

Examples of Racial Equity Best Practices in Other Jurisdictions

General Best Practices: The table below lists a number of best practices related to racial equity that have been implemented in cities and counties throughout the country.

Best Practice	Madison, WI	Marin County	Oakland	Portland	San Francisco	Seattle
Office of Equity and/or Equity Officer	X	X	X	X	X	X
County or city-wide racial equity action plan		X		X	X	X
Department-specific racial equity action plans	X	X		X	X	X
Racial equity analysis tool	X	X	X	X	X	X
Racial equity staff training program	X	X	X	X	X	X
Partner with community-based organizations	X	X	X	X	X	X
Track and report on racial equity data regularly			X	X	X (racial equity report card)	
Racial equity resolution	X		X (city ordinance)	X (city ordinance)	X Legislation to create racial equity office	X (executive order)
Updated recruitment and hiring practices	X	X		X	X	X

Case Studies: The following pages detail racial equity efforts in three jurisdictions – Seattle, San Francisco, and Portland - that are leading the way in this work. These case studies are meant to provide more in-depth examples of strategies that could be replicated.

Seattle: [Race and Social Justice Initiative](#)

On April 3, 2014, Seattle Mayor Edward Murray signed an Executive Order affirming and expanding RSJI. Mayor Murray's Executive Order requires City staff to use RSJI tools and to assess racial equity progress in both work outcomes and internal practices. It also calls on RSJI to deepen support for community-led racial justice work through projects and programs that increase the City's accountability to community. The [racial equity toolkit](#) is used to assess policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues across the City.

The City of Seattle has published three 3-year Race and Social Justice Initiative Plans. Details of the plans can be found [here](#). The most recent, the Race and Social Justice Initiative 2019-2021 Strategy, focuses on the following high-level strategies:

1. Build an anti-racist network within City government. Shift internal practices and develop decision-making skills that eliminate institutional and structural racism.
2. Transform the internal government culture of the City toward one rooted in racial justice, humanistic relationships, belonging and wellbeing.
3. Align our racial justice efforts with local community organizing and strengthen relationships with communities most impacted by structural racism.
4. Work in relationship with national and regional racial justice leaders from all communities and sectors to advance racial justice.

San Francisco: [Citywide Racial and Social Equity Initiative](#)

Launched in 2016, the Racial and Social Equity Initiative is an essential component of the Planning Department's work and is supported by the City's Human Right Commission and Mayor Breed's policy priorities. The Board of Supervisors passed legislation in August 2019 creating a San Francisco Office of Racial Equity, which requires all city departments create Racial Equity Action Plans by 2020. The Initiative is also consistent with the proposed City's Five-Year Financial Plan released on January 4, 2019. The Five-Year Financial Plan states that upcoming budget investments will be driven by the guiding principles of equitable outcomes and accountability. It sets the long-term strategy for city investments, under Mayor Breed's leadership to achieve a diverse, equitable and inclusive city and to generate greater accountability and equitable outcomes in the provision of city services and use of city funds. The City has an [Action Plan](#) that is updated and monitored consistently and contains accountability measures, which will become the primary tool to help advance racial and social equity in a comprehensive way, including internal and external processes (hiring, public information, project review, outreach, etc.), policies and programs, staff capacity-building, and process improvements.

Portland: Office of Equity and Human Rights- Racial Equity Goals and Strategies

The City of Portland established [citywide racial equity goals and strategies](#) (see below). All City of Portland Bureaus released [Five-year Racial Equity Plans](#) in 2016. The detailed plans address specific racial inequities and bring to life the City's [Racial Equity Goals and Strategies](#) which were adopted as binding City policy by City Council in 2015. A [racial equity toolkit](#) is also used throughout City.

CITYWIDE RACIAL EQUITY GOALS & STRATEGIES



OFFICE of EQUITY
and HUMAN RIGHTS
CITY OF PORTLAND

EQUITY GOAL #1

We will end racial disparities within city government, so there is fairness in hiring and promotions, greater opportunities in contracting, and equitable services to all residents.

EQUITY GOAL #2

We will strengthen outreach, public engagement, and access to City services for communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities, and support or change existing services using racial equity best practices.

EQUITY GOAL #3

We will collaborate with communities and institutions to eliminate racial inequity in all areas of government, including education, criminal justice, environmental justice, health, housing, transportation, and economic success.

OVERALL STRATEGIES

- 1 Use a racial equity framework:**
Use a racial equity framework that clearly articulates racial equity; implicit and explicit bias; and individual, institutional, and structural racism.
- 2 Build organizational capacity:**
Commit to the breadth and depth of institutional transformation so that impacts are sustainable. While the leadership of electeds and officials is critical, changes take place on the ground, through building infrastructure that creates racial equity experts and teams throughout the city government.
- 3 Implement a racial equity lens:**
Racial inequities are not random; they have been created and sustained over time. Inequities will not disappear on their own. It is essential to use a racial equity lens when changing the policies, programs, and practices that perpetuate inequities, and when developing new policies and programs.
- 4 Be data driven:**
Measurement must take place at two levels—first, to measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes; and second, to develop baselines, set goals, and measure progress. Using data in this manner is necessary for accountability.
- 5 Partner with other institutions and communities:**
Government work on racial equity is necessary, but insufficient. To achieve racial equity in the community, government needs to work in partnership with communities and institutions to achieve meaningful results.
- 6 Operate with urgency and accountability:**
When change is a priority, urgency is felt and change is embraced. Building in institutional accountability mechanisms using a clear plan of action will allow accountability. Collectively, we must create greater urgency and public commitment to achieve racial equity.