

Racial Equity Council

Responsibilities and Member Leadership Capacities

Formally adopted by the Racial Equity Leadership Network Jan 20, 2022

This document defines the key capacities, knowledge and skills necessary for the success of the Racial Equity Council (RE Council) -- a body of community-based racial equity groups, organizations and designated leaders, who represent the Sacramento Racial Equity Leadership Network¹, that works collectively to guide the City of Sacramento in establishing a plan for creating the City Racial Equity Resolution and the Sacramento Centered On Racial Equity (SCORE) initiative and workplan. Our institutions were created to work better for white people than for people of color. Creating racial equity requires acknowledgement of the City's role in creating and perpetuating institutional racism and racial disparities, and explicit action to transform policies, practices and procedures so that City actions eliminate institutional racism and racial disparities within its jurisdiction. Inaction perpetuates institutional racism and continues to create racial disparities. Leadership by communities closest to the harmful impacts of institutional racism is essential because the standard institutional practices can have detrimental impacts. Examples of these practices include:

- Officials and staff state that they value racial equity and intend to advance it followed by actions that cause harm and drive racial inequities. Without a complete understanding of what racial equity means and what it takes to achieve it, institutions default to their habitual policies, practices and procedures - those that have created current racial disparities
- Intentional co-opting of racial equity advocacy language specifically to build political power or support rather than truly supporting racial equity.
- The practices of those who hold influence within the halls of power, and how those within the halls of power advance typically do not incorporate the understanding of those most harmed by institutional racism. As a result, actions officials take to advance their own individual power often do so on the backs of communities of color.
- Actions are often taken in the best interest of communities of color, but do not accomplish the intended outcomes, or can even cause harm. This occurs when decisions and the design of the strategies are not guided by the communities they are supposed to serve.
- Racial equity is sometimes incorporated in planning processes, but the implementation defaults to habitual practices that do not bring about the aspiration and guidance agreed upon during the planning processes.
- These patterns intensify divisions between communities, leading to fractures among groups and leaders, diminishing the collective power of communities of color.

¹ A network of designated representatives that constitute the various groups and organizations working for a shared, bold racial justice vision and for racial equity solutions to the inequities faced by people of color in Sacramento and willing to be led by leaders and communities of color. The Racial Equity Leadership Network will determine the size, composition and membership of the RE Council once applications are received is to be determined by the Racial Equity Leadership Network.

This body is accountable to both the Network and to their home organizations, constituents; and to respective, and/or collective communities of color in Sacramento invested in a bold racial justice vision for their community. This document informs the capacities of who is selected as members of the RE Council, as well as the process by which RE Council membership is determined, serving as a “job description”.

Priorities for the Racial Equity Council

I. Guide the City’s work to transform how it works to

Achieve racial equity: so all of our communities can thrive and so governmental decisions and processes serve all its constituents, especially those who have been most harmed by government policies. This will require an explicit focus so that communities of color who have historically not had influence or power, have the power to determine their own futures, and the City prioritizes working for the benefit of the community, especially communities of color, rather than for the benefit of those institutions and constituents who typically hold influence, or for political gain.

The work of the Racial Equity Council will include:

- A. Defining the role of the RE Council so that it has decision-making power and will have mechanisms to hold the City accountable when needed. This requires that it has influence during planning, implementation and evaluation stages. *This needs to be more than just making plans -- it needs to be real.*
- B. Guiding City Council on development of an effective community engagement/community partnership program as well as a racial equity assessment to guide all City Council budget, policy, procedure and practice decisions. This includes a partnership structure and metrics to evaluate budget, policy and program implementation and to allow for re-alignment of efforts to achieve racial equity.
- C. Guiding the City in the creation and implementation of a racial equity assessment tool.
- D. In order to eliminate inequities and achieve racial equity, working with City Council to create and resource a formal structure and mechanisms for the RE Council to guide the City’s racial equity work over the long term.

II. The Racial Equity Council works in close partnership with, takes leadership from, and is accountable to the Racial Equity Leadership Network.

The RE Council will:

- A. Strategize as a body and with the Racial Equity Leadership Network as it guides the City’s and City Council’s work.
- B. Elevate the vision, goals and strategies put forth by the Racial Equity Leadership Network - developed from the Network’s work with the organizations, constituents and

communities that it is accountable to. Aligns around shared priorities, strategies and tactics to achieve these priorities

- C. Amplify the Racial Equity Leadership Network's definitions and understanding of "racial equity", "community organizing" and "community power".
- D. Members of the RE Council will work with the Racial Equity Leadership Network to guide the City to establish internal mechanisms that allow communities of color to provide input and hold accountability (whether they are town halls, surveys/polls, check-ins, etc, or other means that work most effectively to engage and partner with communities of color) regarding the on-the-ground realities that will drive the decisions and recommendations of the RE Council, as they relate to city governance.
 - a. The practical implementation of these mechanisms could be carried out and channeled through the members of the Racial Equity Leadership Network.
 - b. Ultimately, this will help maintain informed recommendations and accountability at multiple levels of decision-making.
- E. Meet regularly with the Racial Equity Leadership Network to determine the strategy and tactics of the RE Council
- F. Consult with the Racial Equity Leadership Network before presenting the Network's position to the City.
- G. Be accountable to the Racial Equity Leadership Network collectively, and the Racial Equity Leadership Network has the responsibility and means, including removing members of the RE Council if necessary, to uphold accountability.

III. In order to be successful, RE Council members must:

- A. Understand how white supremacy is constructed upon anti-Black racism, colonialism and functions systematically. And that these structures must be deconstructed and transformed in order to advance racial equity and achieve racial justice.
- B. Have deep knowledge about Sacramento, its history, its neighborhoods, its communities most impacted by structural racism, and the interplay between the city and the region acknowledging that the political boundaries are inconsistent with how communities develop and thrive.
- C. Be trusted to act in the best interest and outcomes of communities of color, as informed by the Racial Equity Leadership Network and the communities of color who have borne the local impacts of racism
- D. Be willing to act in the service of the Racial Equity Leadership Network and community(ies), and to push the RE Council and the City, while maintaining the respect of both
- E. Able to work in collaboration to shift power to communities of color in Sacramento.

Selection process for the Racial Equity Council

The Racial Equity Leadership Network will use this document to promote a democratic and

transparent process to:

1. Make initial connections to groups and leaders across communities of color to engage potential candidates for the RE Council
 2. Broadcast this important opportunity to the racial justice ecosystem and broader communities of color in Sacramento, including through community-based organizations, cultural and civic groups, faith-based communities, and resident leaders who have a demonstrated investment in a bold racial justice vision for Sacramento.
 3. Review and select RE Council members
 4. Formally adopt the RE Council as a body
-

Racial Equity Council Accountability

RE Council accountability to the Racial Equity Leadership Network and the structure of the relationship between the two bodies will be defined in a separate document.