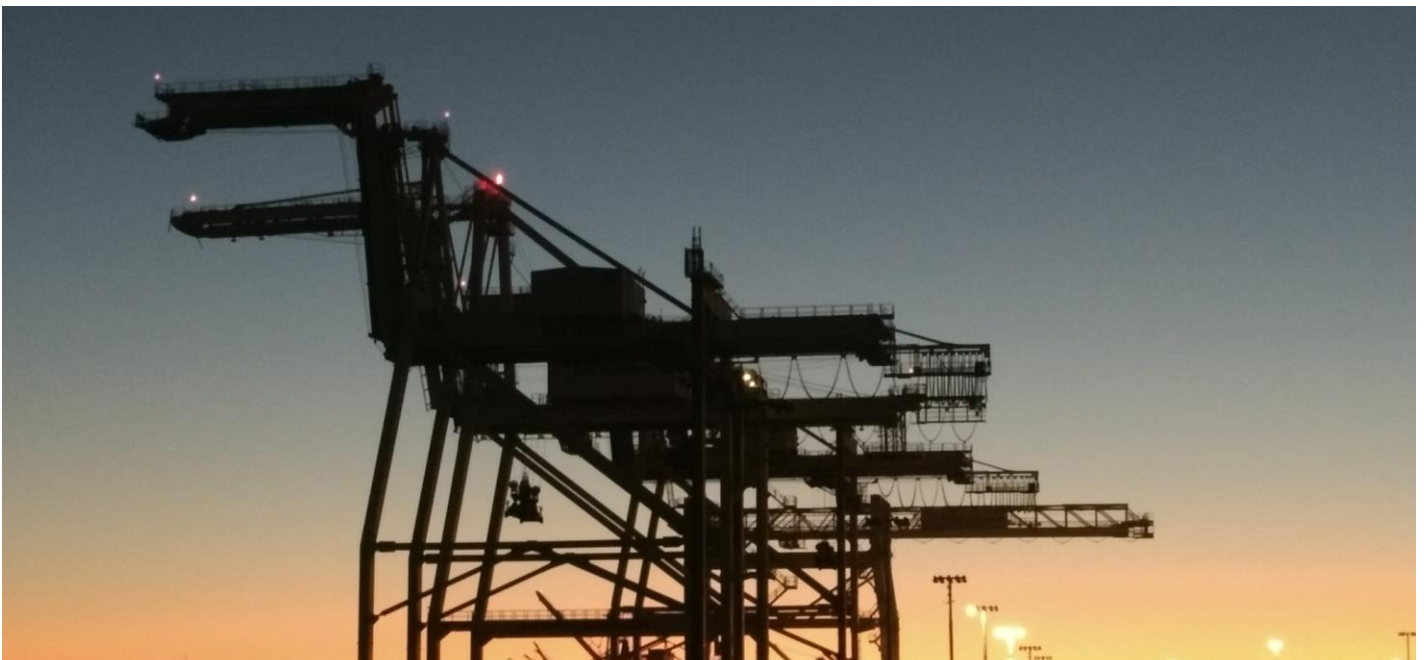
**Mission:** To intentionally integrate, on a Citywide basis, the principle of "fair and just" in all the City does to achieve equitable opportunities for all people and communities.

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## Racial Equity Change Theory

In 2017, the Department of Race and Equity (DRE) adopted a Racial Equity Theory of Change to guide racial equity work in the City of Oakland. A Racial Equity Theory of Change is a logic model that helps define what needs to be changed in an institution to create outcomes that benefit those who have been harmed by structural racism. This approach is also helpful to establish a range of transformational change activities and targets.

Based on more than 15 years of experience conducting similar work in government institutions and in community settings we have found that there are key areas that need to be addressed within an institution to implement lasting changing that support racial equity. We have also learned that to undo the impacts of policies that have harmed Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) we need to be intentional and strategic in our approach, and to be prepared to support staff, department leadership and elected officials to manage change both at the citywide and department level. Within limited resources and staff, we decided to focus our efforts in three strategic areas of change and set three strategic goals to benchmark our progress.



