

City of Austin  
Equity Assessment  
Tool Pilot Review and  
Mini Grant Update



# Vision & Mission

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*The vision of the City of Austin is to make Austin the most livable city in the nation for ALL*

*The mission of the City of Austin Equity Office is to provide leadership, guidance, and insight on equity to improve the quality of life for Austinites.*

# A Tale of Two Cities

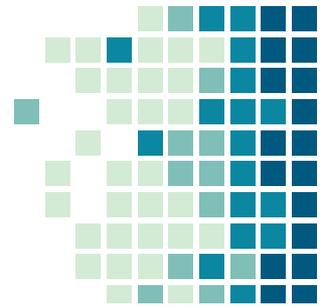


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Austin is the best place to live in the nation  
according to *U.S. News and World Report*

&

One of the most economically segregated  
cities in the U.S. according to the *Martin  
Prosperity Institute*

# What Does Equity Look Like to You?

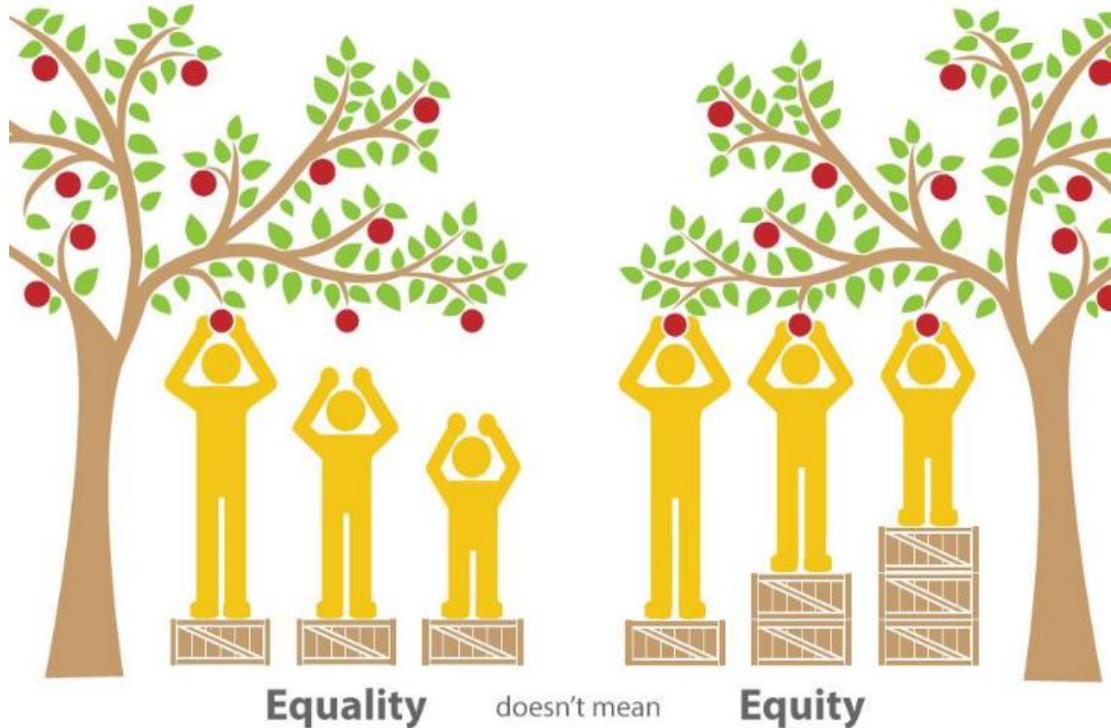


## COA Equity Statement

Racial equity is the condition when race no longer predicts a person's quality of life outcomes in our community.

The City recognizes that race is the primary determinant of social equity and therefore we begin the journey toward social equity with this definition.

The City of Austin recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of these wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity.

