



City of Asheville
Equity Manager Position – Scope Summary
December 2, 2016

BACKGROUND

During its annual retreat in January 2016, the City Council developed a 2036 vision in which it articulated the community as it is and as it strives to be in 2036. One of the eight focus areas of the vision articulated below – A Diverse Community – encompass the equity lens through which the City seeks to achieve its goals, deliver services and programs, and maximize the quality of life for all.

A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Asheville is an inclusive, diverse community. We define diversity broadly, including but not limited to all races, ages, sexual orientations, gender identification, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultural beliefs. We have created a fair and balanced society where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfill their potential because they have access to healthy, affordable food, transportation, quality education, and living wage jobs. Asheville promotes and supports minority business as a means of strengthening our local economy. We use a racial equity lens to review and achieve our city's strategic goals in health, education, housing, and economic mobility.

In an effort to create a framework, develop resources, and achieve meaningful progress towards this component of the Vision, the Fiscal Year 2017 budget approved in June 2016 included funding for the development of diversity and equity initiatives. The development of such efforts includes evaluation of the City's efforts to equitably engage with and deliver services to the community and will include areas of study such as representation on boards and commissions, public input opportunities, and contracting and infrastructure investments.

POSITION SUMMARY

The City of Asheville Equity Manager is responsible for the City's efforts to promote access, equity and diversity through innovative policy, programs and services. As a senior level staff position within the City Manager's Office, the Equity Manager will assist the City in identifying and addressing current and emerging access and equity issues and in developing relevant supports.

The Equity Manager will initially focus on:

- Utilizing existing resources and community input to identify areas for immediate and meaningful action
- Assessing existing programs, services and initiatives that support equity and identify opportunities to maximize efforts and achievements
- Fostering and maintaining collaboration and connections within the community, stakeholders and partners (such as Buncombe County, Asheville City Schools, WNC Diversity Engagement Coalition, etc.)

Specific responsibilities include:

- Provide leadership, guidance, and support to internal and external partners in the delivery of an equity policy and initiatives

- Collaborate with and provide technical assistant to City departments to create awareness, understanding, and effective use of an equity lens in developing and implementing programs to achieve fair and equitable outcomes.
- Develop and recommend performance indicators and progress benchmarks to maximize accountability related to the delivery of city services to achieve fair and equitable outcomes.
- Work closely with community representatives, stakeholders, and appropriate boards and commissions to create best approaches to working collaboratively with the City.
- Play an active role in advising on the integration of community engagement and racial equity concepts into all aspects of the City's programming strategies
- In conjunction with internal and external partners, provide leadership, guidance and support in the delivery of equity policy and initiatives
- Work collaboratively with all stakeholders to develop an Equity framework which includes:
 - o Assessment tools that help departments in the equitable access and delivery of services and programs;
 - o Analytical tools that help identify disparities in resource allocation;
- Develop and recommend performance indicators and progress benchmarks to ensure accountability and to achieve fair and equitable delivery of city services. Collect, analyze, and present data measuring equity program efforts.
- Develop and manage the program's budget, ensuring implementation of sound fiscal management, including proper internal controls.
- Promote understanding of equity among city council members, city staff and community members.

Top Priorities

- In partnership with the City Manager, Assistant City Manager and other key stakeholders, develop and establish the mission, goals, strategies and performance measures for the City's core commitment to equity.
- Conduct an environmental scan of service delivery in the city to identify disparities and gaps in service and programs
- Create a city-wide equity action plan that encompasses equity tools and provides a blueprint of systems and structures to operationalize equity.
- Explore and recommend approaches for ongoing community and employee input relative to the race and equity issues, initiatives or programs.
- Operationalize an equity lens into city wide policy, programs and budget decisions to advance and support equitable service delivery to the community
- Develop, recommend, and implement training to help employees in all departments understand and embrace equity and the lens in their work to advance and support equitable service delivery to the community
- Maximize the manner in which the contributions, interests and needs of all sectors of Asheville's population are reflected in the City's mission, operations and service delivery
- Develop, in staff members, the use of an 'equity lens' as a tool to identify and remove barriers and reinforce best practices in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of policies, services and programs.