

JEDI Strategic Plan Update

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Outline



- I. Background, Purpose & Objectives
- II. Requested Feedback
- III. Preliminary Results
- IV. Requested Feedback
- v. Next Steps and Future Mayor and Council meetings



Project Purpose & Outcomes



Why This Matters:

- Assess current JEDI landscape across City operations and the community
- Identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement
- Develop an actionable 5-year strategic roadmap with measurable outcomes

Desired Outcomes:

- Enhanced organizational culture and employee experience
- Strengthened community trust and partnership
- Equitable service delivery and access across all populations
- Sustainable JEDI framework integrated into City operations



Background



January 2026

- The Executive Learning Lab (TELL) engaged as contractor
- Kick off meeting with JEDI Office

February 2026

- Equity Champions kick off meeting 2/17
- Core assesment framework established & confirmed 2/25

March 2026

- Mayor & Council Work Session 3/2
- Equity Champions finalized survey and community partner recommendations
- Survey conducted
- Employee Focus Groups completed

April 2026

- Community Listening Sessions conducted

May 2026

- Mayor & Council Work Session 5/18





Overall Engagement Strategy



The engagement efforts will serve, first, as a data and feedback collection effort, second, as a relationship-building process and lastly, as the foundation that ensure that the strategic plan reflects the lived experiences of stakeholders centered needs.



Requested Feedback



1. Do you support additional outreach?
2. Are there specific groups you would like prioritized in the outreach efforts?



JEDI Strategic Plan: Assessment and Engagement Framework



Internal Workforce Assessment

- Online survey (all staff)
- Employee focus groups by department, role, tenure
- Individual meetings with department heads
- Race-disaggregated data analysis to identify disparities

External Community Assessment

- Stakeholder interviews with partner organizations
- Listening sessions with diverse community groups
- Input on service access, gaps, and partnership opportunities

Data Collection Standards

- Confidential and voluntary participation
- Diverse representation ensured across all engagement activities
- Multiple formats to accommodate different communication preferences
- Analysis by demographics to identify equity gaps



Overall Engagement Status Update



✓ COMPLETED	IN PROGRESS
Internal Staff Survey	Mayor & Council Interviews
7 Internal Staff Focus Groups	
Survey data analysis	External Community Focus Groups
Crosstab analysis by demographics & department	

UPCOMING:

- Strategic Planning Sessions with Equity Champions (May)
- Integrated Data Analysis
- Drafting Strategic Plan
- Final Plan Presentation

INTERNAL Engagement Efforts



- Intentional & targeted strategies
- Wide net to reach all
- Accessible & welcoming spaces
- Strengthen existing partnerships
- Promote transparency & trust
- Establish ongoing communication plan
- Support & protect sound data



Internal Survey Overview & Findings



210

Staff Responses

Responses by Role Level

- Mid-level: 43%
- Frontline/Operations: 14%
- Supervisor/Leads: 22%
- Senior Leadership: 6%
- CMO/Directors: 15%



Internal Survey Overview & Findings



Areas of Strength

- ✓ 82% Feel valued and respected by colleagues
- ✓ 69% Can be authentic at work (**note disparity when cross tabulation for ethnicity*)
- ✓ 71% Feel their voice is heard in decision-making
- ✓ 75% Agree department is making efforts to hire/retain diverse staff



Survey Findings: Who Is Being Left Behind?

GROUP	KEY FINDING	EQUITY PRIORITY
Frontline Staff	Significantly lower on 7 of 8 program areas; higher discrimination rates vs. managers	Equitable access to JEDI programs & information
Women	Microaggression rate nearly 2x men's (48% vs. 27%); lower voice & feeling valued	Workplace safety, reporting culture, & inclusion
Black/African American	Lower authentic self & voice ratings; higher discrimination & microaggression rates	Psychological safety & representation
Hispanic/Latino	Highest discrimination & microaggression rates; gap on equal access to advancement	Equitable advancement pathways
Newer Employees (<1 yr)	Significantly lower on hiring, language access, accommodations & community engagement	JEDI onboarding & early integration