## Strategic Areas of Change and Change Strategies Timeline

### Strategic Areas of Change

- **Elimination of systemic causes of racial disparities in City Government**
- **Promotion of inclusion and full participation for all residents of the City.**
- **Reduction of race-based disparities in our communities.**

### Strategic Racial Equity Goals

These goals set a strong foundation for sustained long term change and affectively increase the capacity of City staff to implement a racial equity approach in their lines of business.

1. **Cultivate advocates and their capacity to focus on equity,**
2. **Build infrastructure and political will to support systemic change and,**
3. **Employ new skills/tools to make changes, track and recognize progress.**

Strategy	Timeline	Progress
1. Increase awareness of racial inequity, its root causes and how it is perpetuated by institutions and systems.	1-4 years	Ongoing
2. Mobilize advocates to organize support for furthering a shared vision of racial equity through institutional leadership, equity teams and staff engagement in change efforts.	1-5 years	Ongoing
3. Develop strategic approaches and tools for analysis and resources for advancing racial equity goals, including specific racial equity outcomes.	2-10 years	Ongoing
4. Train staff to apply pro-equity tools to change structures, policies, practices and procedures to further institutional transformation.	2-5 years	Ongoing
5. Establish baseline disparity data, targets/benchmarks and processes to track and report outcomes.	3-5 Years	Ongoing

## **DRE Accomplishments**

As we closeout 2020 and take account of the racial equity work City of Oakland Departments have undertaken since last year, it is clear we are starting to change systems in our City. Yet, we have some distance to go before racial disparities impacting Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) have been eliminated, and racial justice is imbedded in all we do as government.

The City has continued to increase capacity to examine operations, programs and services for barriers, burdens and opportunity to proactively advance equity. The DRE Racial Equity Academy basic training continued to draw full classes where staff learned how to identify systemic racism and apply a racial equity framework and tools in their work. With support from DRE and leadership departments are actively building their internal expertise through forming Equity teams and drafting Action Plans.

2020 will be remembered as the year the whole country was activated to face structural racism. A year full of tragedy, struggles, civil unrest and a historic moment for racial equity in Oakland. This, our second report accounts for what we have accomplished this year in the face of a pandemic, an economic crisis and increased urgency to eliminate systemic racism in government. It must be recognized that in many cases 2020 activities were made possible by the seeds of change planted in previous years and in this way, the work is building momentum in the City.

Numerous departments worked with DRE to explicitly center racial equity in their efforts to respond to COVID19. In 2020, the pandemic, and the deaths of George Floyd and Brionna Taylor underscored how critical it is for our governments to address structural racism in our systems and operations. Once again, the Oakland communities' tradition of standing up against injustice challenged us to do better and go deeper to imagine a better world for all of us.

Oakland led strong, collaborated with Alameda County and the State of California to center those most impacted by COVID 19 in its response to the Pandemic. Mayor Libby Schaaf reached out to regional leadership to design a response through convening an interagency COVID19 Equity Taskforce.

The City, in partnership with community health clinics, with support from philanthropy, set up early testing sites to serve the zip codes most impacted by COVID-19. Through a collaboration between DRE and Oakland's new Department of Violence Prevention, the City secured outside funding to support a place based, credible messenger approach to meet the needs of the most at risk populations. This coordination enabled an intentional focus on the intersection of violence prevention and addressing the general community needs created by COVID19,

Using the Race and Equity inclusive engagement outreach framework, the city partnered with organizations already serving individuals in Black and Latinx communities and offered PPE, food resources and health educations helping us to save lives and keep people healthy.

2020 was also the year the Alameda County, HUD and local homelessness service providers undertook an examination of existing homeless services. They invited DRE to support their effort with technical assistance for adding a racial equity impact analysis to their process.

The resulting report has the potential to reshape the discussion of ending homelessness at all levels of government. The report can be found here: <https://everyonehome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Centering-Racial-Equity-in-Homeless-System-Design-Full-Report-FINAL.pdf>

### **Strategy 1. Increase awareness of racial inequity, its root causes and how it is perpetuated by institutions and systems:**

In 2019, DRE added our first series of public, Town Talks about Race events to deepen staff and community understanding of the ways in which we are all shaped by systemic racism. Dr. Robin DiAngelo's exploration of White Fragility and Dr. Joy DeGruy's powerful breakdown of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome were both great successes.

