

BALTIMORE CITY PLANNING

Equity Action Plan: 2020 Progress Report



BACKGROUND: EQUITY COMMITTEE

In 2015, in response to a food justice training, staff began to meet monthly to discuss what changes could be made internally towards integrating equity into the work of the Department of Planning.

This resulted in an Equity Action Plan, shared with staff and Department of Planning leadership.

This document takes the Equity Action Plan a step further: assessing our progress since its initial drafting and preparation in 2016-2017. It also documents our intentions moving ahead towards 2020-2021.

Finally, our team plans to update our progress annually moving forward.



PROGRESS REPORT KEY:

Score	Explanation
1: Defining Goals and Strategy	Issue is addressed ad-hoc; no goals, strategy or workgroup has commenced.
2: Establishing Work Group and Plan	Work group convened and underway; work plan goals and strategy under development.
3: Work-in-Progress	Work group meets regularly; goals established; research is underway; recommendations for improvements/changes to program/policy are under development.
4: Recommendations Complete	Study of issue/program/policy complete; recommendations presented to decision makers and DOP leadership.
5: Implementation	Recommendations are being implemented across Department. Program/policy is being evaluated for efficacy.



EAP, Goal 1:

Improve and increase the dialogue and connections between the Department of Planning and underserved communities in Baltimore

Actions	Rationale	Progress Assessment
1a. Empower residents through education and information sharing.	We launched the Planning Academy with the goal of educating and empowering City residents.	5
1b. Increase residents' access to opportunities to provide input on planning topics.	We have piloted the use of twitter town halls, Konveio/Civiccomment and other new tools for input, but have not developed a formal strategy Dept-wide.	3
1c. Build relationships within underserved communities.	Planners work daily to build relationships with communities, but there is not a formal strategy around this.	1
1d. Improve communications through the development of a strategy that elevates and prioritizes transparency	We have taken steps to increase our media presence, but a formal study/strategy is needed.	3



EAP, Goal 2:

Ensure that the Planning Department Staff Reflect the Demographics of Baltimore City

Actions	Rationale	Progress Assessment
2a. Create more opportunities for students and young professionals to learn about planning and help create a pipeline for the profession.	We have convened workgroup to design Planning Summer Camp (TBD); a Mayoral Fellow took steps to develop recommendations around this topic. Additional implementation is needed.	4
2b. Improve efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.	2020 Mayoral Fellow project resulted in recommendations presented to leadership. Implementation steps forthcoming.	4



EAP, Goal 3:

Develop a model equity assessment tool in compliance with Baltimore's new Equity Assessment Program.

Actions	Rationale	Progress Assessment 3
3a. Develop an equity framework for development review development review staff reports	Convening work group in 2020; workgroup is developing recommendations by end of 2020.	3
3b. Plan for Baltimore's future using an equity lens.	An equity lens has been applied to projects such as the Sustainability Plan, but there is not a Department-wide guidance on applying such a lens to all policies.	3



EAP, Goal 4:

Use an equity lens to prioritize capital investments

Actions	Rationale	Progress Assessment
4a. Conduct an equity analysis of the Capital Improvement Program and set equity goals.	CIP Equity Analysis completed; updated by BNIA. Steps now being taken to set equity goals and respond to findings.	5
4b. Implement policies that support more equitable allocation of funds.	Cross-Agency level discussion around equity are ongoing. Specific new policies under development/discussion at individual Agencies.	3
4c. Engage stakeholders in the capital budget process.	CIP staff have made strides to engage residents thru local workshops and the Planning Academy; but this is not integrated into a broad Department wide engagement strategy yet.	3
4d. Identify additional capital dollars to meet Baltimore's overwhelming capital needs.	This effort has not yet commenced formally.	1



EAP, Goal 5:

Evaluate the Planning Department's internal practices and policies.

Actions	Rationale	Progress Assessment
5a. Incorporate equity into staff work plans, SMART goals, & professional development	This is happening on an ad-hoc level across the Department, but without an overarching plan.	1
5b. Spend department funds on goods and services provided by local, minority-owned businesses whenever possible.	This is happening on an ad-hoc level across the Department, but without an over-arching plan.	1
5c. Ensure that the Planning Department Staff and Commissions reflect the demographics of Baltimore City.	A study focusing on staff recruitment was completed in 2020; implementation of recommendations is next step. Commissions are typically appointed by the Mayoral administration.	5
5d. Continue to partner with other agencies and the Mayor's Office to collectively work towards equitable outcomes.	Staff are attending in the Equity workgroup convened at Citywide level.	5

