

Bend City Council
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Summary Report and Recommendations

Prepared by Allyship in Action LLC
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Executive Summary

Council's Directive

Bend City Council passed a resolution committing to making Bend a welcoming and inclusive community in 2017, but in March 2019, Councilors decided that more was needed. They recognized that in order to serve an increasingly diverse community, the City needed to be intentional about prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in its policy making and operations. This led to the Council¹ unanimously approving the following goal language:

STRATEGY 4: Embed a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the City of Bend and publish DEI statistics to the public by 6/30/2020.

- **Action:** Implement a diversity, equity, and inclusion training program for City Council, City Staff, and volunteers
- **Action:** Hire a consultant to conduct an organizational assessment
- **Action:** Establish a short-term steering committee/task force to assist in identifying the needs and priorities of underrepresented communities in Bend
- **Action:** Establish a permanent commission/committee to develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan, and seek opportunities to leverage community efforts through funding and support.

Allyship in Action was hired to support these efforts and has worked over the past year to:

- Design and deliver foundational diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) trainings
- Conduct a baseline DEI assessment including a staff survey and stakeholder interviews
- Coordinate a DEI Task Force to deliberate on a DEI committee or commission
- Make recommendations to City Council and staff based on the findings

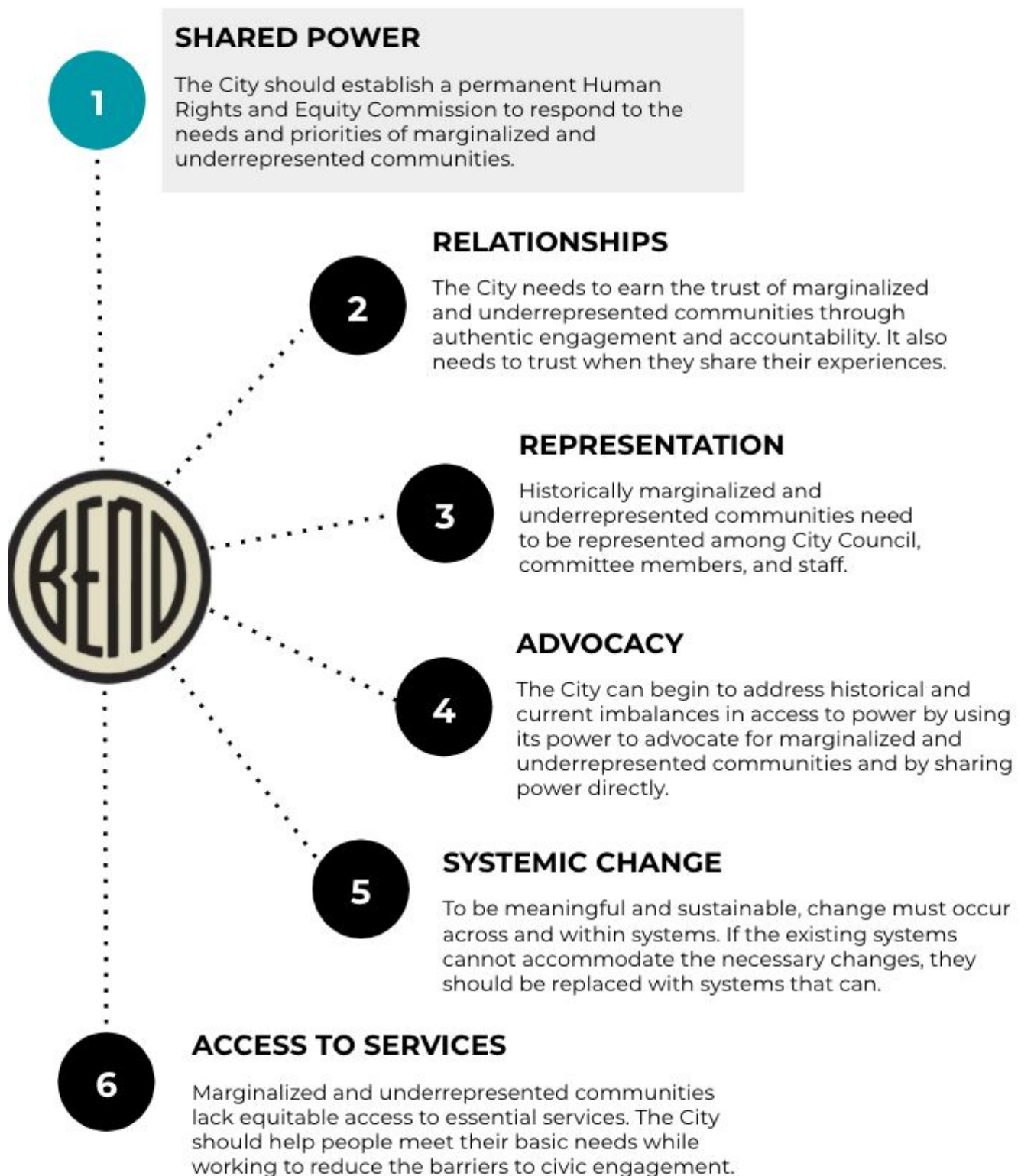
This report highlights the findings and recommendations for the Bend City Council. (A future report to City staff will include staff-focused items.) In particular, it focuses on recommendations from community stakeholders, the DEI Task Force, and Allyship in Action. The appendices provide additional details including a glossary, City staff and committee demographic information, the DEI survey questions, and additional context from the community stakeholders and the DEI Task Force.

While there is a lot of information contained in this report, there is significant overlap in the feedback and some clear overarching themes. The recommendations from Allyship in Action synthesize the recommendations of stakeholders and Task Force members and are informed by Allyship in Action's experience and expertise in serving marginalized and underrepresented communities.

As a majority person of color, LGBTQ+, and woman-owned Bend business, Allyship in Action is both personally and professionally grateful to the City Council for prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion. We hope that this report not only grounds the work moving forward, but also allows everyone to be a part of the conversation and to foster a sense of belonging.

¹ The 7-0 vote included Mayor Sally Russell, Mayor Pro Tem Bruce Abernethy, and Councilors Barb Campbell, Gena Goodman-Campbell, Justin Livingston, Bill Moseley, and Chris Piper.

Themes and Findings



Key Terms

This report uses language that is reflective of Allyship in Action’s best practices and deviates from that language when citing external sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, in order to preserve the integrity of the way the source characterized the demographic data. The following are some of the key terms used in this report. For other terms — or to read about why Allyship In Action decided to use these terms — see [Appendix A: Glossary of Terms](#).

Dominant Identity/Culture: Refers to the identities held or the pattern of knowledge, belief, and behavior valued by those who have historically held power; normative cultural expectations. For the purposes of this report, “dominant identities” include white people, men, heterosexuals, cisgender people, and people without disabilities.

Latinx/Hispanic: Latina/Latino/Latinx are feminine, masculine, and gender-inclusive identity terms used by some people with origins/ancestry in Latin America (Mexico and Central and South America). Hispanic is an identity term used by some people with origins/ancestry in a Spanish-speaking country, and is the term used by the U.S. Census and other government surveys. Allyship in Action uses “Latinx/Hispanic” or “Latinx” to describe these groups as they are not typically distinguished in data sources.

LGBTQ+: LGBTQ+ is an umbrella term that includes people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer, with the plus representing additional marginalized gender and sexual identities including asexual, intersex, Two Spirit, non-binary, and others.

Marginalized:² Marginalized (or “historically marginalized”) describes the ways in which certain groups and identities have been systematically excluded from access and opportunity by those with more dominant identities in order to reinforce entitlement, consolidate power, and maintain control. Others may use terms such as: diverse, minorities/minoritized, underrepresented/underserved, oppressed, or others. For consistency, this report uses “marginalized” unless used in direct quotes.

Older adult: Depending on the context, older adult (or older person) typically refers to someone who is older than 60 or 65.

People of color (POC): People of color is an identity term that “suggests a social relationship among racial and ethnic minority groups”³ and is sometimes used to refer to people who are not white. The term is inclusive of people who are Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Indigenous, Latinx/Hispanic, and/or multiracial. While some prefer the term BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, POC), Allyship in Action uses POC for this report. (Wondering why we chose not to use BIPOC? See [Appendix A: Glossary of Terms](#).)

Underrepresented: Underrepresented describe people, communities, and identities that have been represented or portrayed (in politics, media, etc.) to a lesser extent than they are present in the population. People who are underrepresented are often people from marginalized communities and Allyship in Action uses this term to tie into the wording of the City Council goal.

² Within Allyship in Action, there are varying levels of comfort with the use of the word “marginalized” and there is an ongoing local and national dialogue around the use of the words used to describe people with these identities or experiences.

³ “People of Color,” *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Society*, Salvador Vidal-Ortiz (2008)

Introduction

Background

On March, 21, 2019, Bend City Council unanimously approved goals for the 2019-2021 biennium that included, for the first time, a strategy focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This strategy is embedded within the larger category of Effective & Efficient City Operations.

While the City initially sought to work with a [RARE program](#) participant to get this work off the ground, the City was not selected for the program. City staff engaged Allyship in Action for support to help the City move forward with the DEI-related action items set forth by Council.

This recent engagement does not mark the first time that the City of Bend has taken proactive measures to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion — Bend's leadership in passing an LGBTQ-inclusive, non-discrimination ordinance in 2004 is one example — but it is indicative of increased community concern with respect to representation, equity, inclusion, and social justice.

Due in part to the pervasive myth that Bend is not diverse, meaningful action around advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion has been slower to take hold in the Central Oregon region than in more urban parts of the state. As a result, marginalized communities continue to be underrepresented in the City's Council, staff, committees, and access to services. It also means that community members — including councilors and staff — vary widely in their experience with, and perspectives on, issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Regardless of these varied backgrounds and beliefs, City Council recognized that the City needs to be able to reflect and engage effectively with all the communities it serves.

About This Moment

The work culminating in this summary report and recommendations for City Council took place during a time of crisis and uprising in our community and country. From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic to the current rallies supporting (or protesting) the movement for Black Lives, Bend is affected by, and a part of, these historical moments. While the effects of COVID-19 have been felt by all, marginalized communities have been among the hardest hit by the health, economic, and social impacts. This includes Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other people of color as well as LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities.

Bend is also not immune to the polarization that politicized crises often entrench. This was apparent in the wide range of feedback from City Council members, City staff, DEI Task Force members, and the community stakeholders from marginalized and underrepresented communities.