During the third and fourth quarters of 2019, Department staff participated in national and local conferences, panels, TV interviews, printed media and radio interviews to highlight the importance of a systemic approach to address racial disparities. Two events stand out for their impact in this area.

The first, is the case study conducted by the U.S. Office of Government Administration (GAO) of the Capital Improvement Project prioritization process. The case study highlighted [The Capital Improvement Program](#), or CIP process as an exciting innovation and best practice for local governments. The program uses community input and equity factors to improve the process for programming improvements to Oakland's public buildings, spaces, and streets/sidewalks.

The second, is the participation of City staff in the National ESRI Users Conference. ESRI is the primary provider of GIS services to governments across the country. DRE staff contributed a chapter to an ESRI book that will highlight the use of GIS mapping to address racial equity issues in City government. The chapter was very well received and led to an invitation for numerous staff, from three departments; Information Technology, Transportation and DRE, to participate in ESRI's National Users Conference. Now ESRI, the primary provider of GIS services to governments at all levels adopted a racial equity framework for their organization and offered the first racial equity users' workshop with over 300 people in attendance. The conference was an opportunity to show case the work of City of Oakland Departments, to plant seeds of race and equity nationally, and solidify our reputation as leaders in racial equity implementation in government. In addition, ESRI created a [Racial Equity HUB](#) where the work of Oakland City Departments has been shared so other cities can learn from it.

In addition, three City departments consulted with DRE to develop explicit internal strategies to keep racial equity front and center during the pandemic creating internal newsletters and a website highlighting department activity around racial equity. Planning & Building Department newsletter, Finance Management Department newsletter and Transportation Equity Team website.

**Strategy 2. Mobilize advocates to organize support for furthering a shared vision of racial equity through institutional leadership, equity teams and staff engagement in change efforts:**

Oakland is the only city in the U.S. with a Department and staff dedicated to the advancement and implementation of racial equity in government. [Oakland’s Municipal code 2.29.170](#) derived from the [Ordinance](#) that created DRE sets the shared vision for racial equity and the mission for the department, furthermore it provides authorization to support elected officials and city staff to work with intentionality towards creating a more fair and just City.

Building an internal structure to support change is crucial to successful outcomes. City departments have been asked by the City Administrator and supported by DRE to create Racial Equity Teams (RETs) to build internal capacity. In this reporting period our department supported the creation of four new equity teams

2017-2019 Racial Equity Teams	2019-2020 Racial Equity Teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic and Workforce Development,</li> <li>• Planning and Building</li> <li>• Transportation,</li> <li>• Library,</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Parks and Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Attorney’s Office</li> <li>• Oakland Fire Department</li> <li>• Finance Management Agency</li> <li>• Oakland Police Department</li> </ul>

DRE will continue to work with remaining departments to stand up equity teams and expects they will be launch by end of Q4 2021. RET leads meet in DRE sponsored monthly work sessions to skill build, learn from each other and share progress and strategies.

In response to the challenges City staff and community members were facing due to the digital divide during the pandemic, DRE supported the creation of a Citywide employee lead by staff in Planning and Development. The workgroup focuses on inclusive engagement and has now become a space where City employees conducting Outreach and engagement activities can find tools, support and resources for their work. Members of the workgroup are lending their skills and expertise at no cost to other city staff leading training on how to best reach underserved residents, facilitation of online meetings, and tools and resources available to City employees. The workgroups is in the process of mapping resources and creating a SharePoint site to share resources and information citywide and a report on how to best implement inclusive outreach and engagement more broadly across the City.



### **Strategy 3. Development of action plans and tools for analysis and resources for advancing racial equity goals, including specific racial equity outcomes:**

DRE has developed tools and training to support City leadership and staff to develop strategic approaches and policies that advance racial equity and have specific racial equity outcomes.

