

FY 2021-22 Budget Board of Supervisor Inquiry Form

Deadline: April 30, 2021

Please email: CAO-Budget@sonoma-county.org

Department: Equity

Date: 5/3

Board Member	
Gorin	
Rabbitt	X
Coursey	
Gore	
Hopkins	

Inquiry Number: BIR-121

Request/Question:

What is the work product that the Office of Equity provides the BOS and at what frequency to ensure we are meeting our accountability measures?

Response:

What is OOE's work product?

The Office does not produce a single "work product." Instead, the Office produces different outputs depending on the project, OoE staff's capacity to lead, support, and/or offer consultation on any given initiative.

Areas of work and support for BOS

- **Connect and align county departments internally and seek opportunities to align and leverage resources with external partners, such as cities, etc., to embed equitable practices in our work.**
 - **Core Team work:** In order to achieve this goal, the Office of Equity does not work alone. Instead, the Office works as a connecting and consulting agency for and with departments willing to embed equitable practices in their internal work and service provision. The Office has launched an Equity Core Team, a group of staff members representing 25 out of 26 County departments, supported to embark on a Racial Equity Learning Program, which includes a Results-Based Accountability component. The training will extend through FY 22- 23 after which time we will have the County's fully trained cohort, which will be able to develop a training for our County leadership (Supervisors and Department Heads) and take the information learned to several other spaces across the County organization.

- **Offer consultations for departments and Countywide initiatives on arising equity issues**
 - The Office of Equity provides support to different departments and BOS-led initiatives as requested or directed by the Board and staff leadership. Examples of this work are the Director’s supporting staff in the redistricting efforts, supporting the Ag Commissioner in an engagement process to develop a policy to allow safe and equitable access to mandatory evacuation zones during wildfires, and advising the County Administrator on the County’s Cannabis Equity Program.
 - An example of this is the Office’s involvement in the ARPA funding distribution. The BOS directed OoE to collaborate with the CAO, EDB and HSD to propose areas of funding to equitable distribute available ARPA funds. This work, which was not part of the strategic plan or the Director’s initial work plan has been adopted and embraced by the Office and will continue through 2026. The Office of Equity will work with the ARPA Community Work Group to identify recommendations for areas of funding and accountability metrics to track the progress of those investments.

- **Connect and support departments and BOS District offices with community engagement matters.**
 - SB 160 authorizes Counties to establish a community advisory group for the purpose of engaging “culturally diverse communities.” The Department of Emergency Management and the Office of Equity are working in partnership to ensure that community members who experience disconnection from our mainstream communications and services, and who are made more vulnerable after disasters, including immigrants and refugees, non-English speakers, low-wage and migrant workers, inter alia, can provide recommendations regarding their needs and recommended strategies to assist us in addressing these experiences in the updated Emergency Operations Plan. We are working with local community members and organizations who have advocated to resolve issues related to cultural responsiveness in our County’s emergency response, including the Just Recovery Partnership (a collaborative funded by the Latino Community Foundation and made up of La Luz, Corazon Healdsburg, Raizes Collective, KBBF Radio, Movimiento Cultural de la Union Indígena (MCUI), and North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP)), North Bay Jobs with Justice, and the NBOP’s Immigrant Defense Task Force. Working together, these groups have previously provided specific recommendations which have allowed us to better understand outstanding critical needs. In essence, we are both respecting and capitalizing on the way in which this community has organized itself as we engage with them. This allows for a more efficient and effective partnership, and allows us to conduct meetings in each of the supervisorial districts to further gather community input and perspectives, working closely with established local volunteer promotores (community health workers), who are organized to respond and support underserved communities during emergencies.

- **Achieve the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, particularly the Racial Equity and Social Justice pillar.**
 - Goal 1: Foster a County organizational culture that supports the commitment to achieving racial equity.**
 - Objective 1:** Establish an Equity Core Team by mid-2021 to advance equity initiatives across all departments in collaboration with the Office of Equity.

Objective 2: Invest in an ongoing and continually developing racial equity learning program, including understanding the distinction between institutional, structural, interpersonal, and individual racism, for County leadership and staff by end of 2021.

Objective 3: Conduct a baseline assessment by mid-2022 of racial equity awareness and understanding among County staff and develop a process to assess progress annually.

Objective 4: Develop a shared understanding of key racial equity concepts across the County and its leadership.

Goal 2: Implement strategies to make the County workforce reflect County demographic across all levels.

Objective 1: Identify opportunities to enhance recruitment, hiring, employee development, and promotional processes to reflect the value of having the perspectives of people of color represented at all levels in the County workforce.

Objective 2: Implement countywide strategies to recruit, hire, develop, promote and retain County employees of color, produce an annual report card assessing progress, and update strategies as needed.

Goal 3: Ensure racial equity throughout all County policy decisions and service delivery.

Objective 1: Establish a racial equity analysis tool by 2022 for departments to use for internal decision-making, policy decisions and implementation, and service delivery.

Objective 2: Establish regular and publicly available reports on racial equity in County policies, programs, and services.

Goal 4: Engage community members and stakeholder groups to develop priorities and to advance racial equity.

Objective 1: Establish a process for engagement and collaboration with community members and stakeholder groups, and launch a community engagement strategy by the end of 2022 with a focus on racial equity.

Objective 2: Collaborate with community members and stakeholder groups to develop racial equity strategies for County emergency response, economic recovery and resiliency planning efforts.

Objective 3: Begin implementing strategies for regular community engagement to guide racial equity efforts.

Objective 4: Develop and establish a language access policy for the County of Sonoma by end of 2021 (Needs to be amended to 2022 due to American Rescue Plan Act workload).

Frequency and accountability measures?

The frequency and accountability depend on the project. For example: the Core Team project is expected to last about 2 years with the first cohort. The Strategic Plan implementation will span over five years. The work with DEM on SB160 has extended for 6 months. Each activity or project has a different metric for success. The Office of Equity will provide the Board with annual updates on its work plan and measures of success.