

# Social Equity and Racial Justice Resolution

ACTION ITEM TRACKING – UPDATED NOVEMBER 30, 2020

Section 1.B. Proclaim Juneteenth as an annual day of municipal commemoration and partner with communities of color and other local organizations to celebrate African American/Black culture on this day annually.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Adam Hanks (Interim City Administrator)

**Updates:**

Holding Pattern: Council determined that this item should be revisited in January of 2021 so that the City can identify organizations for the City to partner with to commemorate Juneteenth. Councilors will be asked to work on this task on behalf of the City at that point.

**Next Steps:**

Bring back before Council in January of 2021

Section 1.C. Advocate at the state and federal levels for policy reform that includes: a searchable database of officers sanctioned for excessive use of force and other misconduct; a national data collection program to determine the number of people killed or injured by police officers tracked by race, gender, age, and other demographic characteristics; limiting the transfer of military equipment to local jurisdictions; providing more extensive training for police officers regarding de-escalation, intrinsic bias, and procedural justice; and assisting people with mental health or addiction issues who have interactions with law enforcement.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Mayor Stromberg, Councilors Graham and Slattery

**Updates:**

Councilor Graham has checked in with State Representative Pam Marsh, and district staff for Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley to determine what legislation is coming before those bodies related to this item. All advised that nothing was moving until the next Congress/State Legislature cycle.

**Next Steps:**

Councilor Graham will check in again for the latest updates from these offices in January, 2021.

Section 2.A. Support the Ashland Police Department in taking a more active role in on-campus conversations about racial justice at Southern Oregon University and in developing engagement events to help local residents understand APD's policies regarding use of force and other relevant issues.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Tighe O'Meara (Police Chief)

**Updates:**

A community town hall is being planned to engage BIPOC and concerned members of the community on how APD policies have been informed by recent events and requests.

Section 2.B. Strengthen our cultural competency and intrinsic bias training program for members of the City Council and City Staff.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Tina Gray (Human Resources Director)

**Updates:**

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement is in early draft form  
HR is working on training, policies, new hire orientation – Continual staff training, additional training for managers and supervisors, updating job descriptions to make EDI an essential job function for all positions at the City.

**Next Steps:**

Community engagement/feedback regarding EDI draft statement  
Policies to be reviewed and updated with gender-neutral terminology  
Training programs put in place  
Continue collaborative partnerships within the community and region that focus on EDI to help us learn and grow and bring back new ideas to the City for implementation

Section 2.C. Display Black Lives Matter signs at City-owned locations to offer visible and immediate support for racial justice advocates in our community.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Bill Molnar (Community Development Director), David Lohman (City Attorney), Councilor Graham

**Updates:**

Government-sanctioned displays or messages in support of particular public policies or viewpoints are allowed only limited circumstances without also allowing displays or messages in support of other, possibly opposing viewpoints.

**Next Steps:**

Staff has requested input from the mayor and councilors regarding how the City might move forward on this item within the existing legal constraints.

Section 2.D. Continue and enhance our support of the annual celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Councilor Slattery

**Updates:**

Councilor Slattery has reported that the organizing group will move the event to Medford in 2021. He has offered the City's continued support either for the Medford event or for associated/connected Ashland based activities that support the main Medford event.

**Next Steps:**

Call for councilor volunteer(s) to follow up with organizers in January of 2021.

Section 2.E. Connect with Southern Oregon University and its students to better understand the experience of all college students, but particularly students of color, in the City of Ashland as a first step toward improving that experience.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Councilor Slattery, Adam Hanks (Interim City Administrator)

**Updates:**

City Administrator meets with SOU President monthly through the Ashland Coalition and will engage President Schott on this concept in upcoming meetings and provide additional information as available.

Councilor Slattery has been in contact with SOU regarding their survey for social equity and racial justice. He anticipates having the results shared with him when available and will present them to the Council.

**Next Steps:**

Report back on SOU's social equity and racial justice survey and report on engagement with President Schott



Section 2.F. Work with community partners to develop training, incident response, and community acknowledgement programs that help residents and business owners address the long-term, systemic root causes of inequality and racial injustice and celebrate progress.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:**

**Updates:**

Holding Pattern: COVID-19 has limited the capacity of the City and community partners to take this on at this time.

**Next Steps:**

Continue to re-visit this action item monthly until such time that the City and community partners have the capacity to move this forward.