Two primary tools; the Racial Equity Analysis Work Sheet, the Inclusive Outreach and Engagement Guide. In addition, our department worked with the City Administrator's Office to add sections about Inclusive engagement and racial equity to the staff agenda reports and budget.

Some highlights of this work are the Economic Development, Transportation, Public Works, and Libraries plans which integrated equity frameworks and received support from DRE staff. In addition, department equity team members in transportation develop additional tools and training to support staff in transportation and public works.

Following the lead of the Oakland Equity Indicators 2018 Report and OakDOT's Strategic Plan, and given Oakland's diverse communities, the OakDOT Equity team created the [Oakland Geographic Equity Toolbox](#) was created as a way for the City of Oakland to prioritize neighborhoods based on concentrations of people with demographic factors determined to have experienced historic and current disparities. The Geographic Equity Toolbox is now being used by other City departments and has been featured in several GIS National publications.

DRE staff also provided support to Public Works Environmental Services Division in the development of the [Equitable Climate Action Plan \(ECAP\)](#) and to Planning and Building in the design of a new incentive program that centers equity as part of the [Downtown Strategic Plan](#) options and the design for an inclusion process for the Oakland General plan. We also supported the IT department to design a program to support low income families in areas of the cities impacted by COVID 19 to receive digital literacy assistance and devices.

**Strategy 4. Train staff to apply pro-equity tools to change structures, policies, practices and procedures to further institutional transformation.** DRE offers staff an array of opportunities to learn and engage with Racial Equity work that will transform the way the City does business:

**Advancing Racial Equity Academy (AREA):** The goal is to train as many city staff as possible and to activate critical mass, at least 30% (tipping point of change) of the City's workforce to begin applying racial equity principals and tools to their work.

City employees in all City departments and at all levels have attended the Racial Equity Academy, which increases internal department capacity to work on equity. By the end of 2019, 450 City employees had completed the Academy. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the Academy continued remotely and, 680 additional city employees attended in 2020. We are on track to have trained over 1500 total staff by the end of 2021. This, in combination with the uptick in equity tool application in the City, is a meaningful benchmark for building adequate capacity to institutionalize changes that advance equitable outcomes for our communities impacted by racial disparities.

**Lunch and Learn Sessions:** In 2019 DRE offered regular short sessions to reinforced new skills and allowed City staff to attend focused conversations on the impacts of structural racism

on BIPOC communities. Due to the pandemic, lunch and learn sessions were curtailed in 2020, and we hope to reactivate this programming by the end of 2021.

**One-on-one/team technical assistance and project support:** DRE staff supports department staff in applying racial equity tools to projects and policies as needed. For this two year reporting period DRE staff provided over **6000 hours** of technical assistance to Department staff, Equity Teams, Alameda County and other Bay Area Cities and partners to help them implement racial equity in their work.

**Strategy 5. Establish baseline disparity data, targets/benchmarks and processes to track and report outcomes:** In 2017, the City of Oakland was chosen to be one of six Cities to develop local Equity Indicators tools in partnership with the City University of New York's Institute for State and Local Governance (CUNY ISLG) and with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation. The project began as a joint effort between the Resilient Oakland Office and the Department of Race and Equity. It has resulted in a product that has been useful across City departments and community organizations to advance racial equity by using strategies determined through an intentional focus on racial and ethnic disparities and their root causes.

The purpose of the first report was to develop a baseline quantitative framework that could be used by City staff and community members alike to better understand the impacts of race, measure inequities, and track changes in the disparities for different groups over time. The Grassroots for Racial Equity Taskforce added a layer to the effort by producing a community generated, "[Bring up the Score](#)" report. These reports are being used to guide and inform policies that address racial disparities both by community organizations and City departments.

You can see the first Oakland's Equity Indicators Report and executive summary and read the notes for the community briefings on the department [website](#).

DRE is working on an update of the Equity Indicator Report to be released in 2021.

## City Departments Advancing Equity

The following are equity projects/activities that departments have developed, using equity principals and tools, with technical support from DRE.

### ***City Administrator's Office***

Expansion of the [Cannabis Equity Program](#) Analysis, Program Design and Implementation of Public Kitchen Program, Loan program and Real State Acquisition Program, made possible with State equity funding inspired by Oakland's early cannabis equity work.

