

CITY OF SAN MATEO

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Operationalizing Equity in the City of San Mateo









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Executive Summary

The City of San Mateo is committed to making diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) a top priority in our community. During the midst of the pandemic and economic recession, we were confronted with the legacy of the lack of progress we as a nation have made in addressing discrimination in our society and institutions. San Mateo is choosing not to accept this legacy, and we will work toward becoming better allies and change makers for our colleagues, our communities, and beyond. We know collective action is needed to effect systematic change and create a more just society for all community members.

This Citywide DEI Strategic Plan Framework is our first step in creating meaningful and long-lasting positive change. It is a guidance document that encourages constructive and realistic approaches toward a higher standard of inclusion. And most impressively, it accounts for the need to work together as both service providers and neighbors.

We put together a team of professionals to address this vitally important undertaking, including City staff and our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force which is comprised of representatives from our partner agencies, local non-profits, and neighborhood organizations. I want to personally thank every one of the participants who contributed to building this framework. They represent the many faces of San Mateo and all aspects of our city and city government. Their unique and informed perspectives helped to set a new standard toward meaningful equity and inclusion in our City.



Drew Corbett, *City Manager*

Introduction to the DEI Strategic Framework Report

Every member of the City of San Mateo community should feel a sense of belonging. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, (DEI) Strategic Framework shared in this report is twofold: it informs community members of our commitment to building and supporting that sense of belonging; and it provides guidance for those charged with integrating DEI awareness into our programs, projects, and policies. This work is inspired by the vision in our City's General Plan and refined by our DEI Internal Staff Committee.

As a precursor to the creation of this citywide DEI Strategic Framework our DEI Internal Staff Committee provided the following definitions:

Diversity - *All the ways in which people differ.*

Equity - *Fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people. To create conditions that allow all to reach their full potential.*
One's identity cannot predict the outcome.

Inclusion - A variety of people have power, a voice, and decision-making authority.

San Mateo is a vibrant, livable, diverse, and healthy community that respects the quality of its neighborhoods, fosters a flourishing economy, is committed to equity, and is a leader in environmental sustainability. We embrace diversity and respect the experiences, contributions, and aspirations of people of all ages, abilities, incomes, and backgrounds. We strive to include everyone in community life and decisions for a shared, sustainable future.

— Excerpt from the City of San Mateo General Plan Vision Statement



Who is San Mateo? We are San Mateo

In San Mateo today, more than one language is spoken in nearly half of all households. And while many residents are highly educated and prosperous, there are many struggling to escape poverty and to provide for their families. The numbers illustrate the need to provide services with a lens for equity versus equality. Equality provides everyone with the same solutions. Equity creates solutions according to unique needs.

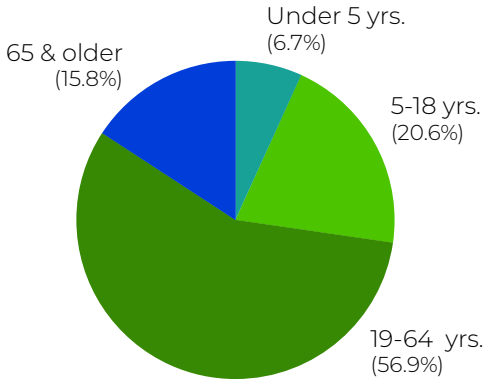
TOTAL POPULATION

102,000

Estimate July 1, 2021 (V 2021)

RACE	% of POPULATION
White	50.2
Black or African American	2.2
American Indian & Alaska Native	0.6
Asian	24.3
Native Hawaiian & other Pacific Islander	2.3
Two or More Races	8.2
Hispanic or Latino	24.5
White, not Hispanic or Latino	41

AGE



TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS

40,233

Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied
20,895	19,338
51.9%	48.1%

LANGUAGE SPOKEN

	POPULATION (With Limited English Shown in Parenthesis)	
English only	55,177	56.8%
Spanish	18,403 (10,018)	18.9% (10.3%)
Other Indo-European	7,019 (1,822)	7.2% (1.9%)
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	8,152 (3,704)	8.4% (3.8%)
Other Asian Pacific Island	7,394 (2,316)	7.6% (2.4%)
Arabic	674 (148)	0.7% (0.2%)
Other/Unspecified	332 (101)	0.3% (0.1%)
Total Residents/Limited English	(18,109)	(18.6%)

Our Approach to Creating a Strategic Framework

Imagine going on a trip to a new place without a map, flying a plane without a flight plan, or preparing a city for its future without an intentional strategy. Integrating a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion into our city operations requires strategic thinking and action. And it all begins with the development of a plan. The purpose of this report is to both document our approach to creating a strategic framework, and to provide a road map for the implementation of a DEI lens to all current and future city operations.

The strategic planning team reviewed DEI plans from cities around the country to use as inspiration. The team implemented a three-pronged approach to building a strategic framework, which included:

- **Setting up the pillars of the DEI Strategic Framework**
- **Creating criteria for a DEI lens to be applied to current and future planning of programs, projects, and policies**
- **Developing measurement/evaluation criteria for implementation teams to gauge the impact and relevance of their work**

The City of San Mateo DEI Task Force reviewed each element of the strategic framework and provided input from the community perspective.



