

Racial Equity Action Planning

August 30, 2021





Overview

- What we've done...
- What is a Racial Equity Action Plan
- What is a Race Equity Tool Kit
- Review Village Board Racial Equity Goals
- Next Steps and Opportunities
- Questions

Racial Equity... what we've done

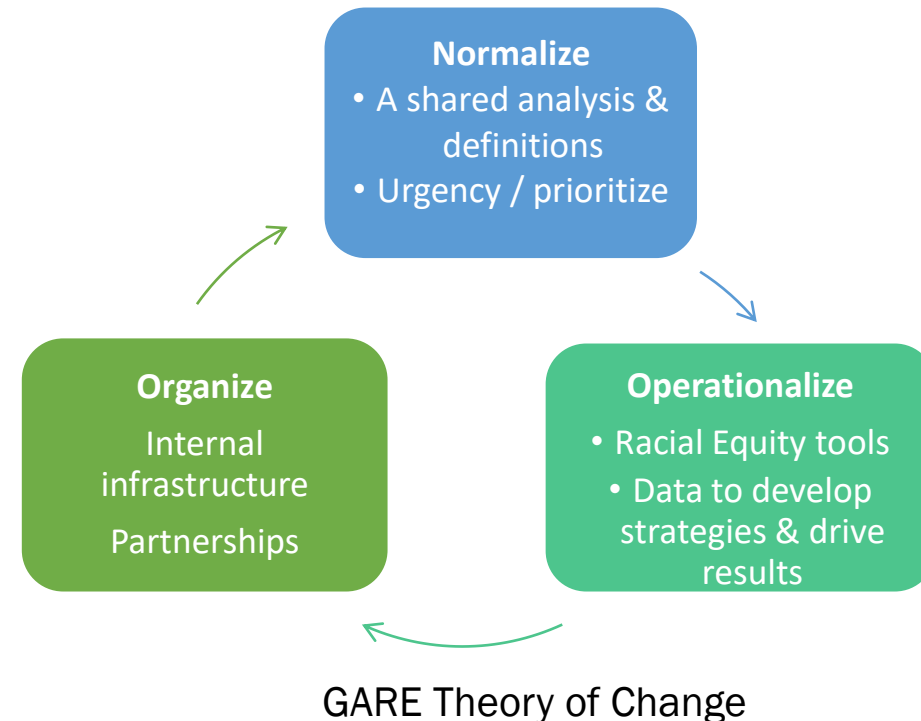
- The Village Board of Trustees first identified racial equity training as a Board Goal in 2019.
 - Join GARE
 - Train Elected Officials & Staff
 - Develop Staff Leaders
 - Conduct a Racial Equity Assessment
- Following an RFP, on July 20, 2020, the Board approved a one-year contract with the National League of Cities' (NLC) Race Equity and Leadership (REAL) team to conduct Racial Equity Training (for the Village Board, staff, and the commission chairpersons) and to conduct an initial assessment of staff via a benchmarking survey on Equity Practices and Attitudes within the Village.

Racial Equity... what we've done

- The next step with the NLC REAL Team was to develop a cross-departmental Village Equity Team to conduct the benchmarking survey, analyze the results, make recommendations, and assist with further training, including Operationalizing Racial Equity and developing an Equity Tool.
- The transition to and necessary prioritization of vaccine distribution shifted all available resources away from these activities.
- With the current Village Board's adoption of Racial Equity as a Board Goal this year, staff would like to resume and enhance activities related to the advancement of equity within the organization in alignment with the specific equity goals and sub-goals.

Racial Equity... what we've done

- The Village joined GARE, the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, as a member jurisdiction in 2020.
- GARE is a national network of local, state and federal governments working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.
- GARE is highly member driven and includes high quality tools, resources and opportunities for collaboration.



