

MEMORANDUM

To: County Council

CC: Annie Cole, Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer & Executive HR Policy Advisor
Alessandra Durham, Chief of Staff
Eric Parks, Deputy Executive
Heidi Beazizo, Chief of Staff, County Council

From: Lacey Harper, Executive Director

Date: June 20, 2023

Subject: **Budget Condition Response: Social Justice Initiatives, 1.0 Executive Management FTE**

Established in 2020, the Office of Social Justice (OSJ) has led efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in Snohomish County. OSJ has also been a critical resource for the community both to engage on issues of concern and support individuals and organizations in need.

OSJ is charged with leading the County's DEI efforts to create an environment of inclusion. One way of accomplishing this is through supporting departments by working with them to review their outreach efforts to diverse communities. OSJ has worked with departments to review plans, outreach to communities, met and provided input to external consultants hired by departments, and other critical steps. In addition, OSJ has brought together a countywide group that meets monthly to discuss equity efforts and provide input as necessary to leadership.

While OSJ would like to be responsive to the multitude of needs from County and external partners, the current staffing configuration is limiting its ability to have a greater impact in developing and leading the equity efforts of the County. Additionally, it is not able to be as supportive to departments in reviewing documents, projects, and plans.

In the adopted 2023 Budget, the County Council set a condition that OSJ's goals associated with the 5-year strategic plan be provided to release the funds for the 1.0 Executive Analyst/Program Management FTE (NEW0102R). At the same time, Council approved by Motion 22-525, an RFP for the office to work with MGT Consulting to conduct an internal readiness assessment and reach out to our external community to gain their input as to their perceptions of the County and its interaction with excluded and/or under included communities. This information, along with a number of other data points, will be used to

create a strategic work plan to set the direction of OSJ's work. (See appendix A and the attached DEI Assessment Status Report from MGT for June).

As we await completion of MGT's assessment, the Executive has identified the following goals for inclusion in the 5-year strategic plan for the Office of Social Justice:

- MGT will be providing a comprehensive report which will include an Equity Action Plan (EAP) that OSJ will be tasked with implementing.
 - Identifying who has responsibility and accountability for action
 - Establishing resource allocation necessary for task completion
 - Sets key milestones and dates for each strategic action
 - Provide a comprehensive progress evaluation tool.
 - Training on how to use the analytic tools
 - Training materials

- Implement metrics to measure progress towards our stated equity goals for dismantling institutional racism and improving diversity, equity, and inclusion to create an environment in which our staff and community feel welcome in the County and gain a sense of belonging.
- Assist departments in gaining confidence in reviewing and writing their own documents with an equity and inclusion lens
- Identify the roles and responsibilities for an Equity and Inclusion Community Advisory Board
- Develop a resource SharePoint page for use by Snohomish County employees

We have set lofty goals for the Office of Social Justice. These goals cannot be attained without the addition of staff. Therefore, we are requesting the release of the FTE that was included in the 2023 budget.

Appendix A
MGT Consulting Scope of Services

Task 1.0: PROJECT MANAGEMENT & BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

1.1 Project Kickoff

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall facilitate an initial meeting for key members of the project team to meet each other, identify desired communication strategy, ensure mutual understanding of the project goals and outcomes, identify potential barriers, and establish consensus regarding activities, timelines, deliverables, and mutual expectations.

DELIVERABLES

- Finalized work plan and project schedule
- Description of deliverables
- Identification of key stakeholders, engagement expectations, responsibilities, and project roles
- Logistics for project management meeting schedule, agenda, and reporting protocols
- List of potential stakeholders who might advise the project and provide valuable insight

1.2 Client Engagement

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall prioritize effective communications with the project team and stakeholders to maximize trust, clarity of project progress and action steps, and ensure timely and successful execution of all components of the project. Regular collaborative engagement in a manner that meets the project team's availability and interest allows mutual certainty that all aspects of our work align with the County's mission and ultimate goals.

DELIVERABLES

- Facilitation of regular (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) meeting agendas and minutes
- Meeting documents including PowerPoint presentations and related materials
- Documentation of decisions made, action steps, responsibility matrix, and deadlines

1.3 Peer Review of DEI Best Practices

OBJECTIVES

Consultant shall conduct thorough research and review of a sample of the County's peers. Research and review shall include reporting to County whether and how a peer initiative was successful, and their successes and lessons learned regarding their Equity initiatives. This work will help the project team understand Equity Initiatives of the County's peers are doing and may inform the potential recommendations that will follow.

DELIVERABLES

- Written draft chapter of peer review and industry-leading best practices in Equity initiatives
- Graphic presentation of Equity best practices

Task 2.0: ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Consultant shall conduct an internal assessment of the County to determine strengths, weaknesses, equity understanding, and readiness to embrace and infuse social justice through all levels of the County's structure and operations. The internal assessment will involve an analysis of quantitative and

qualitative data and other information to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the state of the organization County related to equity.