Despite the varied perspectives, one thing was clear — while the disparities faced by members of marginalized and underrepresented communities are not new, current events have sparked an increased sense of urgency about taking action to address them. We appreciate all those who shared their truth — whether for the first or the 100th time — in the hopes of creating change. We hope to honor that trust in this report to the City Council.

Methodology

Process

Allyship in Action began its work with the City of Bend in September 2019. In the following year, Allyship in Action engaged with City Councilors and staff as well as stakeholders from marginalized and underrepresented communities to establish a baseline for the City's DEI work and identify recommendations for next steps to move the City toward achieving its DEI goals.

As the timeline below illustrates, some of the engagement was simultaneous. All data sources informed Allyship in Action's recommendations, with an emphasis on the themes that arose in multiple contexts or were shared by multiple stakeholders.

September 2019	Planning meetings with City staff.
October 2019	Interviews with City councillors.
November 2019	Staff leadership DEI training preparation.
December 2019	Staff leadership DEI training.
January 2020	City department DEI presentations.
February 2020	City department DEI presentations, City Council trainings, DEI Task Force.
March 2020 (pandemic)	Call to Action at Annual Business Meeting for Staff, DEI Task Force.
April 2020 (pandemic)	City staff DEI survey, community stakeholder interviews, DEI Task Force.
May 2020 (pandemic + BLM)	City staff DEI survey, community stakeholder interviews, DEI Task Force deliberation, presentation to Stewardship Subcommittee.
June 2020 (pandemic + BLM)	DEI Task Force deliberation, staff DEI survey data analysis.
July 2020 (pandemic + BLM)	DEI Task Force deliberation, presentation to Stewardship Subcommittee.
August 2020 (pandemic + BLM)	Finalize reports, presentation to City Council.

Data Sources

This report and its appendices are informed by the following sources:

City Council Feedback

Allyship in Action gathered feedback from members of Council at various points in the process to ensure that this work remained in alignment with the Council's goal and desired outcomes. This included:

One-on-one Interviews with Bend City Councilors

To ensure the work was in alignment with City councilor's intentions, Allyship in Action invited each member to participate in a one-on-one interview. Mayor Sally Russell, Mayor Pro-Tem Bruce Abernethy, and City Councilors Barb Campbell, Gena Goodman-Campbell, Justin Livingston, and Chris Piper participated. Councilor Bill Moseley was invited, but declined.

Council DEI Liaisons and Stewardship Subcommittee Feedback

To ensure that this work continued to align with Council's intent, Allyship in Action sought feedback from the Council's DEI liaisons (Abernethy and Goodman-Campbell) and the Stewardship Subcommittee (Abernethy, Campbell, and Piper) on the DEI Task Force recommendations.

Training Feedback

Allyship in Action collected feedback from Council participants in trainings and presentations. Councilors who attended these trainings include: Mayor Sally Russell, Mayor Pro-Tem Bruce Abernethy, and City Councilors Barb Campbell, Gena Goodman-Campbell, Justin Livingston, and Chris Piper. Councilor Bill Moseley was invited, but declined.

City Staff Feedback

City Leadership Staff

Allyship in Action met regularly with Senior Management Analyst Shelly Smith and periodically with the City's executive leadership team to inform the trainings, survey content, stakeholder outreach, staff engagement, and general direction of the work. Allyship in Action also consulted with City Attorney Mary Winters to clarify the legal implications of the work.

All Staff

Allyship in Action conducted a voluntary staff survey to assess knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, and concerns relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Approximately 70% of staff participated in the survey. The survey included 41 multiple-choice questions (some of which included optional text fields) and three short answer questions, see [Appendix C: DEI Survey Questions](#). A full report on the staff DEI survey is being provided to City staff in September 2020.

Allyship in Action also collected feedback in presentations to City departments and a training with City leadership staff.

Demographic Data

City Staff

Allyship in Action collected staff demographic data from the City of Bend in order to identify the degree to which City staff are representative of Bend residents. Women are the most significantly underrepresented group — only 30% of City staff are women. Latinx/Hispanic, multiracial, and staff of color are also underrepresented. See the full comparison in [Appendix B: About Bend](#).

City Committees and Commissions

Allyship in Action conducted a voluntary demographic survey to see how the diversity of the City's permanent and ad hoc committees compares to the diversity of the general population in Bend. The response rate was 63%. People of color are the most significantly underrepresented group —

only 4.5% of respondents identified as people of color and 0% of respondents identified as Latinx/Hispanic. For the results of this survey, see [Appendix B: About Bend](#).

Community Feedback

Community Stakeholder Interviews

To identify the needs, priorities, and perspectives of marginalized and underrepresented communities in Bend, Allyship in Action interviewed 15 stakeholders representing these communities and the organizations that serve them. Stakeholders were asked a variety of questions about their experiences to help inform how the City could better serve their communities. For more details, see [Appendix D: Community Stakeholder Feedback and Recommendations](#).

Community Conversations

In addition to the feedback from the 15 stakeholder interviews, Allyship in Action also considered both formal and informal feedback from the community about City Council and staff engagement related to topics including: policing (including the hiring of a new Bend Police Chief), the COVID-19 pandemic, and the establishment of a Human Rights Commission, among others. While policing and COVID were not included in the formal interview questions, as these became larger community concerns, they came up more frequently in community conversations. Including these perspectives allows Allyship in Action's recommendations to reflect evolving needs and priorities of marginalized communities.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Short-Term Task Force

Allyship in Action recruited and coordinated diverse community members to participate in a short-term DEI task force. City staff directed the DEI Task Force to identify possible models and best practices to establish a permanent DEI committee or commission to develop a DEI action plan and serve as a conduit to historically marginalized and underrepresented communities. For more details, see [Appendix E: DEI Task Force Report and Recommendations](#).

Data Assumptions

Allyship in Action's assessment of the data assumes the following::

- Participants engaged truthfully in interviews, surveys, and training feedback.
- DEI survey respondents are representative of the staff of the City of Bend.
- Ad hoc and permanent committee respondents are representative of the committees and commissions of the City of Bend.
- Community stakeholders are sufficiently engaged with and connected to the group(s) they represent to provide meaningful and relevant feedback.
- Survey respondents, people interviewed, and DEI Task Force members understood the terms and concepts included in the surveys, interviews, and related resources.

Community Stakeholder Recommendations

Background

The City's organizational baseline is also informed by how marginalized and underrepresented communities perceive the City is representing and serving their communities. The Council goal also emphasized the importance of understanding the needs and priorities of marginalized and underrepresented communities to inform a future action plan. To that end, Allyship in Action interviewed 15 external stakeholders affiliated with organizations and groups that serve or represent a wide range of people from marginalized and historically underrepresented communities.

Bend Asian Resources
Bend Central District Visionary Board
Bend-La Pine Schools Budget Committee
Better Together Central Oregon
Central Oregon Coalition for Access
Central Oregon Community College
Central Oregon Council on Aging
Central Oregon Trans Health Coalition
Changing Patterns
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Embrace Bend

Homeless Leadership Coalition
Human Dignity Coalition
Latino Community Association
Let's Talk Diversity
Mecca Bend
Oregon Indian Education Association
OUT Central Oregon
Restorative Justice & Equity (RJE)
RJE Student Advisory Board
Rural Organizing Project
THRIVE Central Oregon

The interviews included community stakeholders who identify as or provide services to people who are Black, Native/Indigenous, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian, multiracial, LGBTQ+, youth, older adults, houseless/housing insecure, formerly incarcerated, and people with disabilities.

The community stakeholder interviews included dialogue on the following topics:

- The needs and priorities of the communities they work with.
- How diversity, equity, and inclusion shows up in their work.
- What representation looks like at the City of Bend.
- The organization's relationship and experience with the City of Bend.
- The City's relationship with the communities they work with.
- The City's service to the communities they work with.
- Their hopes or concerns regarding the City's DEI work.
- The opportunities for future collaboration between the City and the organization.
- Leveraging the efforts of the organization through funding or other City support.

Allyship in Action preserved the voices of the community stakeholders by using direct quotes when possible. This includes the use of expletives, which Allyship in Action intentionally included to acknowledge and honor the intensity of the feelings of exclusion shared. The following is an overview of the themes that emerged from these conversations.

For the unabridged community stakeholder feedback and recommendations, see [Appendix D: Community Stakeholder Feedback and Recommendations](#).

Needs and Priorities

THEME | Access to Essential and Culturally-Responsive Services

When asked what their communities needed most, stakeholders often started by listing essential services such as food and water, housing and healthcare, transportation and childcare, internet and phone service, etc. They described vulnerable community members whose basic needs were not being met and who, as a result, were less likely to have a voice in City decision making processes.

While this gap in access to services is not new, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified these disparities. These pervasive inequities also contribute to the virus's disproportionate impact on Bend's Latinx/Hispanic community and other marginalized groups.

Nearly every single stakeholder identified the importance of having culturally appropriate and responsive services that take into account the needs of their specific communities. Communication from the City of Bend was one of the most prominent themes with respect to how the City could reach the communities the stakeholders worked with or represented, from overreliance on technology to language access.

THEME | Advocacy, Action, and Accountability from City Staff and Council

Stakeholders expressed feelings of frustration about always having to be their own advocates. The recent public call for action with respect to police violence against Black people has highlighted that now, more than ever, community stakeholders feel like "there's a real need for elected officials to step out and advocate."

Due to past experiences of ambivalence and inaction with the City, stakeholders overwhelmingly expressed concerns about the City's DEI work becoming an exercise in checking boxes. One stakeholder said, "This isn't about checking a goddamn box," urging the City to "get out of uncomfortableness and do the work." Another echoed those sentiments, saying that they are "concerned about box-checking and [that] nothing substantive will change" and people will think, "We're trained, we're woke, we're good."

Most of the community stakeholders expressed a need to see accountability and action. In the words of one stakeholder: "So rarely do we see any consequences tied to DEI goals or policies." Another highlighted "the need for people external to the system to keep it honest and keep it moving."

THEME | Authentic and Proactive Relationship Building

A few stakeholders shared some positive experiences related to relationship building with the City of Bend and said they saw those experiences as a foundation to build on. Most, however, expressed that there was still a lot of room for improvement. Despite some folks feeling like City staff were receptive, one stakeholder described their relationship as "tolerant," saying that "They smile and nod, and choose not to offend us, but do not take us seriously."