Racial Equity Board Goals

On June 14, 2021, the Village Board adopted the following equity goals:

Creation of race equity and social justice action plan

- a. Creation of racial equity impact tool-kit (Aug 2021: present a plan to begin action planning and tool-kit development)
- b. Maintain GARE membership (Oct 2021: as part of FY22 budget recommendation)
- f. Consider hiring a Racial Equity Coordinator for hiring and review of vendors (Oct 2021: as part of FY22 budget recommendation)
- g. Increase opportunities to engage the public on policy discussions (Nov 2021: as part of public hearing on the budget; also inherent in creating a plan and tool-kit)
- c. Pass a resolution committing to equity goals (1st Quarter 2022)
- d. Upon the 2020 census review, determine necessity of additional metrics for measuring multiple dimensions of diversity (hold a study session in 1st Quarter 2022)
- e. Review ordinances and policies for racial inequities (present a plan 1st Quarter 2022 for using racial equity tool-kit)
- h. Continue to explore Reparations (2nd Quarter 2022)

What is a Racial Equity Action Plan?

- Both a process and a product
- Articulates a clear and bold vision for Racial Equity in Oak Park that is informed by community members of color who have been most impacted by structural and institutional racism
- Designed to achieve meaningful and measurable results
- Establishes timelines, accountability and performance measures
- Equips staff with training, knowledge, tools to integrate equity into work and the Village organization as a whole.
- Ideally has a dedicated lead person or organization assisting the Village



GARE's racial equity planning process

What is a Racial Equity Action Plan?

CITYWIDE RACIAL EQUITY GOALS & STRATEGIES	
EQUITY GOAL #1 We will end racial disparities within city government, so there is fairness in hiring and promotions, greater opportunities in contracting, and equitable services to all residents.	OVERALL STRATEGIES 1 Use a racial equity framework: Use a racial equity framework that clearly articulates racial equity; implicit and explicit bias; and individual, institutional, and structural racism. 2 Build organizational capacity: Commit to the breadth and depth of institutional transformation so that impacts are sustainable. While the leadership of electeds and officials is critical, changes take place on the ground, through building infrastructure that creates racial equity experts and teams throughout the city government. 3 Implement a racial equity lens: Racial inequities are not random; they have been created and sustained over time. Inequities will not disappear on their own. It is essential to use a racial equity lens when changing the policies, programs, and practices that perpetuate inequities, and when developing new policies and programs. 4 Be data driven: Measurement must take place at two levels—first, to measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes; and second, to develop baselines, set goals, and measure progress. Using data in this manner is necessary for accountability. 5 Partner with other institutions and communities: Government work on racial equity is necessary, but insufficient. To achieve racial equity in the community, government needs to work in partnership with communities and institutions to achieve meaningful results. 6 Operate with urgency and accountability: When change is a priority, urgency is felt and change is embraced. Building in institutional accountability mechanisms using a clear plan of action will allow accountability. Collectively, we must create greater urgency and public commitment to achieve racial equity.
EQUITY GOAL #2 We will 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.	
EQUITY GOAL #3 We will 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.	

- Specific goals related to Racial Equity can help guide the Racial Equity Action Planning process.
- Consider higher level strategic thinking that look at the following questions:
 - What conditions of well-being do we want for our community?
 - Why do these conditions exist differently for people of color? Ask yourself “Why else?” 3-5 times to get deeper into institutional and structural issues at play.
 - What would these conditions look like if we achieved them?
 - What measures can we use to quantify these conditions?
 - Who are the partners with a role to play?
 - What works to “turn the curve” on baseline inequities?
 - What do we propose to do?

A high-level example of how Portland began the conversation

Racial Equity Action Planning

Preparation

- Pass a resolution committing to equity goals.
- Identify leads and build a Village Equity Team who will ensure an equity focus throughout, design the project, manage the project, conduct research, analysis, and strategic planning and manage communications
- Engage with the community, particularly residents of color
 - Partner with existing commissions such as the Community Relations Commission
 - Partner with community based organizations already working on racial equity
 - Use existing reporting and data that catalogues disparities, their causes and associated solutions.
- Provide foundational training for Village Equity Team

Racial Equity Action Planning

Research & Information Gathering

Inventory existing racial equity data (qualitative and quantitative)

- Workplace demographics, hiring, retention and promotion
- Contracting practices
- Village commitment, leadership and management
- Community access and partnership
- Community level data disaggregated by race in housing, jobs, education, criminal justice and other areas