Survey Findings: Opportunities

Challenges Requiring Action

Training	Bias	Communication
• 34% are aware of available JEDI trainings • Respondents provided narrative recommendations for trainings	• 37% have experienced or witnessed microaggressions in past year • 25% have experienced or witnessed discrimination in the past year	• 46% believe their department communicates well internally about JEDI • 62% believe their department communicates well externally about JEDI



Survey Findings: Inclusion Opportunities



Current State:

61% Agree department provides accommodations for visible disabilities

61% Agree department provides language services when needed

Feedback on Current Systems:

- Language bank (internal employees) is slow and inequitable
- Overburdening bilingual staff
- Language line exists but difficult to use, not well publicized
- Staff rely on personal phones and Google Translate
- No centralized translator directory
- Rec One registration has no language preference prompt

**Note: Only 5% reported having a visible/invisible disability (11% preferred not to answer)*



Survey Findings: Opportunities



Top Barriers for Leaders Advancing JEDI:

- Competing priorities/time constraints: 49%
- Unclear expectations from senior leadership: 51%
- Insufficient data to inform decisions: 40%
- Limited resources/budget: 35%





Internal Focus Groups: Findings



NEED Shared Organizational Definition of JEDI

We heard:

- No shared understanding of what JEDI means
- No common language across role levels
- No role-specific model for daily practice





Internal Focus Groups: Findings

CONCERN Culture Is Supervisor-Dependent vs. Organizational



We heard:

- Workplace culture varies significantly by supervisor
- Inclusive supervisors create safety; others create silence
- Results in patchwork of micro-cultures, not one City



Internal Focus Groups: Findings



CONCERN **Training Exists but Needs Improvement**

We heard:

- Training is available but not effective, online modules too long, too general, not followed up
- Only 34-35% participation rate across organization
- Overwhelming preference for in-person, scenario-based, role-specific content
- Training must answer: 'What do I actually do when this happens?'
- Format barriers for frontline staff and part-time workers without regular computer access
- No accountability or follow-through after completing training modules





Internal Focus Groups: Findings



CONCERN **Leadership Intent Does Not Match Operational Reality**



We heard:

- Leaders believe JEDI efforts are underway
- Staff experience efforts as sporadic, unclear, and not actionable
- Gap is structural, not a matter of intent



Additional Internal Focus Group Findings



Psychological Safety
Varies by
Department

JEDI Seen as
Compliance, Not
Culture

Federal Climate
Creating Uncertainty

EXTERNAL Engagement Efforts



- Intentional & targeted strategies
- Wide net to reach all
- Accessible & welcoming spaces
- Strengthen existing partnerships
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External Engagement Update: Listening Sessions



External Community Focus Groups (Target: 10-12 per group)	
Seniors & Targeted Communities (7)	Sufficient for session
Education Partners & Youth Leaders (1)	Converted to interview + Youth Commission
Housing & Economic Development (2)	<i>Additional recruitment needed</i>
Faith Community & Community Service Organizations (2)	<i>Additional recruitment needed</i>
Business & Civic Organizations (2)	<i>Additional recruitment needed</i>
Small Business (4)	<i>Additional recruitment needed</i>

*Outreach to date: 247 emails x2 + posters, flyers, postcards



Listening Sessions: Mayor & Council Interviews



Geographic Equity	Language & Communication Access	Training & Staff Behavior	Accountability & Measurement	Federal Climate & Access
• Persistent East-West divide • Engagement & budget equity	• Expanded material touchpoints • Enhanced language & formats	• Increase training audience • Practical and nuanced topics	• Clear & measurable indicators for progress • Defined accountability	• Proactive approach to implications of federal realities



Listening Sessions: Housing, Faith-based & Education



Housing & Economic Development	Faith-Based & Community Service Organizations	Education & Youth Groups
• Awareness of services • Clarity regarding eligibility • Isolation	• Organizational awareness of need • Impact of federal enforcement activity • Underutilized faith communities	• Resource disparities persist • Impact of federal enforcement activity • Multi-channel outreach needed



Listening Sessions: Seniors & Diverse Communities



Digital Accessibility	Physical Accessibility	Transportation Gap	Immigration Specific	Jurisdictional Challenges
• Communication compatibility • Ongoing audits for accessibility	• Exclusionary equipment • Ongoing transit barriers	• Public transit coverage limitations • Expansion of virtual opportunities	• Community isolation • Informal resources for sharing information	• City vs. County services

Words from the Room: “It too me so much to work up the nerve just to go to a city agency. If something went wrong, I may not want to pursue it again.” “The city emails are not properly ARIA-tagged. I would suggest the city run their emails through a screen reader before sending.”



