

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

Department/Office: Office of Sustainability and Environment

Name of policy, program, etc. analyzed: cooling facilities access in extreme heat events

Names and titles of key staff that led this RET process: Tracy Morgenstern, Sharon Lerman

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

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)
Equitable access to information about the impacts of extreme heat and to opportunities to access passively cooled or air conditioned facilities. Equitable access includes accommodating the following considerations:

Information:

Available through information channels already relied on
Translated
Culturally appropriate
Timely

Facilities

Existing community resources –places where folks already gather
Transportation
No cost
Culturally appropriate
Proximal
Language
Disability
Children

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

Staff from City departments including OSE, Parks, SPU, DPD, SCL, and HSD provided input. This input builds on what we learned through pilot projects in the ID/Chinatown and Rainier Beach where we gathered information about what steps communities take to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat and how the city can better provide information and cooling facilities during heat events. The project also tested community engagement approaches.

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)

The City maintains a list of cooling facilities that are shared with the community during extreme heat events. Lower income communities and communities of color are disproportionately impacted by extreme heat, and may be less likely to use City-owned cooling facilities. Ensuring equitable access to cooling facilities, and information about cooling facilities, will help alleviate increased risk of the health effects of extreme heat events for the following groups

- Residents living in older buildings with poor ventilation
- Residents who may have low trust in government and/or not be comfortable going to a City-owned facilities for cooling or to participate in public policy decision-making processes
- Residents with limited English language proficiency who may not access messages about safety during heat events
- Elderly or disabled residents

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)

- Evaluate the heat event response threshold to consider if it is adequate in meeting the needs of the most heat-vulnerable populations (e.g. live in poorly ventilated brick buildings).
- Identify opportunities to fund cooling in facilities that are identified as culturally appropriate community gathering spaces which can serve as cooling centers.

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

These actions will be incorporated into the Climate Change Preparedness Strategy with specific implementation tasks identified in the associated implementation plan. Implementation of these actions are monitored annually.

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 report back to the departments who participated through the preparedness interdepartmental team on what we learned and will bring the draft preparedness strategy for comment to community organizations and residents who participated in the heat pilot project to ensure the Preparedness Strategy effectively captures their ideas.

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)

Community-driven decision making is very difficult to support in a bureaucratic system which does not foster this level of partnership with the community. We will use the pilot project results to help us think about how we can move along the continuum from inclusive engagement to community-driven decision making.