2.1 Analysis of Data, Policy, and Practice

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall work with the County's project leadership to establish a comprehensive list of data, documents, policies, and practices to be included in the equity audit. Each of these will be strategically organized for effective assessment by Consultant. Consultant shall include analysis of internal policies with special emphasis on the impact of policies and practices on people from historically marginalized demographic groups. An equity lens will be applied to our analysis of the following topics:

- Hiring and Development
- Employee and leadership demographics
- Organization hiring and promotion practices
- Barriers to recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse workforce
- Development opportunities and investment into employee growth
- Internal Culture
- Identification of policies and practices that have a disparate impact on marginalized communities
- Identification of policies and practices that are contributing to the success of people from marginalized backgrounds
- Racial Equity Readiness
- Evaluation of leadership racial equity acumen and sensitivity
- Impact of staff and leadership self-awareness and implicit and explicit bias on organizational culture and the employee experience
- Compensation Transparency
- Transparent communications around seniority, pay-scale, and promotion requirements
- Standardization of promotion requirements
- Equity of benefits package
- Human Resources Policies
- Anti-discrimination
- Formal and informal resources for employees
- Harassment & Retaliation
- Good Faith Efforts

DELIVERABLE

- A written analysis of existing organizational strengths and gaps with clear recommendations on how to best build upon strengths that will enhance equity throughout the organization and for its stakeholders

2.2 Staff Outreach Plan

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall design and administer a set of protocols to garner insight of staff and leadership perspective regarding organizational culture, equity in the workplace, and the employee experience. To

maximize awareness of the County's commitment to equity, build interest and motivation to engage in the organization's equity-related vision and this assessment, we will create an internal staff outreach plan to boost authentic engagement. This staff outreach plan will provide a strategic road map for informing staff of the importance of their participation.

DELIVERABLE

- Staff Outreach Plan to maximize awareness and motivation for internal stakeholders to engage in the feedback portion of the equity audit

2.3 Internal Stakeholder Engagement

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall design and administer a set of protocols to garner insight of County's staff and leadership perspective regarding organizational culture, equity in the workplace, and the employee experience. Upon completion, Consultant shall evaluate all insight collected to ensure representative participation from all stakeholder groups and re-administer with targeted outreach if necessary.

DELIVERABLES

- Key Leader Interview Guide (contingent on project need)
- Focus Group Interview Guide and Protocol (contingent on project need)
- Organizational Assessment Equity Survey
- Quantitative and Qualitative analysis of survey results

2.4 Equity Resource Library

OBJECTIVE

This assessment will identify and compile resources that are available within the community, with a focus on those materials that will increase the capacity of staff to better serve and engage with diverse populations both in the community and in the County offices.

DELIVERABLE

- Evaluation of existing education and training resources
- Recommended additions to the resource list with suggestions on how to maximize participant use

Task 3.0: COMMUNITY LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Consultant shall conduct an external audit of the County's policies, practices, and impact on the residents of the Snohomish County. Consultant will determine strengths and weaknesses of the County's work and identify opportunities for change to elevate its success in ensuring equity for all County residents without exception to one's race, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identify, or religion. This will involve an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and other information to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the County's work related to ensuring equity.

3.1 External Analysis

OBJECTIVE

Consultant will analyze external data points of the County's community to identify inequities in practice and/or disparities that are impacting the residents of the County. Using ACS (American Community Survey) and Census data, we will be able to provide a current picture of the state of equity

throughout the County. We will use this analysis to craft a concise reader-friendly presentation for the County to use in creating equity goals and action plan.

- External Operations
- Community engagement
- External communications
- Interactions between Snohomish County and its residents
- Breadth and access to community support programming
- Policies and practices that have a disparate impact on people from traditionally marginalized communities

DELIVERABLES

- Written document identifying strengths and gaps in current resident-facing County services
- List of recommendations for improvement

3.2 Focus Groups with Community Partners and Content Experts

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall conduct a series of focus groups and/or 1:1 interviews with key local experts who demonstrate a thorough understanding of the community and the juxtaposition of County history and its present. Consultant will seek to understand barriers and opportunities regarding pervasive inequities that are relevant to the community served by the County. Consultant will work with community partners to help bridge the divide between the County and less visible residents within the Community. In order to provide a more comprehensive assessment that is contextualized with a 360-degree perspective, Consultant will seek insight from key individuals of the following local experts:

- Local historians
- Educators (PK-12 and Higher Education)
- Business Leaders
- Healthcare providers
- Community Based Organizations
- Organizational department/division heads

DELIVERABLES

- Focus group and/or 1:1 interview guide
- Summary report of feedback and insight gained from content experts and community members
- List of Community Partners that are able to work with the County in engaging with residents

3.3 External Stakeholder Outreach Plan

OBJECTIVE

To maximize awareness of the County's commitment to equity, build interest and motivation to engage in the County's equity-related vision and this equity audit, Consultant shall create an external outreach plan, with identified community partners, to boost meaningful engagement in the audit process. This external stakeholder outreach plan will provide a strategic road map for informing the County's residents of the importance of their participation. Consultant will bring a unique perspective and a set of strategies to increase participation and receptivity to this important work.