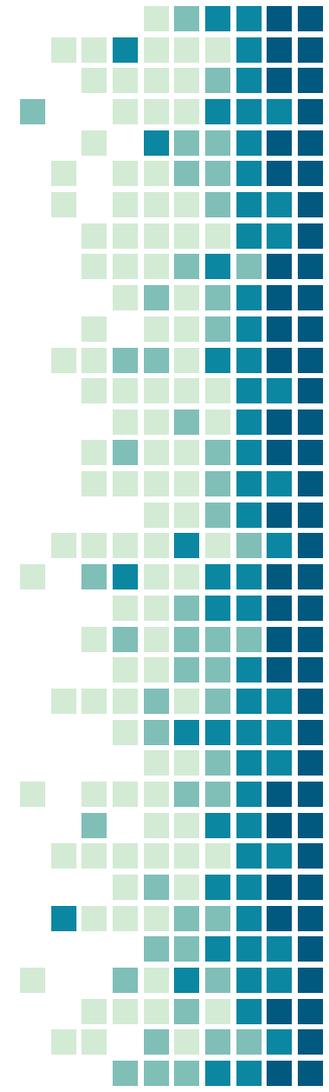


# Austin's Opportunity to Drive Equity

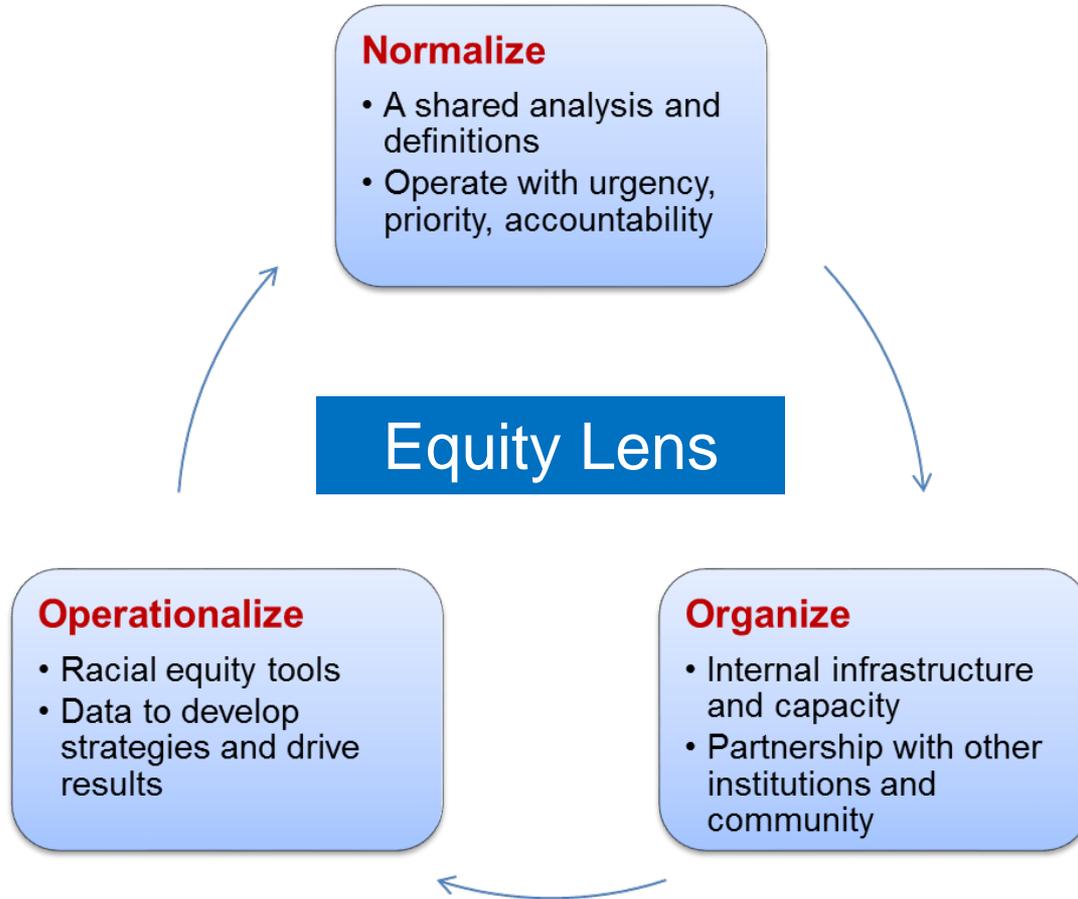
## Key Areas of Departmental CHOICE

- **Planning:** What to change and prioritize in programs?
- **Budgeting:** what items do we add or cut and what initiatives get the funding?
- **Personnel:** who to hire, retain, promote, or develop as leaders
- **Policy Development:** what to propose or modify?
- **Practices:** routines/ habits and or expectations to set