Section 2.G. Work with Jackson County and neighboring communities to develop a program that will provide trained mental health professionals for instances where the Ashland Police Department is called upon to serve the needs of people who are suffering from mental health issues and/or addiction.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned: Tighe O'Meara (Chief of Police), Councilor Graham**

**Updates:**

APD hosted two crisis intervention (CI) workers from Jackson County Mental Health (JCMH) on August 12, 2020. The workers went on patrol with the downtown officers and made several contacts with community members who are chronically in need of mental health assistance.

APD is exploring a possible relationship with JCMH to make available more robust CI resources. Councilor Graham and Chief O'Meara met with JCMH personnel to understand County goals and efforts underway at a regional level.

APD is exploring the feasibility of standing up its own 24/7 CI program using local practitioners.

**Next Steps:** Councilor Graham will meet with Coordinated Care Organizations to identify potential resources for a CI program.

Section 2.H. Determine the feasibility of a mural project to provide a mode of artistic expression of our community's commitment to making meaningful, visible, and ongoing progress on issues of social equity and racial justice.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Bill Molnar (Community Development Director), Councilor Jensen

**Updates:**

Creation and installation of murals, visible from a public right-of-way, are subject to the process and guidelines established by Council Resolution 2016-29 - A RESOLUTION ADOPTING GUIDELINES FOR THE CREATION AND INSTALLATION OF MURALS. The Public Arts Commission (PAC) has established criteria for approval of wall murals, a list of information describing the mural design application and a process for presentation and review, with final approval by the City Council.

Public Arts Commission has expressed support to Council for this project and is ready to help move it forward.

**Next Steps:** Staff will schedule this item on a future PAC agenda in order get input on how best to proceed, including the identification and consideration of possible mural locations for Council consideration.

Section 2.J. Review recruiting/hiring practices to address implicit bias with input from leaders of local diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Tina Grey (Human Resources Director)

**Updates:**

HR is working with the recruitment software vendor to test a new blind application review feature.

HR will remove other fields in the application that could potentially reveal the socio-economic status of the applicant, i.e., applicant's address and educational attendance.

HR is investigating ways to change our selection process to minimize bias as much as possible.

HR is working to improve our internal promotional processes to ensure they are competitive and fair by utilizing panelists with specific training about implicit bias and implementing transparent scoring.

HR has compiled a draft Diversity Hiring Guide outlining new hiring protocols and training requirements for staff who participate in hiring panels.

Section 2.K. Renew the effort with Indigenous leaders in the community to find a solution to the renaming of Dead Indian Memorial Road.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Scott Fleury (Public Works Director), Adam Hanks (Interim City Administrator), Councilors Jensen, Rosenthal, and Graham

**Updates:**

Holding Pattern: Councilor Graham reached out to local Indigenous leaders and communicated that the City stands ready to assist with their efforts to change the name when they are ready to move forward with a new name that is supported by the local Indigenous community. Further action is held off until those leaders reach out to the City indicating they are ready to move forward and request the City's support.

Section 2.I. Request a proactive review of the policies that pertain to the standard process of investigating incidents where deadly force is used in Jackson County.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Tighe O'Meara (Police Chief), Councilor Graham

**Updates:**

Complete for now.

The Jackson County Deadly Force was recently revisited by the Jackson County District Attorney's office and has been approved by all municipalities and accepted by the State. The plan calls for maximum transparency and outside agency involvement to make sure all aspects of a deadly force encounter are scrutinized. There is likely limited ability to impact change on this. If APD officers were involved in a deadly force incident, best practices would mandate that an outside agency handle the investigation. All other agencies in Jackson County have signed on to this plan, as has APD, so even if we reviewed it and wanted change, the other agencies would still adhere to the plan as currently presented. When it comes up for review again, APD will take an active role in the process as it has done in the past.

Section 1.D. Work in the near term as a “Committee of the Whole” to move these efforts forward by assigning tasks outlined in this resolution to individual staff and councilors and reporting back to Council on a regular basis while a more formal process and timeline is developed that includes regular progress reports to Council.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Mayor Stromberg, Adam Hanks (Interim City Administrator)

**Updates:**

Completed/ongoing

This has been put in place with the standard practice of revisiting these action items on a monthly basis since the resolution was passed.

Item Section 1.A. Designate Social Equity and Racial Justice as a Value Service in the City of Ashland's strategic planning process, which will provide an opportunity for focused and sustained attention within the City's planning, management, and policy structure.

**Councilors/Staff Assigned:** Adam Hanks (Interim City Administrator)

**Updates:** Completed