DELIVERABLE

- External Stakeholder Outreach Plan to maximize awareness and motivation for internal stakeholders to engage in the feedback portion of the equity assessment

3.4 External Stakeholder Engagement

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall design and administer a set of protocols aimed at maximizing participation of County residents to allow us to gain comprehensive and accurate insight of the resident perspective on equity in the County. We will establish no less than 4 engagement channels for residents to use:

- 1) A phone-accessible voicemail
 - 2) An e-mail inbox system (ex. SNOHOMISH_COUNTY_DEI@mgtconsulting.com)
 - 3) A County wide survey
 - 4) A series of community meetings and targeted focus groups (in-person or remote as appropriate)
- Upon completion, Consultant shall evaluate all information collected to ensure representative participation from all stakeholder groups.

DELIVERABLES

- Community Equity Survey
- Focus Group Interview Guide
- Demographic data summary of resident participation
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of feedback results

Task 4.0: SUMMARY REPORT AND PRESENTATION

4.1 County Equity Audit Report

OBJECTIVE

The assessment concludes with the delivery of a report and presentation that provides a synopsis of what was learned in the assessment, as well as the Consultant's observations and recommendations from internal and external stakeholders. The report will also include all the learnings that were acquired from the equity audit. Ultimately, the equity audit is intended to be used to drive the design and successful implementation a comprehensive multi-year Equity Action Plan that elevates equity through all aspects of the organization's County's policies and practices.

DELIVERABLES

- Written delivery of final report: The Current State of Equity at Snohomish County.
- Comprehensive list of recommendations for prioritization of actions to take to elevate equity access, and opportunity for the County employees and stakeholders
- Oral presentation of final report (optional, if requested)

4.2 Presentation of Findings, Recommendations, and Action Plan

OBJECTIVE

Consultant's team shall deliver an oral presentation of the project methodology, findings, recommendations, and suggested action plan to the County Council and community leaders to ensure widespread understanding and internalization of strengths, gaps and improvement actions needed to meet the goals and performance expectations of the organization.

DELIVERABLES

- Oral presentation of final report
- Presentation materials including PowerPoint and related documents

Task 5.0: EQUITY ACTION PLAN

5.1 Future Envisioning Analysis

OBJECTIVE

Consultant shall design and facilitate a workshop with a representative sample of the County's leaders to conduct future envisioning focused on building themes and initiatives around the desire for the state of equity at the County. This work will result in the identification of a "North Star" for the organization to strive to become. This North Star will drive the work of the Equity Action Plan.

DELIVERABLES

- Future Envisioning Workshop
- Equity Goals for the County
- Public statement and press release documents
- Development of a shared organizational goal and public Disparity statement

5.2 Development of Equity Action Plan

OBJECTIVE

The goals established during the future envisioning analysis will inform the development of a Strategic Implementation Plan that includes goals, metrics, actions, owners, deliverables, timelines, and accountability measures to ensure the implementation of best practices that are strategically designed to meet the highest leverage needs of the organization (e.g., workforce diversity, workplace inclusion/belonging, sustainability). Material gathered from the survey, interviews, and focus groups will drive development of a strategic roadmap for advancing DEI within the organization. Consultant will facilitate a series of workshops with a diverse set of the organization's leaders to collaboratively build the Strategic Implementation plan.

DELIVERABLES

Written strategic implementation document

- Implementation framework that assigns responsibility, accountability, resource allocation, key milestones, and dates for each strategic action

5.3 Design of Annual Progress Assessment Tool

OBJECTIVE

To assist the County in ensuring that the Equity Action Plan is being implemented with fidelity and meeting the goals of the County, Consultant will create a comprehensive assessment tool to be used annually by the DEI Taskforce and the County Council to assess the County's progress towards meetings its DEI goals including the following:

- 1) Implementation fidelity of the County's Equity Action Plan
- 2) Impact of Equity Action Steps
- 3) Performance metrics of Equity goals and Action Plan milestones

DELIVERABLES

- Comprehensive progress evaluation tool inclusive of metrics, targets, and quarterly dashboard
- Live leader training of required and optional analytic tools for use in quarterly and annual assessments
- Training materials to be used in training for the DEI Task Force and County Leadership