

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**TITLE:** Advancing Racial Equity: Moving Forward Together as a City

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** No action needed at this time. The purpose is to continue discussion and provide information on work and communication related to our year-long participation in the Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government program with the Center for Social Inclusion (CSI) and League of Minnesota Cities (LMC).

**POLICY CONSIDERATION:** Are we moving in the right direction with “Advancing Racial Equity: Moving Forward Together as a City,” and following the vision of the council?

**SUMMARY:** In 2016, a team from the City of St. Louis Park started work with CSI and LMC to learn about advancing racial equity and transforming government. As part of the program, participants attended a racial equity workshop and other training sessions throughout the year. Program leaders are Glenn Harris, CSI President, and Julie Nelson, Director, Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and Senior Vice President, CSI.

### **What is covered in this year-long program?**

- Understanding and awareness of racial equity.
- Exploring the role, challenges, responsibilities, and opportunities for government to advance racial equity.
- Developing racial equity tools to use when deciding policies, practices, programs and budget.
- Learning about national best practices to implement racial equity as a key value and to integrate racial equity via new policies and institutional practice.
- Creating connections and partnerships with other institutions and the community to advance racial equity region-wide.

### **What will we cover at our study session meeting?**

We will provide an overview of program participation by the St. Louis Park team and an update on activities since last checking in with the council in July 2016 (included in discussion attachment).

**FINANCIAL OR BUDGET CONSIDERATION:** Not applicable.

**VISION CONSIDERATION:** St. Louis Park is committed to being a connected and engaged community.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:** Discussion

**Prepared by:** Nancy Deno, Deputy City Manager/HR Director

## DISCUSSION

### **Racial Equity – Moving Forward Together as a City St. Louis Park, MN**

**BACKGROUND:** In 2016, a team from the City of St. Louis Park started work with Center for Social Inclusion (CSI) and League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) to learn about advancing racial equity and transforming government. Program leaders are Glenn Harris, CSI President, and Julie Nelson, Director, Government Alliance on Race and Equity and Senior Vice President, CSI. Part of the program was to attend a racial equity workshop and other sessions throughout the year on racial equity.

As program participants, we are:

- Developing understanding and awareness of racial equity.
- Exploring the role, challenges, responsibilities, and opportunities for government to advance racial equity in the metro area.
- Developing racial equity tools to use when deciding policies, practices, programs and budget.
- Learning about national best practices to normalize racial equity as a key value and operationalize racial equity via new policies and institutional practice.
- Creating connections and partnerships with other institutions and the community to advance racial equity region-wide.

Past, current and future steps:

- *January-December 2016:* Participant in LMC, GARE and CSI Race, Equity and Inclusion program via a cohort team and elected track. Outcomes included a St. Louis Park Racial Equity Statement, Action Plan and development of next steps including staff training and requesting volunteers as department liaisons.
- *March-December 2016:* Regular meeting of cohort team consisting of Jake Spano, Gregg Lindberg, Tom Harmening, John Luse, Jason West, Jacque Larson, Jane Adade, Sagal Abdirahman and Nancy Deno to work on St. Louis Park homework.
- *July 2016:* Overview of racial equity program with supervisors. Council discussion on race, equity and inclusion.
- *September 2016:* Meeting with Human Rights Commission (HRC) and Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC). Overview of racial equity program and St. Louis Park demographics. Mayor Spano and Councilmember Lindberg attended the meeting and a request was made to both HRC and MAC to provide recommendation(s) to council.
- *September 2016:* Increased staff support and leadership for race and equity work. City Manager Tom Harmening asked for staff volunteers (at least two from each of the eight departments) who would be interested in continuing race and equity learning, support and program development, and serve as liaisons/leaders to help support work and answer questions from staff in each department. After a great response from staff from all levels, we have 30 liaisons to help with continued race and equity work.

- *October 2016 Supervisor Training:* CSI Consultants Julie Nelson and Gordon Goodwin presented *Introduction to Advancing Racial Equity* (half day workshop) to supervisors.
- *October 2016 Staff Liaison Training:* CSI Consultants Julie Nelson and Gordon Goodwin presented *Building Racial Equity Expertise: Train the Trainer* (half-day workshop) for the 30 staff members who volunteered as department liaisons. This group will also learn racial equity facilitation and training skills that will support transformation and change within the organization.
- *November 2016:* Check in with cohort team and leaders to talk about next steps and support staff training sessions in December.
- *November 14, 2016:* Council continued discussion on race, equity and inclusion. Human Rights Commission and Multicultural Advisory Committee members were invited to attend this study session.
- *November-December 2016:* Register for year two with our cohort team with CSI and LMC to continue working with other agencies in support of race and equity work. Determine if additional staff will be invited to the new cohort to start in 2017 with CSI and LMC. This would be an opportunity to have additional city leaders/directors participate in the new session of the year-long program.
- *December 8, 19 and 20, 2016:* CSI Consultants Julie Nelson and Gordon Goodwin to conduct six training sessions for all staff on *Introduction to Advancing Racial Equity*. Each staff member will attend one four-hour session. Staff liaisons will be scheduled to attend several sessions to provide additional support, training and connections with staff.
- *December/January:* Human Rights Commission and Multicultural Advisory Committee to provide input to council regarding race and equity.
- *January 27, 2017:* Council discussion on race and equity at annual workshop.
- *February 27 and 28, 2017:* Cities of Bloomington, Maplewood and St. Louis Park to partner on training with Pacific Education Group to provide additional training and support on diversity and inclusion. This two-day program, also used by St. Louis Park Schools, will allow department liaisons, executive staff and others to further develop an understanding, have conversations, gather tools and develop next steps for the organization. Each city will have approximately 25 seats for individuals to attend the two-day program.
- *First Quarter 2017:* Development of department action plans with assistance from CSI consultants.
- *Future:* Determine if we want to continue to work with Pacific Education Group on the Affiliate program, which trains staff and community leaders to support ongoing work with race, equity and inclusion. St. Louis Park Schools used this approach to develop equity facilitators/coaches. Continue race and equity work by scheduling regular check-ins with liaisons and working on action plans.

As with the Vision process, race and equity work will be integrated long-term into the city's practices as we develop programs; review, create and update policies; and provide services to residents.