To the extent their community had an existing relationship with the City of Bend, most stakeholders said the City only reached out when it needed something from their community — otherwise, they described having to initiate conversations. For many, interactions with City leadership and City staff left them feeling undervalued. One stakeholder shared that their community needed "to be a priority, not a second or fourth or fifth thought."

Others shared concerns about tokenism — a symbolic effort to engage a small number of people from marginalized and underrepresented groups to give the appearance of fairness. One stakeholder described feeling like an afterthought, as if the City realized, “Oh, we need one of you.”

THEME | Increased Representation and Inclusion

The vast majority of community stakeholders shared frustration about the lack of diversity in both elected City officials and City staff. Another stakeholder identified this as a priority for youth of color — “our kids need to see others, particularly adults, that look like them.” Along similar lines, one stakeholder emphasized the importance of diverse representation in media and ad campaigns, especially those targeted at bringing people to Bend to visit, work, and live.

Others said the City of Bend could build and improve some of the work they have done so far, in particular with respect to the Welcoming Week. One community stakeholder shared: “...could we include LGBTQ+ people, too? Everyone has an immigration status and LGBTQ+ people are a part of that...we have [people who are] LGBTQ+ and people of color.”⁴

About Intersectionality

People's identities do not exist independently of each other. The overlap of identities may result in experiences of discrimination or harassment that are unique to that intersection of identities.

Another common thread was a sense of being excluded from decision making processes and wanting a seat at the table where decisions are made. One stakeholder noted that having a seat at the table requires removing barriers to participation — including access to essential services.

THEME | Investing in Meaningful Systems Change

The exhaustion and frustration of these community stakeholders was woven throughout their feedback. While there was cautious optimism around the City’s DEI work, there was also vocal concern that these efforts would not lead to meaningful change.

Many of the community stakeholders expressed that fundamentally, systems — especially government systems — were designed to benefit dominant culture and would continue to do so without fundamental institutional change. Others shared profound concerns that the needs of marginalized communities would be “sugarcoated and downplayed so they are easier to address.”

Some highlighted the “power of the purse,” noting that “money shows where the priorities are.” Stakeholders articulated this in a variety of ways, from creating line items in the City budget to support DEI efforts to funding City departments based on how well they meet DEI metrics. Another stakeholder explained the ripple effect of investing in equity. “If you can’t give access to one person, it’s really 10 people,” they said, adding that investing in equity at the outset is “cheaper for all.”

In other words...

Members of marginalized communities are eager to engage more authentically with the City. And while different groups have distinct needs, many communities share similar concerns. While the key themes from this feedback is reflected in the Allyship in Action recommendations, the community stakeholder feedback and recommendations (in greater detail in [Appendix D](#)) can help to identify community-specific needs, priorities, and action items.

⁴ In recent community discussions around Welcoming Week, City staff shared that the Welcoming City mandate has expanded to allow for a broader lens than just welcoming immigrants and that the Welcoming Week and Pride will coincide in the same month and could provide opportunities for collaboration.

Recommendations

Support Equitable Access to Essential Services

Most stakeholders emphasized the challenges their community members face in meeting their basic needs — and the impact that has on their ability to engage and have their voices heard by the City government. These needs included: affordable housing, transportation, healthcare, childcare, and internet access. Because civic engagement opportunities — and access to City services — are often dependent on the availability of these resources, community members who are struggling to meet these needs may be particularly disconnected from the City. While the City can only directly influence those services it provides, it can influence other service providers through its leadership and advocacy, and recognize the impact that these gaps have on folks' engagement.

Increase Access to Government

Recognize and respond to the barriers between residents of Bend and their City government to provide more equitable access and more inclusive decision making. In addition to addressing the barriers presented by unmet basic needs, the City should:

- Increase language access for people who speak languages other than English.
- Ensure that communicating with the City does not require computer or internet access.
- Provide opportunities for underrepresented communities to learn how the City works.

Build Authentic and Mutual Relationships

Authentic relationship building takes time, mutual care, and interest. Relationships should not be transactional — “I need something from you” — but mutually supportive and responsive — “What is our common ground and how can we help each other?” Relationships should also acknowledge and account for power dynamics. An equitable relationship requires the willingness to share power and to build power from within the community. This means building relationships with more than one member of a given community, recognizing intragroup diversity, and accepting that trust takes time to develop — especially when harm has been done in the past.

“I would like to see the members of the City go into the City, rather than expecting communities to come to them,” one stakeholder said, echoing a common sentiment. “To build real relationships.”

These relationships may be both formal and informal — for example, the Bend City Council could develop a government-to-government relationship with the Warm Springs Tribal Council and an individual Council member could serve as a board member for a community organization such as Warm Spring Community Action Team or Unite Warm Springs. Most communities do not have official spokespeople with whom all members agree, so getting multiple perspectives is key.

Prioritize and Proactively Engage Marginalized Communities

Communities can tell if they were invited to a process as a formality rather than as a valued partner. The perspectives of marginalized and underrepresented communities should be sought early on in a project or process and factored into the final decision. For many, interactions with City leadership and City staff left them feeling undervalued.

Increase Representation on Council, Committees, and Staff

Increase opportunities for people from marginalized and underrepresented communities to engage with the City, through mentorship, job shadowing, internships, leadership development programs or other means, to create a pipeline for diverse talent on staff and Council. Support these efforts by creating an action plan with concrete targets for hiring diverse staff and awarding contracts.

Offer Visible and Tangible Support of Marginalized Communities

Show members of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities that they are seen and valued in Bend by providing visible and tangible support for the cultural institutions, celebrations, and other needs of these communities. For example: the City could honor Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of Christopher Columbus Day,⁵ sponsor an LGBTQ+ community center, or speak out publicly in support of the rights of marginalized communities.

Create and Support Culturally-Specific Resources and Services

At a minimum, services should be responsive to the needs of historically marginalized communities. But stakeholders asked that the City take the next step and support culturally-specific resources and services. Culturally-specific services are ones created by and for specific cultural communities, with their needs, priorities, and values embedded in their creation and implementation. Examples mentioned by stakeholders include: supporting a Latinx/Hispanic or LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce, supporting the creation of community spaces for older adults or LGBTQ+ people, creating staff or Council liaisons to specific communities or cultural organizations, and providing public information in the language and modes necessary to reach all communities.

Establish Policies that Support Equity

City Council should seek to establish policies that address systemic inequities faced by members of marginalized or underrepresented communities in meaningful ways. For example: policies to prevent housing discrimination and create affordable housing opportunities for people who are formerly incarcerated, debt-burdened, low income, experiencing chronic homelessness, etc.

Gather Data to Make Informed Decisions

To make data-driven decisions that benefit people from marginalized and underrepresented communities, their voices must be included in — and be able to be disaggregated from — data sources. For example: track the racial and ethnic identities of people arrested by law enforcement and traffic violations issued to track the impact of implicit bias; gather demographic data on Council and committee/commission members; and identify unmet needs and other disparities.

Bring Marginalized Communities to the Seats of Power

Many stakeholders said they felt excluded from decision-making processes and wanted their communities to have a seat at the table where decisions are made. This includes removing existing barriers to participation — an invitation is not enough if the seat cannot be accessed. As one stakeholder described it: “I want a fair chance to create relationships with people in power and the access.”

⁵ Since 2016 the City of Bend has recognized both Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples' Day.

DEI Task Force Recommendations

Background

The City of Bend Short-Term DEI Task Force was established to support the biennial goals set by City Council. It was tasked by City staff with identifying needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities in Bend and making recommendations regarding the establishment of a permanent DEI committee or commission.

The recommendations of the DEI Task Force for the establishment of a permanent DEI commission and a culture shift at the City of Bend are the culmination of a process of research, reflection, and discussion on the needs and priorities of marginalized and underrepresented communities.

For the unabridged DEI Task Force feedback and recommendations, see [Appendix E: DEI Task Force Report and Recommendations](#).

Needs and Priorities

Task Force members described the need for a multifaceted Commission with a responsibility to historically marginalized and underrepresented communities in Bend, to the City Council, and to the community as a whole.

The Task Force articulated specific **needs** including:

- A place to bring concerns or complaints of discrimination;
- A way to address alleged violations of the Bend Equal Rights Ordinance that does not involve BOLI or going to court;
- A mechanism for ensuring that the voices of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities are included in all aspects of City decision making;
- More intentional outreach to and engagement with historically marginalized and underrepresented communities;
- Tools and resources to support City Council and staff in engaging in DEI work; and
- To be taken seriously and appropriately supported and resourced.

The Task Force identified **priorities** that centered around themes of accountability and intentionality, including:

- A forum for community concerns or complaints related to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Intentional and proactive inclusion of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities in goal-setting and planning processes;
- A driver for change that has the power/authority to hold City Council accountable; and
- Rooting the Commission's response role in restorative justice principles.

The Task Force also identified **other considerations**, including:

- Some members may need stipends to offset costs associated with serving on the Commission;
- The Commission's role and responsibilities should be a realistic reflection of its authority, capacity, and resources;
- The Commission will need the support of a dedicated staff member to both begin and sustain its work;
- The existing standard application includes potential barriers to participation for some members of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities; and
- City Council and staff will need other sources of support to bridge the gap until the Commission is up and running.

Guiding Principles and Framework

The City of Bend DEI Task Force recommendations are guided by the fundamental principle that to achieve the equity and inclusion goals of City Council, and to ensure the success of the work of the Human Rights and Equity Commission, the City of Bend under the direction of the City Manager must be directed to:

Apply equity and social justice foundational practices to City actions and endeavor to integrate these practices into the City's: strategic, operational and business plans; management and reporting systems for accountability and performance; and budgets in order to eliminate inequities and create opportunities for all people and communities.

To that end, the Task Force emphasized that the application, membership, and the services of this Commission and all City committees should be accessible to all. Specifically, the group called attention to community members with the following experiences, noting that the City may need to be proactive in addressing access issues in order to bring people to the table.

1. Community members who do not read, write, and/or speak English.
2. Community members of all immigration statuses.
3. Community members without access to a personal computer, printer, smart phone, or tablet.
4. Community members caring for children or others.
5. Community members without access to a vehicle or rideshare services.
6. Community members with diverse abilities and access needs, including people who have physical, mental, sensory, and intellectual/developmental disabilities. This list is by no means exhaustive, but it gives an example of the variety of abilities and access needs desired.

Recommendations

The City of Bend DEI Task Force makes the following recommendations to the City Council.

