
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action needed at this time. The purpose is to provide information and have a discussion regarding our yearlong 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: Should the City continue its work in this area?

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. Part of the program was for participants to attend a racial equity workshop and other racial equity training sessions throughout the year.

What is covered in this yearlong program?

- Develop understanding and awareness of racial equity.
- Explore the role, challenges, responsibilities, and opportunities for government to advance racial equity in the metro area.
- Development and use of racial equity tools that can be used in decisions relating to policies, practices, programs and budget.
- Education on national best practices to normalize racial equity as a key value and operationalize racial equity via new policies and institutional practice.
- Create connections and partnerships with other institutions and the community to advance racial equity region-wide.
- Program is led by Glenn Harris, CSI President, and Julie Nelson, Director, Government Alliance on Race and Equity and Senior Vice President, CSI.

What will we cover at our study session meeting? Nancy Deno will present an overview of the yearlong program the St. Louis Park team is participating in and will provide educational information and city data. We will also hear from some of our cohort team members and have discussion on next steps.

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

Approved by: Tom Harmening, City Manager

DISCUSSION

Why is the City of St. Louis Park interested in the Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government program? Awareness is the start to understanding what we need to do for all of us to work together for a stronger future. This is not a quick fix, instead it's a long, ongoing journey with race and equity. It is important that we all take the time to listen, learn, understand and have courageous conversations around race. Our goal is to continue to make the community welcome and open for all in service delivery, programs, policy, housing, public safety, employment and all other factors that are part of our life in St. Louis Park.

The program through CSI allows groups to work with each other and is a yearlong program to help agencies develop their own plan. The actions to advance racial equity are done in a lengthy process; first, develop a shared understanding on racial equity; next, move into development of statements for the organization and training; followed by analysis with the use of tools developed to provide future guidance to Council.

This work will help us further understand, collaborate, grow and evolve our city in the advancement of racial equity.

What are the steps for St. Louis Park?

1. Racial Equity Strategic Leadership Team started awareness and learning and attended the yearlong racial equity training (program and participants started in January 2016).
 - The St. Louis Park cohort team has started work as a group to learn and develop communication tools. Cohort team members: Mayor Jake Spano, Councilmember Gregg Lindberg, City Manager Tom Harmening, Police Chief John Luse, JCPP Coordinator Afton Martens, Recreation Superintendent Jason West, Deputy City Manager/HR Director Nancy Deno. Newer cohort members are Communications and Marketing Manager Jacqueline Larson, Administrative Services Intern Jane Adade, and Police Department Intern Sagal Abdirahman.
 - Other Councilmembers participating in the elected officials track: Tim Brausen, Thom Miller and Anne Mavity.
 - Additional 21 staff members representing all departments participated in the Advancing Racial Equity Workshop on May 11, 2016.
2. Created racial equity statement. Cohort team developed document (will be distributed at study session).
3. Development of a shared understanding is in process.
 - July 13: Connected with other staff who are new to the program and discussed their view of the May training. Gathered their insight on the race and equity program to help guide training and communication plans for all staff.
 - Gather demographic and other data on our city.
 - July 25: Conversation with Council at the study session.
 - July 28: Supervisor information session to provide introduction and overview on advancing racial equity.
 - Analyze what we already do to advance racial equity and discuss opportunities for improvement and advancement.
 - Plan all staff training with Julie Nelson, CSI, which is recommended to start fall 2016.

4. Collect and use data on race for the community, school and staff. Review programs and procedures, share findings and use information as part of action plans.
5. Develop plans for connecting with HRC and Multicultural Advisory Group to gather their input and assistance.
6. Creation of racial equity tool to use when considering policies or programs.
 - Testing tool on several programs or new policies prior to implementation.
 - Revise as needed.
 - Roll out for organizational use.
7. Develop action plan. Set expectations for racial equity and provide method for tracking and accountability.
8. Develop communication plan including:
 - Commissions
 - Schools
 - Community
9. Ongoing education, training and use of tools.