

Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Summary Sheet: Cover Sheet and Questions

Please fill in below to identify the RET completed:

Department/Office: OSE

Name of policy, program, etc. analyzed: Equity and Environment Agenda

Names and titles of key staff that led this RET process: Sudha Nandagopal

Dates of RET process (e.g., 8/2015 – 10/2015): 8/2014 – 12/2015

This Summary Sheet should be completed by those who worked on this RET with input from Change Team members and department leadership. Representatives from these different groups should review the final version so that there is consensus on content before it is shared with the Mayor's Office. Please fill out a separate Summary Sheet for each of the 4 required RETs that your department named in your director's Performance Plan with the Mayor.

For questions about using this Summary Sheet, please contact your OCR RSJI Liaison.

Please respond to the following questions on a separate document (no more than two pages). Please include this page as the cover sheet along with your response.

1. List the racial equity outcome(s) that you set in Step 1 of the RET process. (Max 300 characters)

- Agenda utilizes Community Partner Steering Committee community knowledge;
- Agenda addresses areas of greatest environmental disparities for communities of color, immigrants, refugees and low income communities;
- The process of creating an Agenda builds strong constituency and influence among people of color, immigrants, refugees and low-income communities for city environmental priorities.

2. Which stakeholders (groups and/or key individuals) did you engage in this RET? In what ways did you engage them? (Max 600 characters)

We created a paid Community Partners Steering Committee consisting of 16 individuals/organizations who are deeply connected and have expertise engaging communities of color, immigrants, refugees, and individuals with low incomes. They have met twice a month since September of 2015 to develop the draft recommendations in the Agenda. The members of the committee have been reaching back into their organizations and communities to ensure the Agenda recommendations are informed by community needs and existing community solutions. Additionally, are continuing to have one-one conversations with community leaders from the International District, board members of organizations led by people of color, and environmental professionals of color.

3. Please describe up to five key benefits and/or burdens for people of color of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which the RET process helped you to identify or confirm. (Max 300 characters each)

- Increase racially equitable decision-making: establishment of a Community Partner Steering Committee to shape the work and design the strategy for creation of the Equity and Environment Agenda.
- Increase racially equitable engagement in environmental program/policies:

Hold a series of community conversations (determined in partnership with a Community Partners Steering Committee) to share draft Agenda recommendations and identify priorities and environmental issue areas to increase equity in Seattle’s environmental work.

- Support capacity building to diversify Seattle’s mainstream environmental organizations through partnerships.
- Create process and structures to support ongoing involvement and leadership of people of color, people with low incomes, immigrants and refugees, and limited-English proficiency individuals in setting priorities, designing strategies, implementing environmental programs. This work will build on existing leadership-buildings programs in the City and community. We will work with the community to determine the best way to measure success.

Potential unintended burdens: The timeline and structure could place additional burden on individuals already stretched for capacity to engage in this work and to be effective members of the CPSC. Because we are relying on a set of individuals who have policy/program expertise we might be missing out on voices who may be interested but unable to engage even in this structure.

4. Please describe up to five key actions – things that you will do differently or begin to do now – of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which will increase opportunity and/or minimize harm for people of color. (Max 300 characters each)

- Creating capacity for community: recognizing their leadership role, the CPSC is being paid for their advice and input on the Agenda as well as being supported via funds from OSE to develop and build community connections to the work.
- Leadership identification and development: We are ensuring that our activities connect to and build leadership in the community so that we will ultimately have many voices influencing program strategies and overall increase access to environmental programs.
- Ensuring deep community engagement: we are mitigating the potential for gate keeping to some degree by utilizing creative community engagement strategies to broaden our reach. We will also be creating ongoing mechanisms to deepen our relationships in communities and ensure we are getting beyond the obvious connections.

5. How will leadership ensure implementation of the actions described in question 4? (Max 800 characters)

We are creating ongoing mechanisms to deepen our relationships in communities and ensure we are getting beyond the obvious connections. This includes creating internal processes and structures to support ongoing, transformational partnerships with people of color, people with low incomes, immigrants and refugees, and limited-English proficiency individuals in setting priorities, designing strategies, and implementing environmental programs.

Since this Initiative is embedded in the leadership structure of the office, we have a strong commitment to implementation. We are working to engage funders and other departments to ensure that we have long-term support for deep partnerships in communities and involvement from key partners to make this work successful.

6. How have/will you report back to your stakeholders? (This includes the people who were directly engaged in this RET process, those who will be affected by decisions made, and other departments or divisions impacted by the RET findings and the actions described in question 4.) (Max 800 characters)

We will have opportunities to report-back to stakeholders via the Community Partner Steering Committee and assuming we receive additional funding from private foundations, through community engagement conversations after the release of the Agenda. We will also utilize one-one conversations to ensure report backs. We are reaching out to departments in the creation of this Agenda and will continue to do so after the release of the Agenda to keep them engaged and to support implementation of action items.

7. What additional racial equity issues did this RET reveal? Consider how these unresolved issues present opportunities for structural transformation (i.e. working across departments, and with other institutions and sectors to achieve racial equity). (Max 800 characters)

Despite this Initiative being embedded within the leadership of the OSE department, there are still significant structural challenges with connecting programs to one-another, connecting engagement activities between program areas. Community members rarely think in terms of the silos of city departments. Due to the timeline and expectations of the Community Partners Steering Committee there were challenges in ensuring ongoing communication across departments and with other institutions and sectors. While they have all been engaged, our tendency towards short timelines and relying on community members who have numerous commitments creates challenges for having an integrated approach.

Additionally, this Agenda creation process is focused on developing structures and partnerships with people of color. The RET process revealed that even with strong partnership structures (such as the paid Community Partners Steering Committee) there are still gaps in achieving racial equity because there's a need to provide opportunities for ongoing partnerships, build community capacity around city program areas and support these leaders from community having influence in multiple issue areas, not just the one that brings them to the table.