Adopt an ordinance establishing a permanent Human Rights and Equity Commission.

Adopt an ordinance establishing a permanent and independent Human Rights and Equity Commission focused on responding to the needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities and providing feedback on issues related to diversity, equity, and/or inclusion in the City of Bend, with roles to include:

1. Investigating and responding to complaints of discrimination and/or violations of the Bend Equal Rights Ordinance by:
 - a. Assisting impacted parties with connecting to and navigating community resources to access care, support, education, and/or resolution.
 - b. Developing and facilitating non-punitive resolutions, such as mediation or restorative justice, supported by appropriate education and resources.
2. Advising City Council on issues relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including the equity impacts of policies and practices, the needs and priorities of marginalized and underrepresented communities, and strategies to increase engagement with these groups.
3. Creating and providing regular guidance and feedback on the implementation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan for the City of Bend that is responsive to the evolving needs of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities as well as the capacity of City Council and staff.

Remove Barriers to Service at the City

Review the standard City Committee/Commission application prior to the establishment of the Human Rights and Equity Commission and remove all unnecessary barriers to engagement by historically marginalized and/or underrepresented groups and ensure that the membership for this Commission and other committees is open and accessible.

Offset Costs of Participation to Increase Access

Establish the means and the process to provide financial compensation (such as a stipend) to Commission members that request it to offset the costs of participating (childcare, transportation, lost wages, etc.).

Create a Diverse and Representative Commission

Ensure that the membership of the Commission includes:

1. A majority of members who identify as a member of one or more historically marginalized or underrepresented communities, including but not limited to: people of color, LGBTQ people,

people with disabilities, lower income people, members of minority faith groups (e.g. Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, etc.), immigrants, youth, and people 65+.

2. At least one person who identifies as Native or Indigenous, with preference for someone with a connection to a local tribal community.
3. People who live or work in Bend or otherwise consider Bend their community.
4. People who are as reflective as possible of diverse historically marginalized and/or underrepresented communities in Bend.
5. People with experience engaging in work related to diversity, equity, and inclusion or other community organizing, as demonstrated by a resume, references, and/or responses to DEI-related questions.
6. An odd number of members between 9 and 15 that meets at a time and in a manner that is most accessible to the most members (including options for remote participation), in order to represent Bend's historically marginalized and underrepresented communities and to effectively carry out the work of the Commission.

Provide Appropriate Staff Support

Direct a dedicated staff member to serve as a liaison between the Commission and the City of Bend and support the establishment, visioning, and development of the Human Rights and Equity Commission by:

1. Providing regular opportunities for members of the general public to provide feedback on the needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities.
2. Facilitating learning and resources to support the work of the Commission and establishing connections with elected officials, City leadership, and other decision makers.

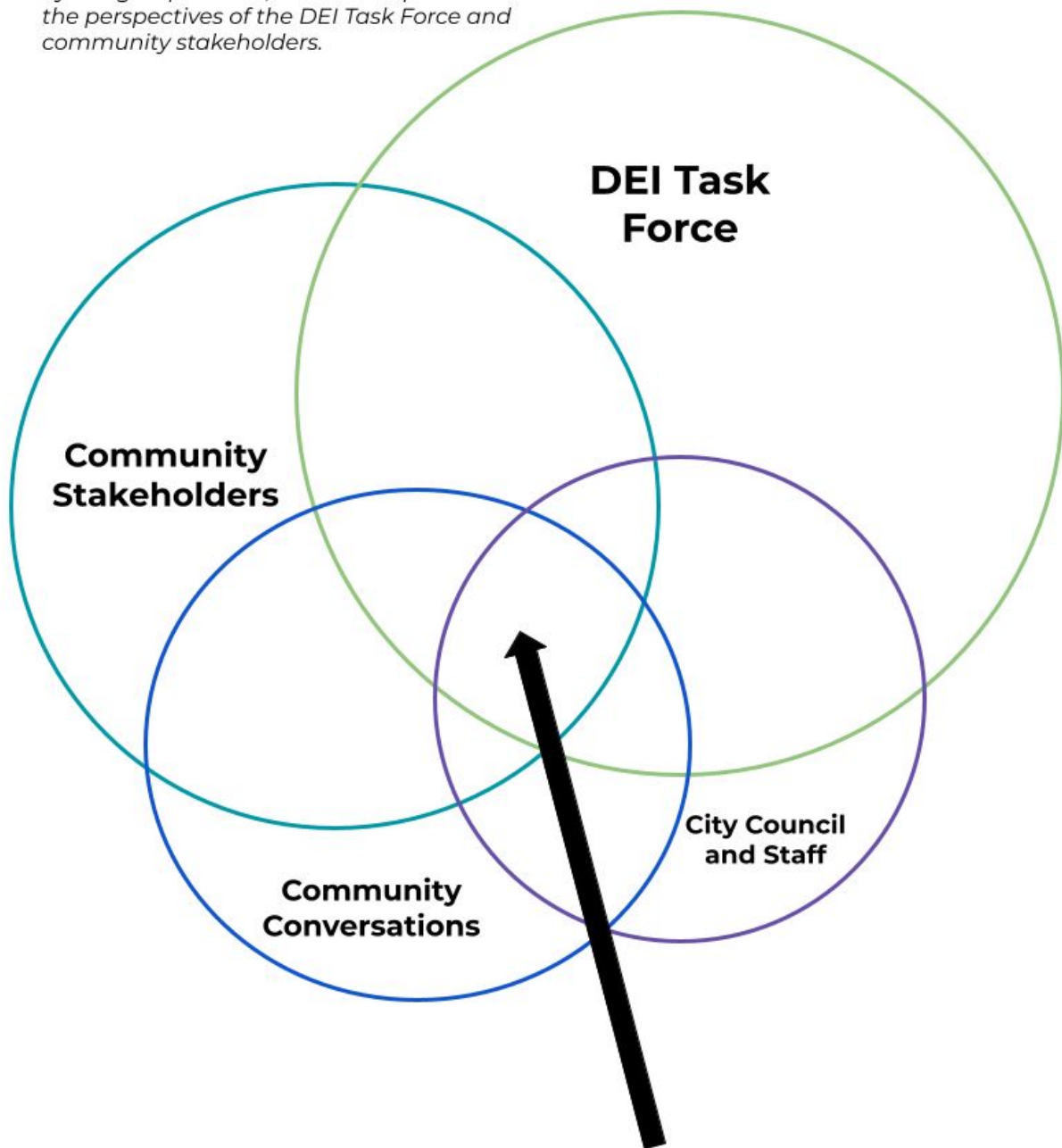
For more details see [Appendix E: DEI Task Force Report and Recommendations](#).

In other words... Creating a Human Rights and Equity Commission — as described in the DEI Task Force recommendations — is an essential first step to ensuring that marginalized and underrepresented communities have the access and power to make their voices heard and their needs and priorities known.

Allyship in Action Recommendations

Background

Allyship in Action's recommendations reflect the overarching themes expressed by the groups below, with an emphasis on the perspectives of the DEI Task Force and community stakeholders.



Allyship in Action Recommendations

The following recommendations are a synthesis of feedback from the DEI Task Force and conversations with community stakeholders, and is informed by data from other sources as well as best practices in diversity, equity, and inclusion. To prepare for the next phase of work, Allyship in Action recommends the following approaches and actions.

Recommended Approaches

Practice what you promote.

Messaging plays an important role in embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion into the daily work of an organization, but statements not backed by meaningful action can be more damaging than no statement at all. On the other end of the spectrum, taking action without engaging staff and stakeholders can lead to resentment. Transparency, humility, and follow-through help build trust.

Prioritize — and invest in — DEI efforts.

While individual efforts are critical to the success of DEI work, it also requires an investment of time, money, and other resources to be sustainable. This may include investing in translators, bilingual staff, community liaisons, and/or other DEI professionals as well as continued learning and community partnerships. DEI efforts that rely on the passion and goodwill of members from marginalized and underrepresented communities are both inequitable and likely to lead to burnout. When times are tough — whether financially, socially, or politically — prioritizing equity helps to direct resources where they are needed most.

Embrace systemic change.

Most systems produce the results they were designed to produce. Systemic change can be challenging and uncomfortable because it requires those who hold power to share that power and even to step aside. It takes courage and creativity to create equitable and inclusive communities.

Measure what matters to plan for the future.

Bend is a growing city that is becoming increasingly diverse. Rather than use outdated and problematic U.S. Census numbers⁶, the City of Bend should rely on the more accurate and forward looking data available through the Bend La Pine Schools about the diversity that is coming up through the local schools. Collecting broad demographic data can reveal disparities as well as the degree to which committee members and staff reflect the community. While it can be difficult to create a metric to measure the success of DEI work internally, periodic surveys can help track progress or reveal gaps in access to be addressed.

Evaluate the equity impacts of all policies and practices.

Because results do not always align with intentions, it is important to evaluate the impacts of policies and practices to identify potential or actual inequities.

⁶ U.S. Census data is problematic because of the way race is framed (e.g. people from the Middle East and North Africa are counted as white) and the tendency to undercount some marginalized communities..

Recommended Actions

Invest in public safety alternatives that reduce the reliance on tactics that disproportionately impact marginalized communities.

Many cities are exploring different approaches to public safety in response to concerns about police use of force, racial profiling, and the treatment of members of marginalized communities including Black people, people of color, people with mental illness, and LGBTQ+ people. Bend's police department has already started laying the foundations of relationship building with the Black, Latinx, and deaf communities, and is well-positioned to explore new approaches and partnerships.

Establish relationships with marginalized and underrepresented communities and seek their input on decisions.

City staff and members of Council have begun building some relationships, but there are many opportunities to initiate and expand collaborations with organizations serving marginalized and underrepresented communities. Even more important is not to reach out to those organizations only when the City needs something, but to support and engage with these groups proactively. Inclusion means not just giving marginalized and underrepresented people a seat at the table, but also prioritizing their needs and valuing what they bring.

Ensure that all public meetings, materials, and comment opportunities are accessible to all residents.

Public engagement should be accessible to folks including: people who don't speak or read English, people with hearing or visual impairments, people without access to or agility with communications technology, people who need childcare or transportation, etc. A process cannot truly be considered public if some residents cannot read the agenda, see or hear the information being presented, find the childcare or transportation to attend, fit comfortably in the chairs, or use the restroom safely.

Ensure that committees are accessible and representative.