Coordinated annual report on implementation of measure Z programming with an equity framework.

Worked with Oakland Unite, OPD and Fire Department with a racial equity framework to guide COVID response, outreach and PPE distribution as well as violence prevention efforts.

Updated the City Council Agenda Report Template to include specific changes requiring inclusion of racial equity considerations and analysis for recommended actions.



### ***City Auditor***

Analyzed fire inspections conducted and not conducted by neighborhoods in the City to determine if the Fire Prevention Bureau is providing consistent levels of service equally throughout the City.

The Police Commission audit, issued in June 2020, pointed out the Commission should establish goals to address police response times, stops, and use of force disparities by race as pointed out in the City of Oakland's Equity Indicators 2018 report.

The Police Commission audit recommended the Police Commission use a more systematic approach for addressing racial profiling in law enforcement in Oakland, including monitoring progress to assess whether new policies are having a positive effect on reducing racial profiling.

The homeless audit analyzed the homeless population in Oakland and the location of encampments throughout the City, finding that Black and brown populations experience much higher rates of homelessness, and that homeless encampments are more likely to be in areas of the City impacted by cumulative racial equity.

### ***City Attorney***

Tenant Protection Ordinance, COVID Eviction Moratorium took into consideration racial equity to address the needs of communities most impacted by racial disparities.

Launched their Race and Equity Team.

### ***Department of Transportation (ODOT)***

*Flex Streets Program* - inclusive outreach and engagement efforts lead by Equity Team members to engage residents in the zip codes most impacted by COVID-19 revealed that the needs and barriers faced by residents in these areas went beyond the needs of business districts impacted by racial disparities and the COVID economic downturn.

These inputs resulted in recommendations and actions to change the program and address issues of access to services like free testing, food banks and other basic services. Through this work the City supported using public right of way for conducting business outdoors also included improving walking access to community based organizations providing services to residents.

*2019-21 CIP Budget Process* led by ODOT and Public Works Department - The process used racial equity principals to develop a methodology to rank projects using a range of criteria that included equity impacts, was informed with community input on the approach and project submission.

In 2020 they are also working with relevant departments to train their top leadership and management levels and conduct the second round of community engagement sessions. Because of this work, participation in Black and Latinx communities in the CIP process increased 100% during the pandemic.

The DOT Equity Team launched a Workforce Equity in Hiring Analysis Pilot to assess for root causes of hiring inequity. This process is now poised to be replicated city-wide through the Human Resources Department.

DOT Equity Team engaged staff who work in the field and in maintenance positions to attend AREA training and increase their participation in departmental equity work.

Staff led four-part Study and Action sessions on unpacking White fragility in the workplace for managers and supervisors

Finished creating and released the Geographic Equity Tool for citywide use; presented to interested parties

Created the [OakDOT Racial Equity Team webpage](#)

### ***Planning and Building***

Downtown Specific Plan Equity Assessment and options development in partnership with Law, Housing and ODOT building on the foundation for downtown development to support equitable outcomes for plan implementation.

Drafted Equity Standard Operating Procedure for department and began process to refine and socialize it (starting w/deputy directors.)

Published a departmental (internal) equity newsletter; published first issue and are working on the second.

Piloted new strategies for hiring process (using other best practices; implementing required anti-bias training for interviewers with support of HR RET); drafted a guide to equitable hiring and are working to put in a system of "equity Subject Matter Experts."

Implemented buddy system to support new Equity Team members in participating and feeling engaged.

Almost all managers and supervisors have attended through AREA training.

Identified an additional equity project to take on in Building (code enforcement inspections)

Started a book club (first book: The Color of Law - hopefully we can then lead discussions about it with the rest of the department, and particularly the Planning Bureau).

Coordinated inclusive community engagement group to improve our engagement processes citywide.

Used of Inclusive Outreach and Engagement Guide to plan and facilitate a process that eased a difficult process and built community trust and support for the outcome.

Drafted Oakland General Plan framework development to center racial equity in the next update.