Listening Sessions: Business, Civic & Small Business



What was heard:

- City seen as “genuinely trying” by an insider
- Twinbrook residents and low-income renters feel left behind in decisions & engagement
- Affordable community residents feel their needs are not addressed
- Award programs & boards overwhelming white
- Awareness of processes remains low
- Renters and condo residents are excluded from outreach
- Notification process needs improvement and expanded reach

Listening Sessions: Cross-Cutting Themes

1. People most in need are hardest to reach
2. Language access is a system, not a translation
3. Geographic equity is Rockville's most visible gap
4. The City's best is genuinely good, but uneven
5. Measurement & accountability are non-negotiable





Next Steps



- Internal
- External
- Timeline



Next Steps: Internal Efforts



Additional Focus Group Sessions

Programming Staff

Issue: Low registration rates across these internal focus groups

Why This Matters: These staff design and deliver community programs, they are frontline JEDI implementers who interact directly with diverse residents and make daily decisions about inclusive programming, accessibility, and equitable service delivery



Next Steps: External Efforts



1

Housing & Economic Development

Residents experiencing housing insecurity, landlord-tenant issues

2

Faith-Based Organizations

Faith leaders serving vulnerable populations, community trust-builders

3

Education & Youth

Educators, youth advocates, families

4

Business & Civic Organizations

Business owners interacting with permitting, economic development

5

Small Business

Minority-owned, immigrant-owned businesses navigating City processes



Revised Timeline



MAY +

- Complete Mayor & Council interviews
- Conduct additional staff focus group (Programming Staff)
- Conduct additional community focus groups with extended recruitment
- Begin strategic planning sessions with JEDI Champions

JUNE

- Complete all data collection, finalize crosstab analysis
- Integrate survey, focus groups, interviews, and community input
- Incorporate Council feedback into final plan
- Draft 5-year strategic plan with Year 1 roadmap

JULY

- Finalize JEDI Strategic Plan
- Launch Year 1 implementation
- Establish baseline metrics and progress tracking system
- Present findings and plan to Mayor & Council



Requested Feedback



- 1. Do you support additional outreach?
- 2. Are there specific groups you would like prioritized in the outreach efforts?

Housing & Economic Development & Business	Faith-based & Community Service	Education & Youth	Seniors, Disability & Ethnic Communities
Rockville Housing Enterprises, Montgomery County HOC, Civic Associations (all), REDI, Neighborhood Connect reps, Renters United, local developers	Interfaith Works, CAST, Tikvat Israel, Mt. Calvary, Community Reach, Action Comm. for Transit, B’Nai Israel, Christ Episcopal	Youth Commission, Latino Youth Development, RHE Youthbuild, Lincoln Park & Twinbrook CC Advisory, PTA (all), Rainbow YA	Rockville Senior Center, NAMI, NAACP, CASA, MOCO Pride Center, CCACC, Gilchrist IRC, Mainstreet Connects, Centro Cristiano Peniel

*Outreach was conducted through email, personal contact, public flyers at all City facilities, Engage Rockville, and staff liaisons to all Boards, Commissions, and Task Forces. The table above summarizes the categories and representative organizations contacted as part of the external engagement process.



Reference



Training Research & Best Practice Foundation

Type	Sources
Peer-Reviewed Research	Blessett et al. (2019); Flores et al. (2024); Kwon & Nguyen (2024); Martínez Guzmán et al. (2024); Newman et al. (2023)
National Framework & Tools	Government Alliance on Race and Equity — Racial Equity Toolkit; Getting to Results; Federal Agency Framework
Government Benchmarking	San Francisco Budget & Legislative Analyst's Office (2019); Favro/City Mayors Foundation (2020) - analysis of 32 U.S. city equity offices; City of Seattle Office for Civil Rights — Race and Social Justice Initiative; City of Minneapolis — Strategic and Racial Equity Action Plan; King County, WA; City of Austin, TX; City of Portland, OR