The current application process is difficult to access and is solely available online. The City should make reducing barriers to participation a priority. Regularly collecting demographic data can highlight opportunities to recruit members who better reflect the social and cultural diversity of Bend. Because the City of Bend does not currently collect this information, Allyship in Action conducted a one-time demographic survey for this report.

Establish a permanent Human Rights and Equity Commission that prioritizes the recommendations of the DEI Task Force.

Giving community members a seat at the table is a first step in building trust with marginalized and underrepresented groups, as the City Council did in mandating the creation of a permanent City DEI commission and City staff did in asking the short term DEI Task Force to provide recommendations to inform its creation. If not all of the DEI Task Force recommendations can be incorporated into this City commission, work to ensure that these needs are addressed in other ways, such as through collaboration with other public agencies.

Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Language is evolving and contextual, particularly as it relates to personal and social identities and DEI work. Both locally and nationally, there may be differences in the way terms are used to describe this work. **Allyship in Action acknowledges this can be uncomfortable and confusing and readers are invited to refer back to this glossary as needed.** This report uses language that is reflective of Allyship in Action's best practices and deviates from that language when citing external sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, in order to preserve the integrity of the way the source characterized the demographic data.

A Note About Language

This section explains why Allyship in Action decided to use certain terms when there are differences in the way in which terms are used to describe this work.

Dominant Identity/Culture: Refers to the identities held or the pattern of knowledge, belief, and behavior valued by those who have historically held power; normative cultural expectations. For the purposes of this report, “dominant identities” include white people, men, heterosexuals, cisgender people, and people without disabilities.

Latinx/Hispanic: Latina/Latino/Latinx are feminine, masculine, and gender-inclusive identity terms used by some people with origins/ancestry in Latin America (Mexico and Central and South America). Hispanic is an identity term used by some people with origins/ancestry in a Spanish-speaking country, and is the term used by the U.S. Census and other government surveys. Latinx and Hispanic are overlapping, but not identical, categories. For example: Brazilians may be described as Latinx but not Hispanic, while Spaniards are Hispanic, but not Latinx. Others prefer to identify themselves with their country of origin (e.g. Mexican, Colombian, etc.)⁷. Allyship in Action uses Latinx/Hispanic in this report with the understanding that it is not a perfect or all-inclusive term. In some parts of the report, we shorten this to “Latinx” for brevity.

LGBTQ+: LGBTQ+ is an umbrella term that includes people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer, with the plus representing additional marginalized gender and sexual identities including asexual, intersex, Two Spirit, non-binary, and others. Allyship in Action may use the term LGBTQ+ to refer specifically to marginalized sexual orientations, separate from gender identity or expression.

Marginalized:⁸ Marginalized (or “historically marginalized”) describes the ways in which certain groups and identities have been systematically excluded from access and opportunity by those with more dominant identities in order to reinforce entitlement, consolidate power, and maintain control. The groups and identities we used “marginalized” to describe may be referred to by others as “diverse,” “minorities/minoritized,” “underrepresented/underserved,” “oppressed,” or other terms. For clarity, Allyship in Action has normalized these terms within this report to “marginalized,” unless used in direct quotes. Allyship in Action uses “marginalized” interchangeably with “historically marginalized” and intends that the standalone word bears the full weight and impact of history.

⁷ “Hispanic vs. Latino vs. Latinx: A Brief History of How These Words Originated,” [Remezcla](#) (2018)

⁸ Within Allyship in Action, there are varying levels of comfort with the use of the word “marginalized” and there is an ongoing local and national dialogue around the use of the words used to describe people with these identities or experiences.

Older adult: Depending on the context, older adult (or older person) typically refers to someone who is older than 60 or 65. Because age is a dynamic identity, it is not considered historically marginalized. That said, older adults do experience age-based discrimination (ageism) and are often underrepresented in the workforce.

People of color (POC): People of color is an identity term that “suggests a social relationship among racial and ethnic minority groups”⁹ and is sometimes used to refer to people who are not white. The term is inclusive of people who are Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Indigenous, Latinx/Hispanic, and/or multiracial. While some prefer the term BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color; or Black and Indigenous people of color), Allyship in Action is using POC for this report.

While BIPOC is a more descriptive term that highlights Indigenous and Black people’s unique experiences with racism, it is a less accurate descriptor of the data highlighted in this report. Allyship in Action did not receive feedback from enough Black or Indigenous folks to center their experiences without risking their privacy.

Allyship in Action was intentional about using the term “person of color” in the staff survey. Due to the small numbers of City staff who may have identified as Black, Native/Indigenous, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian, etc, Allyship in Action intentionally created broad categories to be able to invite staff experiences and feedback while protecting identities. .

People formerly incarcerated: The [Prison Studies Project](#) recommends using “people first” language or “returning citizen” when referring to people with criminal records. Allyship in Action is choosing to model their use of “people formerly incarcerated” due to the way the word “citizen” may exclude people who are undocumented.

Underrepresented: In using the word underrepresented, Allyship in Action intends to describe people, communities, and identities that have been represented or portrayed (in politics, media, etc.) to a lesser extent than they are present in the population historically. People who are underrepresented are often people from marginalized communities and Allyship in Action uses this term to tie into the wording of the City Council goal. For simplicity and readability, Allyship in Action uses “underrepresented” rather than “historically underrepresented” and intends that the standalone word bears the full weight and impact of history.

Glossary of Terms

Access/accessibility: The ability or right of a person to get what they need (such as services, entrance, work, education, etc.).

Agender: Someone without gender or who does not identify strongly with gender.

Allyship: A practice ... in which a person holding systemic power seeks to end oppression in solidarity with a group of people who are systemically disempowered. (OCADSV)

Asexual: A sexual orientation characterized by not experiencing strong sexual attraction.

Belonging: The feeling of being welcome, included, or part of a group.

Bias: A conscious or subconscious attitude toward people or association of a stereotype based on their (actual or perceived) identity or background.

⁹ “People of Color,” *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Society*, Salvador Vidal-Ortiz (2008)

BIPOC: Refers to Black, Indigenous, and people of color to highlight the oppression, injustice, and unique relationship to whiteness that Indigenous and Black people have.

Bisexual: To be emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender.

Cisgender: Someone whose gender aligns with expectations based on their sex assigned at birth.

Discrimination: The act of treating a person differently based on their (actual or perceived) identity or background. Typically refers to negative treatment.

(Dis)ability: The degree to which a person's abilities align with or deviate from social norms regarding physical, mental, and/or emotional health.

Diversity: Diversity refers to differences in identity and/or experience, typically focusing on those identities or experiences that may be subject to bias, harassment, or discrimination, such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, socioeconomic/class status, ability, religion, language, nation of origin, etc.

Dominant Identity/Culture: Refers to the identities held or the pattern of knowledge, belief, and behavior valued by those who have historically held power; normative cultural expectations.

Equity: Refers to the distribution of time, resources, and focus in a way that counteracts disparities to create equal access and outcomes.

Ethnicity: An identity based on learned aspects of oneself, i.e., nationality, language, and culture. This identity may or may not be the same as a person's national origin.

Gay: Describes people (typically men) who are attracted to people of the same sex or gender.

Gender: A person's sense of being a woman, a man, another gender, or no gender.

Harassment: Offensive behavior that demeans or humiliates a person.

Hispanic: Someone who identifies as being of a Spanish-speaking background and/or traces their origin or descent to a Spanish-speaking country.

Human rights: Rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of identity or status, including: the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more.

Inclusion: Creating a culture where all people feel respected, accepted, and valued.

Intersectionality: Concept that acknowledges that people's identities do not exist independently of each other and that the overlap of identities may result in unique experiences of discrimination.

Intersex: A person whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and/or genitals differs from the two expected patterns.

Latina/Latino/Latinx: Feminine, masculine, and gender-neutral identity terms used by some people with origins/ancestry in Latin America (Mexico and Central and South America).

Lesbian: Term used to describe women who are attracted to other women.

LGBTQ+: An umbrella term used to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, with the + representing additional marginalized identities including, but not limited to: pansexual, asexual, intersex, non-binary, and Two Spirit.

Marginalized: Describes people, communities, and identities that have been intentionally disempowered and/or excluded from access and opportunity by laws and policies over the course of many years.

Marginalization: The process in which individuals are denied access to various rights, opportunities, and resources that are normally available to members of the dominant culture (e.g., housing, employment, healthcare, civic engagement, and due process).

Microaggressions: Interpersonal actions that, regardless of intent, reinforce systems of oppression and contribute to minority stress.

Minority faith: Religious belief held by a minority of the population usually subject to stigma or discrimination (e.g. Muslim, Jewish, etc.)

Multiracial: A person with mixed ancestry of two or more races. The term may also include people of mixed race ancestry who self-identify with just one group culturally and socially.

National origin: A person's country/nation/sovereign entity of origin.

Native/Indigenous: May also be referred to as First Nations peoples, Native American, or American Indian/Alaskan Native depending on the historical or situational context. Describes ethnic groups who are the earliest known inhabitants of an area, in contrast to groups that have colonized or occupied the area later.

Nonbinary: A person whose gender identity falls outside of the gender binary or man or woman.

Older adults: People who are 60 and older.

Oppression: An abuse of power, supported by systems and institutions, that results in unjust treatment or control.

Pansexual: A person who is sexually attracted to all or many sexes, genders, or gender expressions.

Person/people of color (POC): A person who has physical characteristics that distinguish them from white people. Some people identify as a POC to create coalitions across identity. Some people choose not to identify as POC because it can erase their community's unique experiences.

Person/people with a disability: A person who experiences physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental limitations that impairs or interferes with one or more major life activities, including walking, lifting, learning, breathing, etc.

Privilege: Advantage, access, or benefits that result from a person's membership in a dominant cultural identity group.

Protected Class: A category of people who are legally protected from identity-based discrimination. This list varies from state to state, and state to nation. In Oregon, protected classes include: race, color, national origin, sex (includes pregnancy-related conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age (18 and older), physical or mental disability, and veteran's status.

Queer: An identity term that can include lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, intersex people, and other identities. A reclaimed word that is sometimes still used as a slur.

Race: A social construct created to classify and categorize people based skin color and other physical, social, and biological attributes.

Religious or spiritual identity: A person's sense of belonging, formally or informally, to a religious/spiritual community or belief system.

Restorative justice: An approach to justice in which a person who has experienced harm is able to share their experience of what happened with the person who caused the harm, discuss how and why the behavior harmed them, and come to a consensus for what the person who caused harm can do to repair the harm.