The cumulative impacts of small choices can lead to BIG influence on outcomes and equity



# Building a Framework for Equity



## How was the equity tool developed?

- Equity Action team members logging nearly 900 hours of volunteer time
- 6 Steps for Building Racial Equity- Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)
- Council's Six Strategic Priority Outcomes

## What does an equity tool cover?

1. Department Culture
2. Community Engagement
3. Budgeting
4. Alignment with Advancing Equity
5. Unintended Outcomes

# Equity Assessment Core Elements

Lead with  
Race/Ethnicity

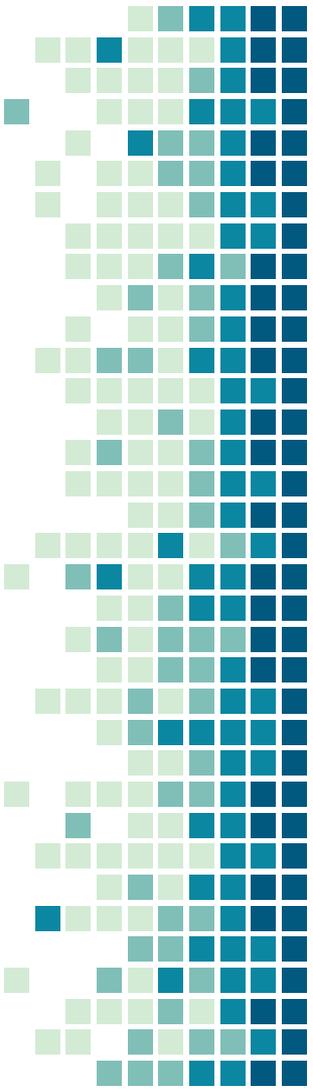
Focus on human  
centered design and  
institutional  
empathy

Engage residents,  
especially those  
adversely affected,  
in decision making

Bring conscious  
attention to racial  
inequities and  
disparities *before*  
decisions are made

Avoid or minimize  
adverse impacts and  
unintended  
consequences

Affirm our  
commitment to  
equity, inclusion, and  
diversity



- Austin Water
- Economic Development
- Human Resources
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Health
- Library
- Public Works
- Transportation