Racial Equity Action Planning

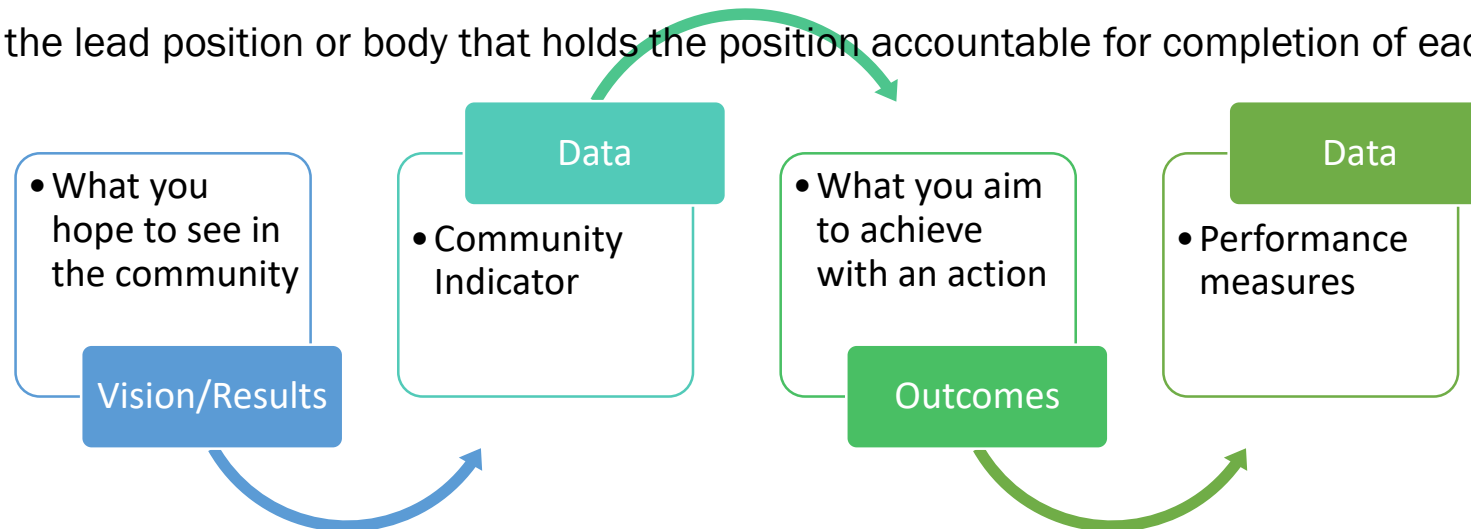
Research
Findings

- Summarize research findings
- Communicate findings to internal and external stakeholders

Racial Equity Action Planning

Develop Plan

1. Create a Racial Equity Guiding Statement
2. Identify results and community indicators then create outcomes
3. Creation actions to achieve outcomes
4. Create performance measures for each action and commit to a timeline
5. Identify the lead position or body that holds the position accountable for completion of each action



Racial Equity Action Planning

Implementation,
Reporting &
Evaluation

- Review and finalize plan
- Public roll out and implementation (external and internal) to staff and community using multiple modes of communication as determined by the Village Equity Team and Board
- Should be a highly visible statement of Oak Park's intent and commitment to racial equity (press release, social media, unique web presence and may be adopted through legislative action/given budgetary authority)
- Annual Reporting to track and communicate progress

Racial Equity Action Planning

Operationalize
Racial Equity tools

- An Equity tool-kit is designed to evaluate decisions including policies, practices, programs and budgets to ensure explicit consideration of racial equity issues. This is done in concert with a racial equity action plan.
- A tool will identify who will benefit or be burdened by a given decision, examine potential unintended consequences of a decision, develop strategies to advance racial equity, and mitigate unintended negative consequences.
- The tool-kit can be used by staff, elected officials and community based organizations.



Next Steps and Opportunities

- Gather feedback from the Board of Trustees related to proposed process
- Extend partnership with NLC's REAL team to support Village Equity Team in Racial Equity Action Planning Process
- Consider hiring a Racial Equity Manager to coordinate and lead Village's Equity work, provide training and support as Departments implement racial equity action plan and subsequent Equity toolkit. May also serve as a subject matter expert for external collaboration as we move into the Organizing phase of the GARE Theory of Change.

Questions?