Sex: A categorization (typically male or female) based on the appearance of an infant's external genitalia and formalized in legal identity documents that influences gender expectations.

Sexual orientation: The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes.

Socioeconomic status: A social and economic position in relation to others that is measured as a combination of education, income, and work experience.

Trans(gender): An adjective used to describe someone who identifies as a gender other than one expected in relation to their sex assigned at birth.

Two Spirit: A term used by some Native/Indigenous people to describe their sexual, gender, and/or spiritual identity.

Underrepresented: Describes people, communities, and identities that have been less represented or portrayed (in politics, media, etc.) than they are present in the population over the course of time.

Undocumented: Refers to foreign-born individuals who do not have documentation granting legal residency in the United States.

Youth: People under the age of 21.

Appendix B: About Bend



Photo via City of Bend

This is Treaty Land

Before it was established as a city in 1905, the area now known as Bend was part of the lands ceded to the U.S. government by tribal communities in the 1855 Treaty of Wasco, Columbia River, Oregon Territory with the Taih, Wyam, Tenino, & Dock-Spus Bands of the Walla-Walla, and the Dalles, Ki-Gal-Twal-La, and the Dog River Bands of the Wasco. Prior to white settlement in the early 1800s, Central Oregon was a place where many tribes lived, hunted, fished, gathered, and traveled through for trade.

Today, descendants of those tribes can be found on the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Indian Reservation and in communities across Central Oregon. While Native Americans were once the majority in Central Oregon, today, they represent about 0.5% of Bend's population.

The Community

Race and Ethnicity

In total, close to 10% of Bend's population is American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, or Multiracial according to the American Community Survey.¹⁰ But those numbers are expected to grow. In the Bend-La Pine schools, for example, 18% of students are children of color and collectively, students speak 38+ different languages.

People of color are currently underrepresented among City staff, City Council, and City committees..

Income and Cost of Living

Bend is sometimes described as “Poverty with a View” — a reference to the number of residents who are living in poverty or are rent burdened (spending more than 30% of their income on rent). A

¹⁰ [American Community Survey](#), U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

2015 report rated Deschutes County's income inequality as "moderate" and "getting worse."¹¹ According to the Economic Policy Institute, the top 1% percent of Bend residents made 21.7 times more than the average income of those in the bottom 99%.

The American Community Survey reports that the 2018 median household income is \$63,468 with an average (per capita) income of \$36,516.¹² While 10.3% of people in Bend qualify as living in poverty and 35% of students at the Bend-La Pine schools qualify for free/reduced price lunch.¹³

People of color in Deschutes County are more likely to experience poverty than white people. Black residents of Deschutes County experience the highest rates of poverty and are four times as likely to have earnings below the poverty line as white residents.

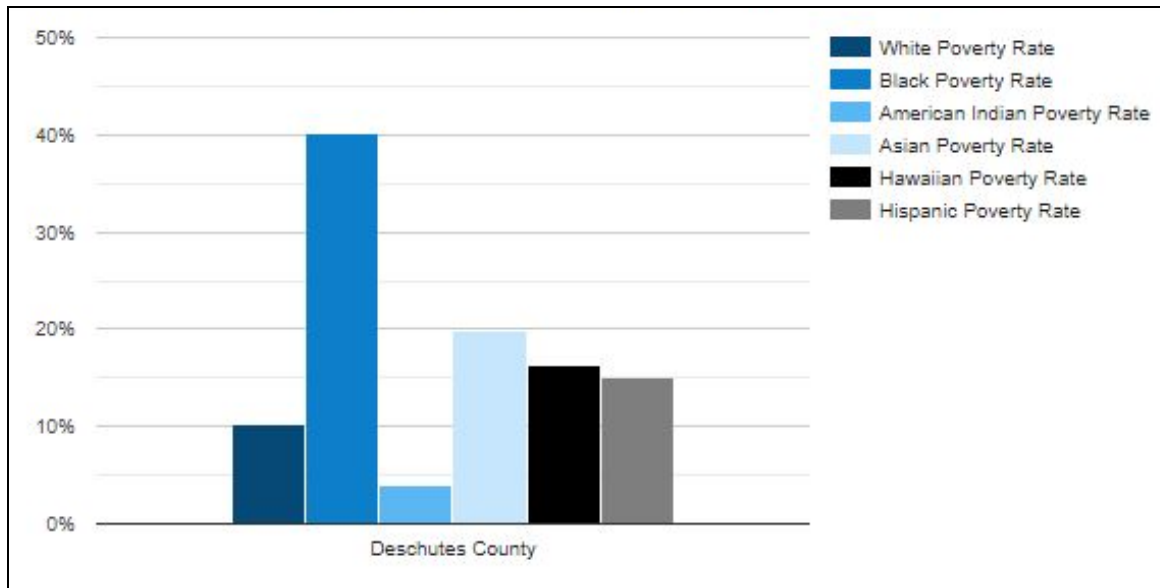


Figure 3: Deschutes County poverty rate by race (via TownCharts.com)

Employment and Education

According to Economic Development of Central Oregon (EDCO), Bend's largest employers include:

1. St. Charles Health System
2. Bend-LaPine School District
3. Deschutes County
4. Central Oregon Community College
5. Mt. Bachelor
6. City of Bend
7. Safeway
8. U.S. Forest Service/Deschutes National Forest
9. IBEX
10. Summit Memorial Group
11. Bend Park and Recreation District
12. Les Schwab Headquarters and Tire Centers

Bend's top industries by employment include:

1. Transportation, trade, and utilities
2. Private education and health services
3. Leisure and hospitality

¹¹ [Tracking Oregon's Progress: A Focus on Income Inequality](#), Oregon Community Foundation and Oregon State University (2015)

¹² [American Community Survey](#), U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

¹³ Bend La Pine Schools Report Card At-A-Glance, [Oregon Department of Education](#) (2018-2019).

According to the American Community Survey, 95.4% of people 25 and older are high school graduates and 43.3% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Bend is home to two institutions of higher education — Central Oregon Community College and OSU-Cascades.

The Bend-La Pine School District reported an on-time graduation rate of 80.6% for the class of 2019. White students had an on-time graduation rate of 85%. Conversely, students receiving free/reduced price lunch, students with disabilities, and students identifying as migrants, American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, multiracial, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, all had lower rates of graduation. Migrant students had the lowest rates of on time graduation at 54%.¹⁴

Gender and Sexuality



While there is no city-level data about gender identity and sexual orientation, the most recent Oregon Healthy Teens (OHT) Survey¹⁵ reports that approximately 6% of 8th and 11th graders in Oregon identify as transgender, nonbinary, or something other than male or female. The same survey found that 12% of Oregon students identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or something other than heterosexual.

The annual Central Oregon Pride festival has been held in Bend for more than 15 years, and attracts thousands of people to Drake Park each summer. To the best of Allyship in Action's knowledge, Bend has had one out LGBTQ+ elected official — former COCC Board Chair John Mundy.

Disability

The OHT Survey also found that 32% of 8th graders and 34% of 11th graders reported some type of disability. Statewide, 25% of adults report having a disability, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

Age

According to American Community Survey, 22.6% of Bend's residents are under the age of 18 and 16.5% are age 65+ years old.¹⁶

¹⁴ Bend La Pine Schools Report Card At-A-Glance, [Oregon Department of Education](#) (2018-2019).

¹⁵ [Oregon Healthy Teens Survey State of Oregon Report](#), Oregon Health Authority (2019)

¹⁶ [American Community Survey](#), U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

The Government

City Council

Bend City Councilors and the Mayor are elected by the voters in Bend to serve four-year terms, while the Mayor Pro Tem is selected by Council from among its members.

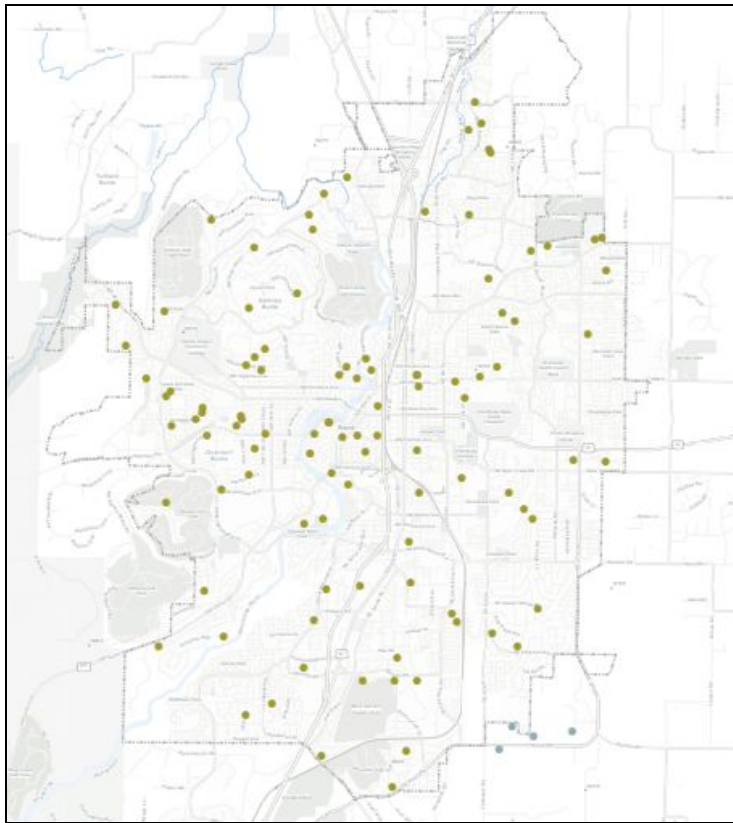
Prior to the election of current Mayor Sally Russell, the Mayor was selected by Council from among its members. Mayor Russell is the first elected mayor in Bend since 1923. The Mayor's role is to lead City Council meetings and serve as an ambassador for the City. Day-to-day operations of the City are managed by City Manager Eric King.



Bend's current City Council includes seven members (pictured above, left to right) — Justin Livingston, Barb Campbell, Bill Mosley, Mayor Sally Russell, Mayor Pro-Tem Bruce Abernethy, Gena Goodman-Campbell, and Chris Piper. Allyship in Action is unaware of any City Councilors, past or present, who are Latinx, people of color, or members of the LGBTQ+ community and City staff was unable to provide data that confirmed otherwise. Allyship in Action did not request demographic data from members of City Council.