Overview of the Strategic Framework

Each aspect of the DEI Strategic Framework provides implementation teams with guidance for operationalizing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion using the Strategic Pillars. It is important to note that this is a living document which provides flexibility for implementation teams to tailor the suggested approaches to fit their areas of responsibility.

The **Vision Statement** keeps the City's aspirations front and center. The **Guiding Principles** ensure that City cultural values are maintained in the long term, and the **Goals** give specific direction or targeted aims.

Critical Questions serve as a tool for teams to make timely and accurate assessments in the creation of initiatives, as well as in the measurement and evaluation of those initiatives to help ensure they have the intended impact.



The Pillars of the DEI Strategic Framework

Vision Statement

The City of San Mateo honors and welcomes diversity and is a place where all unique perspectives are heard and valued, a community of equitable opportunities and outcomes for all.

Guiding Principles

- We place **equity and inclusion** at the forefront of all city services, policies, and programs
- We cultivate a **community of respect** with an appreciation for diverse perspectives
- We stand **united against hate**
- We aspire to have **full community engagement**
- We strive to ensure that all residents have an excellent **Quality of Life**
- We both honor and acknowledge our past as we **welcome new ideas and cultures**
- We prioritize the **undoing of institutional Racial Oppression**

Goals

Institutionalize equity and racial justice into City policies, processes, and programs by improving accessibility and removing barriers

Empower diverse and inclusive perspectives by connecting, collaborating, and building trust with underserved communities

Proactively address inequity by undoing all forms of systemic or environmental bias, discrimination, and harassment, which impact quality of life

Criteria for Implementation and Evaluation of DEI Initiatives

Critical questions are an effective way to establish criteria for current and future initiatives and to evaluate their impact. The strategic planning team created critical questions to further define the tenets of a DEI lens.

Criteria for the Development of Programs, Projects, and Policies

Understanding the Need or Purpose

What is the purpose of what we are making/implementing?

- What is the historical context for this purpose?
- What are we trying to accomplish through this project/service/policy?
- What issues are we trying to address?

What does success look like for this effort?

- How will success be measured?
- How will we know when success is reached?

Program/Policy Impacts

Who is being served? Is there a target population?

What are the potential impacts of this project/service/policy?

- Are there any adverse impacts or unintended consequences that could be an outcome of the project/service/policy?
- Does it benefit one group at the expense of another?

What are the potential barriers to access the benefits of the service/project?
Examples include:

- Language?
- Citizenship status?
- Income?
- Complexity of required paperwork? Is access internet-only?
- Awareness of the program/policy/or service?
- Disabilities?
- Limited availability/access?
- Technology?
- Transportation limitations?
- Historical distrust from marginalized communities?

Are we duplicating efforts of other City Departments, outside agencies, or non-profits?

- What are the opportunities for collaboration?

Is there an opportunity to pilot the program/project before making it permanent?

What data/evidence (whether qualitative or quantitative) can we use to make informed decisions?

Was geographic equity considered?

Communication

Did you engage with the target population as part of the development process for the proposed project/service/policy?

Did you engage with adversely impacted communities as part of the development process?

How will the availability of this program/service/policy be communicated to the impacted populations once it is being implemented?

What are the potential barriers to communication (such as language or access to the method of communication) and what is the plan to address them?

Have you built enough time and budget into the project to allow for outreach and communication?



History has taught us that broad brush initiatives, although well-intentioned, can bring disparate outcomes. A city holds its own unique collection of neighborhoods and diverse communities. And as with the difference between equity and equality, it is crucial that strategic plans acknowledge the unique needs and cultures within a community to achieve desired outcomes.

After Implementation Evaluation Criteria

Understanding the Need or Purpose

Did the project/program/policy succeed in meeting the anticipated outcome?

- Are there any metrics available to support this finding?
- What methods other than metrics can illustrate the resulting outcome and what is your baseline for measurement?

Were there any unforeseen outcomes (positive or negative)?

- What did you learn from any negative unforeseen outcomes?
- Did your process include options to pivot in case unforeseen outcomes arise?

Program/Policy/Projects Impacts (for use if applicable)

Was the enrollment/uptake what was expected in terms of total quantity?

- If not, what were the potential barriers and how can they be addressed?
- If oversubscribed, is there capacity to expand or to be more targeted about participation?
- Did people inquire but not follow through? Do we know why?

Did we reach the intended population?

- Were any groups under or over-represented? (By age, ethnicity, language, etc.)
- Were there any notable differences in which groups inquired but did not follow through?

Has there been consistent participation, or has it dropped since the initial launch?

Are there geographic equity indicators?

Communication

How did people learn about the project/program/policy?

- Did the outcome match with the resources expended on the various communication channels?

What feedback did the City receive on the project/program/policy during the roll-out?

- Was this feedback incorporated already when mitigations were made?
- Are there changes that should be made going forward to improve the outcome?
- Are you tracking the feedback by population (or by other demographic indicators)?