### ***Economic and Workforce Development***

Adopted department race and equity team charter establishing rotating members from each Dept Division (Business, Workforce, Real Estate, Public-Private Development, Cultural Arts) and training requirement for all staff;

Drafted Dept Race & Equity Analysis setting disparities and action items for each division. Incorporated Race & Equity analysis into Workforce Development RFP for service providers and CARES grant distribution for small businesses and nonprofits.

Engaged small business service providers and entrepreneurs on redesign of business support services.

Arranged for a training specifically to build equity capacity in the Business and Workforce Development divisions.

Added race/gender tracking to business services data collection.

Deployed additional engagement measures for Cultural Arts grant program resulted in two awards to artists who may have previously faced application barriers.

Economic Covid 19 Recovery Advisory Group also included disparity analysis and recommendations, based on member input, to reduce disparities through the City's Covid response.

### ***Human Resources***

Included Race and Equity in New Employee Orientation to get new staff launched

Publicized and tracked staff participation in Race and Equity Advancing Racial Equity Academy through the City-wide Training Calendar and training system

Provided hiring process data for ODOT Workforce Equity in Hiring Analysis Pilot to support equity innovation

### ***Finance Management***

Race and Equity Team formation, Charter created and signed, established Team e-mail address

Published first race and equity newsletter

Surveyed of department staff on ideas for Equity Action Plan.

Collaborated with DRE and department representatives to design and launch a Budget Equity Tool, training and roll out for use in development of the 2021/23 City budget.

### ***Library***

Sub-group of racial equity team participated in statewide library cohort out of which Oakland team created Racial Equity Plan which was presented to staff in December.

In June released staff and public statements from team on crisis in black and brown communities.

Started book group on We Keep Us Safe.

Sponsored anti-bias workshops for library staff.

Created staff resource list and updated it.

### ***Public Works Department (PWD)***

New race and equity team completed charter and developed OPW RET Action Plan

2019-20 CIP Process Led by ODOT and PWD Collaboration - The new process used racial equity principals to develop a methodology to rank projects using a range of criteria that included equity impacts, was informed with community input on the approach and project submission.

CIP prioritization Process Automation to track score projects saving thousands of dollars of staff time and will help staff across the city to more easily manage CIP projects

Implemented proactive approach on Illegal dumping in 2 districts to address disparities in the impacts of trash on the streets.

Arranged for staff training/clinic on equity portion of Staff agenda report (2 Clinics)

Produced Equitable Climate Action Plan and Tree Master Plan

Arranged for the Advancing Racial Equity Academy to field staff at Edgewater

### ***Police Department***

Launched Advancing Racial Equity Academy training in OPD.

Convened a Race and Equity team consisting of about 10 members was formed. The group met 3 times in the fall of 2020. The Charter was written, presented to the Chief of Police and finalized.

Implementing recommendations from consultant disparity study to reduce racial disparities in internal discipline.

OPD has agreed to look at transfer concerns within the organization and hiring of African American women.

### ***Information Technology***

Prioritized project for neighborhoods and installations of the OAK Wi-Fi project to extend free wireless internet through Oakland's high need neighborhoods. All neighborhoods should be completed by end of January 2021.

### ***In Closing***

Making racial equity a reality in Oakland is not an easy, however, these accomplishments demonstrate that when given the tools and skills needed to advance racial equity, City staff are stepping-up to meet the moment we are living in.

Many thanks to our colleagues serving on equity teams, staff leading projects that center racial equity and all the City employees across all levels of the organization who have willingly attended the Advancing Racial Equity Academy to improve their abilities to advance racial equity in their work.

It is also important to acknowledge that progress also relies on the support of Oakland BIPOC community advocates and organizers as well as White allies that share the vision of a City where racial equity has been achieved. We extend sincere appreciation to all of them for the years of advocacy that made this work a reality and for their continued efforts to keep us focused on what matters. Their commitment reminds us to go beyond just imagining a transformed future, by acting on a day to day basis to address detrimental conditions and increase opportunity in our communities most impacted by racial disparities.

Let's keep working to make racial equity a reality and remember:

**“Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has.” ~ Margaret Mead**