Boards, Committees, and Commissions

City boards, committees, and commissions are created by City staff, City Council, or State statute.



Permanent “Citizen Committees” include:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
- Bend Economic Development Advisory Board (BEDAB)
- Budget Committee
- Landmarks Commission
- Neighborhood Leadership Alliance (NLA)
- Planning Commission
- Bend Urban Renewal Agency (BURA)

An internal City diversity, equity, and inclusion workgroup recently mapped the geographic representation of committee and commission members and found broad distribution across the City’s quadrants. (See image at left.)

Figure: Geographic distribution of “Citizen Committee” members.

Members of boards, committees, and commissions are selected by Council following an application process. The current application does not ask demographic questions or ask questions about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Allyship in Action collected demographic data about members of these bodies via a short online survey.

While members of boards, committees, and commissions are currently broadly representative of the City’s four quadrants, they appear to be far less representative of the City’s racial and ethnic demographics.

Allyship in Action created a short demographic survey, sent by City staff to approximately 70 active members of City committees and/or commissions. Of the 63% who responded, 100% identified as white (including two respondents who additionally identified as Asian). None of the respondents identified as Latinx/Hispanic. Respondents also tended to be older than the median age in Bend. See the full results compared to Bend demographics in the table below.

Table: Demographic representation of committee members.

Race	Committee Members	City of Bend Population¹⁷
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.0%	0.4%
Asian	4.5%	1.9%
Black or African American	0.0%	0.6%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%
White	100.0%	92.7%
More than one race	04.5%	3.2%
Ethnicity	Committee Members	City of Bend Population
Hispanic or Latino ¹⁸	0.0%	9.1%
Gender	Committee Members	City of Bend Population
Men	52.3%	48%
Women	47.7%	52%
Transgender/Non-Binary/Two Spirit	0.0%	0.65% ¹⁹
Sexual Orientation	Committee Members	City of Bend Population
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual+	15.9%	5.6% ²⁰
Heterosexual	81.8%	No data
Disability	Committee Members	City of Bend Population
Any Disability	9.1%	25% ²¹
Age	Committee Members	City of Bend Population
Median	45-64 years old	38.2 years old

¹⁷ The City of Bend population data from [American Community Survey](#), U.S. Census Bureau (2018). Source data on race data does not add up to 100%.

¹⁸ People who are Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. (e.g. 7.1% of people in Bend who identify as white are also Hispanic or Latino.)

¹⁹ Oregon data from the [Williams Institute](#).

²⁰ Oregon data from the [Williams Institute](#).

²¹ Oregon data from the 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System via the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

City Staff

The demographic data for City employees was provided by the City of Bend Human Resources department. City staff are predominantly white (94%) and male (70%). While white people constitute a broad majority in Bend, they are still overrepresented at the City of Bend.

Neither the City nor the U.S. Census American Community Survey gathers data on gender identity or sexual orientation. We have included state data from the [Williams Institute](#) for comparison.

Table 2: Demographic representation of City of Bend Staff.

Race	City of Bend Staff	City of Bend Population ²²
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.4%	0.4%
Asian	0.6%	1.9%
Black/African American	0.3%	0.6%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%
White	94%	92.7%
More than one race	0%	3.2%
Ethnicity	City of Bend Staff	City of Bend Population
Hispanic or Latino ²³	4.8%	9.1%
Gender	City of Bend Staff	City of Bend Population
Men	70%	48%
Women	30%	52%
Transgender/Non-Binary/Two Spirit	No data	0.65% ²⁴
Sexual Orientation	City of Bend Staff	City of Bend Population
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual+	No data	5.6% ²⁵
Heterosexual	No data	No data
Disability	City of Bend Staff	City of Bend Population
Any Disability	No data	25% ²⁶
Age	City of Bend Staff	City of Bend Population
Median	42.5 years old	38.2 years old

²² The City of Bend population data from [American Community Survey](#), U.S. Census Bureau (2018). Source data on race data does not add up to 100%.

²³ People who are Latinx/Hispanic may be of any race. (e.g. 7.1% of people in Bend who identify as white are Latinx/Hispanic.)

²⁴ Oregon data from the [Williams Institute](#).

²⁵ Oregon data from the [Williams Institute](#).

²⁶ Oregon data from the 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System via the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Appendix C: Staff DEI Survey Questions

Survey Introduction: 5 Things to Know

1. Council's DEI directive

Last June, City Council adopted goal language prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and setting in motion an ambitious timeline for training, data collection, and community engagement. Council directed the City to work with an outside consultant to complete this work by July 2020. The City contracted with Allyship in Action, and over the past six months, Allyship in Action has:

- Provided DEI **training** and presentations for 34 City leadership staff, six City councilors, and nine other local elected officials/civic leaders;
- Provided DEI **presentations** to eight City teams;
- Organized a short-term **DEI task force** composed of diverse community members to draft recommendations for a **permanent commission** to ensure ongoing community engagement;
- Prepared a **DEI survey** to ensure that all City staff have an opportunity to provide confidential feedback on these issues.

2. Why DEI matters now

As we adapt to the challenges presented by the coronavirus, some may ask: why does DEI continue to be a priority?

- In times of crisis, existing gaps in our community become wider and new ones are exposed. It's more important than ever that we ensure all its residents are being well served and can have their voices heard.
- It's also important that we engage with our colleagues with appreciation and empathy for their unique strengths and challenges.
- By continuing to prioritize DEI, we will help ensure that we are meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in our community.

3. Your voice matters

When it comes to the work of the City of Bend, you are the experts. We need your input to help us create a workplace that is welcoming and inclusive for everyone. Your feedback will show us where we are succeeding and where we still have work to do.

4. We know it can be difficult to share your thoughts

It can be tough to share feedback that is critical or personal in nature. That's why the City is working with Allyship in Action to ensure that your privacy is protected. Allyship in Action has designed the survey to protect you from being identified by your survey responses, and will not share the individual responses with the City.

5. DEI is embedded in the City's vision, mission, and values

This work is not just driven by the Council's DEI goals and efforts to improve DEI at the City of Bend are ongoing. These efforts will be shaped by your responses to the DEI survey and informed by ongoing community and staff engagement.

Survey Instructions

About this Survey

This baseline assessment was developed and customized for the City of Bend using evidence-based models from the Oregon Coalition of Communities of Color, the Anti-Defamation League, GARE, Living Cities, and other best practices.

Taking this Survey

This survey will likely take about 10 minutes, depending on much you would like to share. It can be completed and sent to Allyship in Action in any of the following ways:

- ❖ Online (smartphone, tablet, or computer) at: bit.ly/COBDEISurvey2020.
- ❖ By mail: Send this completed paper survey using the self-addressed pre-stamped envelope to:

Allyship in Action LLC
1001 SW Disk Dr Ste 250
Bend, OR 97702
- ❖ By phone: Schedule an appointment with an Allyship in Action partner. Please email info@allyshipinaction.com or call/text (541) 241-6467 if you would like to complete the survey verbally by phone.

Paper surveys should be completed and **sent by mail** to Allyship in Action by **Friday, May 1**. Online surveys should be completed by Friday, May 8. If you need more time, or any other support to complete this survey, please email info@allyshipinaction.com or call/text (541) 241-6467.

Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc. please contact Joshua Romero at jromero@bendoregon.gov or 541-693-2185.

Survey Questions

Working at the City of Bend

This section includes questions about how you feel about working at the City of Bend.

1. How long have you worked for the City of Bend?
 - ☐ 0-2 years
 - ☐ 3-5 years
 - ☐ 6-10 years
 - ☐ More than 10 years
2. I feel like I belong at the City of Bend. (*Belonging describes the feeling of being welcome, included, or part of a group.*)
 - ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure

3. I feel like I belong on my team/unit. (*Belonging describes the feeling of being welcome, included, or part of a group.*)
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
4. My supervisor values my ideas and/or opinions.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
5. I can freely express ideas or opinions that are different from those of my coworkers without fear of negative consequences.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
6. I would recommend the City of Bend as an employer.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
7. I have experienced discrimination or harassment while working for the City of Bend because of my race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, country of origin, ability, age, or veteran status.
- ☐ Never
 - ☐ Annually
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Daily
8. If you have experienced discrimination or harassment while working for the City of Bend because of your race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, country of origin, ability, age, or veteran status, what did you do? (check all that apply)
- ☐ Address the behavior directly
 - ☐ Tell a coworker
 - ☐ Report to supervisor
 - ☐ Report to human resources
 - ☐ Report to a state or federal agency
 - ☐ Nothing
 - ☐ Other (please specify) _____

9. If you have not experienced discrimination or harassment while working for the City of Bend because of your race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, country of origin, ability, age, or veteran status, what would you feel comfortable doing if you did? (check all that apply)
- ☐ Address the behavior directly
 - ☐ Tell a coworker
 - ☐ Report to supervisor
 - ☐ Report to human resources
 - ☐ Report to a state or federal agency
 - ☐ Nothing
 - ☐ This questions does not apply to me
 - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
10. I know and understand the City of Bend's policies around discrimination and harrassment.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
11. I know and understand the resources I have for reporting the discrimination and harassment in the workplace.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
12. I feel like I have to work harder than others because of my race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, country of origin, ability, age, or veteran status.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
13. I am asked to do labor that is outside of my stated work responsibilities. (For example: organizing workplace social functions, speaking for communities I belong to, providing translation/interpretation, etc.)
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
14. All City of Bend staff have equal opportunities for advancement and promotion.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure

15. All City of Bend staff have a voice in decision-making
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
16. There are effective channels for addressing staff concerns.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This section includes questions about the City's diversity, equity, and inclusion work and your experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

17. I understand why the City is prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
18. I understand how diversity, equity, and inclusion applies to my job responsibilities.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
19. I see visible leadership in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion from... (check all that apply)
- ☐ City Council
 - ☐ The City Manager's Office
 - ☐ My team/unit leader
 - ☐ My direct supervisor
 - ☐ My coworkers
 - ☐ None of the above
 - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
20. The City of Bend has a clear strategy for recruiting and retaining staff from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, such as people of color, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) people, and people with disabilities.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure