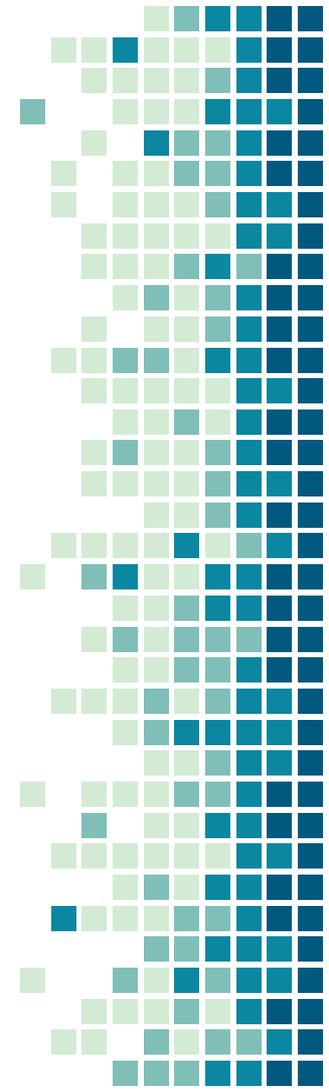


**COURAGE...**

...is contagious

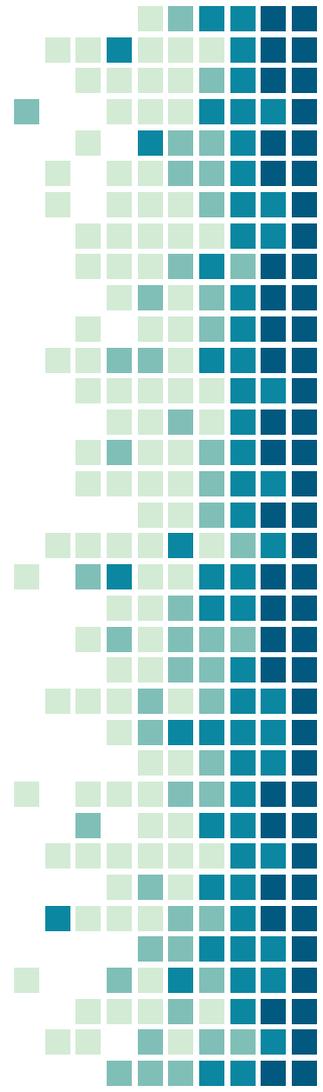
# Outcome Evaluation

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hiring and Training<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Use of community orgs, boards and commissions, and chambers of commerce to ID candidates</li></ul></li><li>• Information Sharing<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Standards for document translation and evaluation of cultural appropriateness</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data Collection and Measurement<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Lack of disaggregated client, contractor and consultant data</li></ul></li><li>• Community Engagement<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Lack of definitive processes or use of passive processes in gathering input</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programming<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Programs across city are natural touchpoints for engagement and input</li></ul></li><li>• Cross-Department Collaboration<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Individual department strengths can address city-wide issues</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Lack of tracking or ability to connect budget line items directly to equity initiatives and goals.</li></ul></li><li>• Disproportional Effects<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Well-intentioned policies disadvantaging marginalized groups</li></ul></li></ul>



# Next Steps

- Recognized internationally by the Open Governments Partnership as a **STAR** level intervention
- Launched the second cohort of 13 departments
- Working with 1<sup>st</sup> cohort of departments to implement Equity Action Plans for FY 19
- Working to build an Equity Academy to expand training opportunities
- Adopting a vision of having 100% of departments participating by 2020
- Introducing a cycle of continuous improvement around equity





# New Equity Mini-Grant Program

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# *What is the Mini-Grant?*

In the FY2018 budget, City Council approved a budget rider of \$75,000 to establish a mini-grant process to focus on equity issues and promote the City Council's six strategic outcomes.



It was created as one of several “buckets” to address initiatives and priorities as expressed by the Quality of Life Commissions.

# *Goals of Mini-grants*

- Focus on equity issues and promote the City Council's six strategic outcomes.
- Allow community-based organizations the opportunity to participate in working on equity concerns
- Simplify the grant process
- Provide grant opportunities for applicants who were unsuccessful with prior grant requests.



# Mini-Grant Development Process

Equity Office worked with Austin Public Health (APH) to conduct a community forum and gather feedback from the community to discuss challenges of the current Request for Grants process for current APH subcontractors and unsuccessful applicants.

## A few examples of suggested solutions:

- \* Streamline the contracting process;
- \* Provide up-front funding instead of reimbursing expenses;
- \* Provide electronic submission of grant applications and reduce burdensome application process;
- \* Improve transparency of how contracts are awarded.

# Features of New Request for Grant Application (RFGA)

- One page Application Threshold Checklist
  - Streamlined the Agreement document to remove cost burden requirements such as the requirement for a financial audit and waiving liability insurance requirements.
  - Quality of Life Commissions will assist with notifying the community of the mini-grants and evaluating the grant applications.
  - Grants will be awarded in increments of up to \$10,000.
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# Next Steps

- Received 125 applications
- Formed a review panel representing a commissioner from all four Quality of Life Commissions
- Projecting late November to notify recipients
- Monitoring and evaluating implementation over the course of the fiscal year





# Questions and Discussion

# THANKS!

Any  
questions?