There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.

— Margaret J. Wheatley, writer, poet, who applies cross-cultural perspectives to leadership

Looking to the Future

The DEI lens created within this strategic framework is designed to be applied to the creation and development of all future programs, policies, and projects in order to anticipate impact and mitigate the potential for furthering inequality.

The value of the framework is its provision of clarification before implementation. It addresses the ultimate questions of; what are we doing, why are we doing it, and will our plans result in the intended outcomes? The City plans to integrate this framework into our daily operations and make it a seamless part of how we serve our community.

In addition, the critical questions in this strategic framework offer structure for the analysis of the impacts of our current programs, projects, and policies. As a second phase of this strategic planning process, the City will perform a comprehensive audit of our current practices using this framework. The City will use the outcome of that audit to make adjustments to our existing approach to ensure that our services reflect our commitment to the DEI principles outlined in this Strategic Plan.

Acknowledgements

We widened our net for the creation of this DEI Strategic Framework. The combination of many voices and perspectives led us to developing an actionable strategic framework. We acknowledge and thank all participants who were generous in sharing their time for this effort.

We appreciate the City staff members who added this task to their daily responsibilities with commitment and the willingness to be a part of the process:

Teresa Abrahamsohn, *Human Resources Director* | Human Resources
Matt Fabry, *Deputy Director* | Public Works
Denise Garcia, *Management Analyst* | City Manager's Office
Maria Gomez-Valverde, *Program Assistant* | Parks & Recreation
Philip Kawakami, *Senior Business Systems Analyst* | Community Development
Kathy Kleinbaum, *Assistant City Manager* | City Manager's Office
Marcia Mendonca, *Senior Management Analyst* | Library
James Moore, *City Librarian* | Library
Amber Shong, *Community Services Coordinator* | Parks & Recreation
Suzette Silberman, *Senior Accounting Assistant* | Parks & Recreation
Heather Stewart, *Senior Management Analyst* | Community Development
Camnga "Daisy" Thach, *Laboratory Analyst* | Public Works
Tracey Unga, *Police Sergeant* | Police

We had the benefit of receiving diverse community perspectives from the members of the City of San Mateo Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force who represent our neighborhoods, service and community organizations, and community leadership.

Ligia Andrade Zuniga | San Mateo High School Unified District
Ricardo Archila | Chamber of Commerce
Stephen Chen | SMUHA - Harbortown
Noelia Corzo | San Mateo Foster City School Board
Alex Golding | San Mateo Pride Center
Rich Hedges | San Mateo United Homeowners Association (SMUHA)–Harbortown
Xin Ma | SMUHA - Beresford/Hillsdale
Michiko Jean Morrow | San Mateo Japanese American Community Center
Carolina Nugent/Adam Nugent | Home Association of North Central San Mateo (HANCSM)
Pam Rittelmeyer | SMUHA–Borel
Dr. Christian Rubalcaba | San Mateo Foster City School Board
Amanda Russell | Caminar
Reyna Sandoval | Samaritan House
Inessa Shishmanyan | Peninsula Family Services
Debbie Soon | Self Help for the Elderly
Dana Stoehr | Police Activities League (PAL) Board
Lisa Tealer | Bay Area Community Health Advisory Council

Under the collective umbrella of care for the community, consensus building, and value for all opinions, the DEI strategic teams created the methodology for this thoughtful and actionable strategic framework.

The San Mateo DEI Strategic Framework At-a-Glance

Vision Statement

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Guiding Principles

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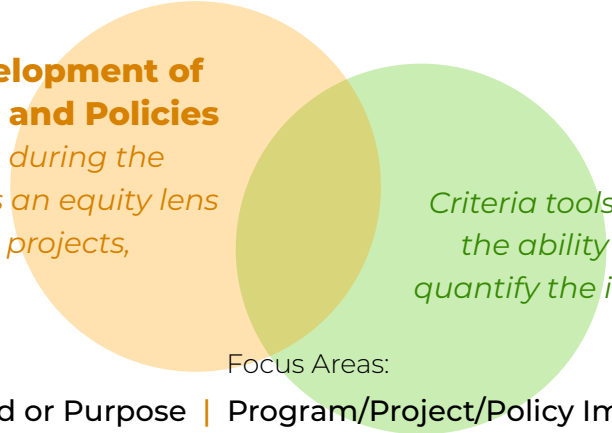
Goals

Institutionalize equity and racial justice into City policies, processes, and programs by improving accessibility and removing barriers

Empower diverse and inclusive perspectives by connecting, collaborating, and building trust with underserved communities

Proactively address inequity by undoing all forms of systemic or environmental bias, discrimination, and harassment, which impact quality of life

Critical questions are important tools to establish criteria and the foundation for comprehensive analysis before and after each new initiative.



Criteria for the Development of Programs, Projects, and Policies

Use of the Criteria tools during the creation phase ensures an equity lens is applied to programs, projects, and policies.

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria tools for evaluation provide the ability to capture, define and quantify the impact of all initiatives.

Focus Areas:

Understanding the Need or Purpose | Program/Project/Policy Impact | Communication