21. The City of Bend has strong, positive relationships with community organizations serving people of color, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) people, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
22. I'm currently involved in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts (check all that apply):
- ☐ At work
 - ☐ In my personal life
 - ☐ Not involved at work, but would like to be
 - ☐ Not involved in my personal life, but would like to be
 - ☐ Not interested
23. I interact with people of color in my personal or professional life.
- ☐ Never
 - ☐ Annually
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Daily
24. I interact with LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) people in my personal or professional life.
- ☐ Never
 - ☐ Annually
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Daily
25. I interact with people with disabilities in my personal or professional life.
- ☐ Never
 - ☐ Annually
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Daily
26. I feel comfortable talking about race/racism at work.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure
27. I feel comfortable talking about LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) issues at work.
- ☐ Strongly agree
 - ☐ Somewhat agree
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Don't know/not sure

28. I feel comfortable talking about disabilities and accessibility at work.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know/not sure

29. I feel comfortable talking about race/racism with people of color.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know/not sure

30. I feel comfortable talking about LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) issues with LGBTQ+ people.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know/not sure

31. I feel comfortable talking about disabilities and accessibility with people with disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know/not sure

32. If a coworker used racist language or behavior, I would likely... (check all that apply)

- ☐ Address the behavior directly
- ☐ Tell a coworker
- ☐ Report to a supervisor
- ☐ Report to human resources
- ☐ Report to a state or federal agency
- ☐ Do nothing
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

33. If a coworker used anti-LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) language or behavior, I would likely... (check all that apply)

- ☐ Address the behavior directly
- ☐ Tell a coworker
- ☐ Report to a supervisor
- ☐ Report to human resources
- ☐ Report to a state or federal agency
- ☐ Do nothing
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

34. If a coworker discriminated against people with disabilities, I would likely... (check all that apply)

- ☐ Address the behavior directly
- ☐ Tell a coworker
- ☐ Report to a supervisor
- ☐ Report to human resources
- ☐ Report to a state or federal agency
- ☐ Do nothing
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

35. I believe people of color, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) people, and people with disabilities when they report unfair treatment or discrimination due to their identity.

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

36. I have some discomfort in engaging with (check all that apply):

- ☐ People with disabilities
- ☐ Transgender people
- ☐ Lesbian, gay, bisexual people
- ☐ Latinx/Hispanic people
- ☐ Native/indigenous people
- ☐ Black/African American people
- ☐ East/Southeast Asian people
- ☐ South Asian people (Indian subcontinent)
- ☐ Middle Eastern people
- ☐ Muslim people
- ☐ People whose first language is not English
- ☐ People experiencing homelessness
- ☐ People experiencing poverty
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Open Feedback

This section is an opportunity to provide additional feedback.

37. What could the City of Bend do to be more inclusive/welcoming?

38. What support do you need to engage in diversity, equity, and inclusion at work?

39. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Personal Demographic Information

We ask questions about your personal identities to understand whether staff are having different experiences based on who they are. These questions are optional, but help us learn more about areas for improvement. **We have kept the options intentionally broad. All individual responses will be kept anonymous and will not be shared with the City of Bend.**

40. I am (check all that apply)

- ☐ A person of color (Black, Native, Asian, Middle Eastern, etc.)
- ☐ Multiracial (two or more races)
- ☐ White
- ☐ Latinx/Latino/Latina/Hispanic
- ☐ I prefer not to answer

41. What is your gender? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Transgender or Non-Binary or Two Spirit
- ☐ Cisgender (gender aligns with sex assigned at birth)
- ☐ Other (specify only if you want to share)

☐ I prefer not to answer

42. What is your sexual orientation?

- ☐ Straight/heterosexual
- ☐ Lesbian/gay/bisexual/pansexual/queer/Two Spirit/asexual
- ☐ Other (specify only if you want to share)

☐ I prefer not to answer

43. I experience the following type(s) of disabilities (check all that apply)

- ☐ None
- ☐ Physical/motor/sensory
- ☐ Mental/cognitive/learning
- ☐ Other (specify only if you want to share)

☐ I prefer not to answer

44. My age is:

- ☐ Under 20
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60-69
- ☐ 70+
- ☐ I prefer not to answer

Thank you for your feedback! If you have questions, or would like to learn more about getting involved in the City's diversity, equity, and inclusion work, contact Senior Management Analyst Shelly Smith at shsmith@bendoregon.gov or 541-388-5535.

Appendix D: Community Stakeholder Feedback

Background

The City's organizational baseline is also informed by how marginalized and underrepresented communities perceive the City is representing and serving their communities. The Council goal also emphasized the importance of understanding the needs and priorities of marginalized and underrepresented communities to inform a future action plan. To that end, Allyship in Action interviewed 15 external stakeholders affiliated with organizations and groups that serve or represent a wide range of people from marginalized and historically underrepresented communities.

The interviews included voices at various intersections of people who identify as or provide services to people who identify as Black, Native/Indigenous, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian, multiracial, LGBTQ+, youth, older adults, houseless/housing insecure, formerly incarcerated, and people with disabilities.

Bend Asian Resources
Bend Central District Visionary Board
Bend-La Pine Schools Budget Committee
Better Together Central Oregon
Central Oregon Coalition for Access
Central Oregon Community College
Central Oregon Council on Aging
Central Oregon Trans Health Coalition
Changing Patterns
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Embrace Bend

Homeless Leadership Coalition
Human Dignity Coalition
Latino Community Association
Let's Talk Diversity
Mecca Bend
Oregon Indian Education Association
Out Central Oregon
Restorative Justice & Equity (RJE)
RJE Student Advisory Board
Rural Organizing Project
THRIVE Central Oregon

Methodology

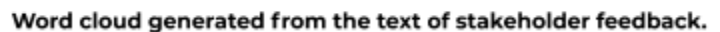
The community stakeholder interviews included dialogue on the following topics:

- The needs and priorities of the communities they work with.
- How diversity, equity, and inclusion shows up in their work.
- What representation looks like at the City of Bend.
- The organization's relationship and experience with the City of Bend.
- The City's relationship with the communities they work with.
- The City's service to the communities they work with.
- Their hopes or concerns regarding the City's DEI work.
- The opportunities for future collaboration between the City and the organization.
- Leveraging the efforts of the organization through funding or other City support.

Allyship in Action preserved the voices of the community stakeholders by using direct quotes when possible. This includes the use of expletives, which Allyship in Action intentionally included to acknowledge and honor the intensity of the feelings of exclusion shared.

THEME | Basic Needs

Finding: Marginalized and underrepresented communities need access to services, food, housing, transportation, healthcare, childcare, education, and internet access.



Across the board, housing is the primary issue. Housing discrimination manifests itself in various ways and one participant shared that “There’s so much freedom for landlords and property managers to decide what their criteria is.” Lower income folks with housing vouchers, people returning to society after incarceration and people from the Latinx community, and face both “overt and covert discrimination.” Latinx/Hispanic families often combine households and may be multigenerational and have issues with the landlord because people with no identification, social

security number, or credit history can be on the lease, and the landlord “considers family as uninvited guests.”

“I’m seeing older folks forced out of Bend, while others are living in cars, motel rooms, or are unhoused.”

Others are simply priced out of the housing market. “I’m seeing older folks forced out of Bend,” said one stakeholder, “while others are living in cars, motel rooms, or are unhoused.” People with disabilities not only have to deal with availability of housing, but cannot access multi level units because they cannot do steps.

Transportation also was on peoples’ minds, from youth to older adults. With a better bus system and “real visible, lit bike lanes,” students would not be often forced to drive as far. People from the Latinx/Hispanic community would also benefit from a more robust bus system since many do not have drivers licenses. But for older adults, “if you are 60-70 and healthy you can maybe take the bus, but they are few and far between in schedules and routes,” one stakeholder explained, and for vulnerable older adults, “their need is more point-to-point, door-to-door.”

And while transportation has always been an issue for people and members living in Warm Springs, who often have to travel to Madras, Redmond, or Bend to receive services or access educational opportunities, one stakeholder noted the irony of the current remote learning reality: “All of a sudden they can offer these classes to everyone online. ...Now we’re seeing what we could have been doing this whole time.”

THEME | Culturally Responsive Services

Nearly every single stakeholder identified the importance of having culturally appropriate and responsive services that take into account the needs of their specific communities. That included everything from allowing for communication that does not rely on technology to language access.

Finding: Marginalized and underrepresented communities need services that meet their specific needs. It is not one-size-fits-all.

Communication from the City of Bend was one of the most prominent themes with respect to how the City could reach the communities the stakeholders worked with or represented. While several stakeholders highlighted the lack of resources in Spanish, one specifically emphasized the importance that the information “not only be in a native language and culturally appropriate,” but the City needs to relay relevant information in a way that the Latinx community can understand. Several stakeholders shared that Facebook is the best way to connect with the Latinx/Hispanic community, with one caveat — “many people do not read Spanish... word of mouth is the best way to reach those folks... those are the ones who are left behind.”

“The Asian population is the largest silent undocumented population in the U.S., growing in leaps and bounds.”

It is not just Spanish speakers who need language access. Another stakeholder explained that when “you look at the undocumented population, a lot of those folks are Asian Americans... the Asian population is the largest silent undocumented population in the U.S.” Culturally, the stakeholder explained, those folks do not access civil services to stay under the radar, “so nobody sees them and thinks they don’t exist.”

For undocumented community members, the types of information they may prioritize receiving from the City may be different than the broader community. For example, they may prioritize information regarding workers rights, immigration issues, healthcare, and filing taxes.

Older adults also experience hardships in accessing information from the City and providing input. “The City tends to use tech to solicit input, and for the older adults we deal with that’s not how they get their information,” one stakeholder shared. “They don’t know how to use Survey Monkey...a lot don’t have broadband.”

For the LGBTQ+ community, several stakeholder shared that traditional services do not always meet the needs of LGBTQ+ folks and identified the need LGBTQ+ specific and LGBTQ+ friendly support services around housing, food security, and medical care, as well as for “a community center or other sober gathering place for the LGBTQ+ community that’s about social connection, not just accessing resources.”²⁷

THEME | Relationship Building

Stakeholders expressed feelings of frustration about always having to be their own advocates and self-initiate contact with the City of Bend.

Finding: Marginalized communities need advocacy from City Council and Staff.

The recent public call for action with respect to police violence against Black people has highlighted that now, more than ever, community stakeholders feel like “there’s a real need for elected officials to step out and advocate.”

In particular, one stakeholder articulated that “(1) the City needs to admit there is a problem and that there are a lot of people who do not feel comfortable living here, and that it doesn’t make the City any less great if we make sure other people have quality of life and a welcoming place to live; (2) be proactive, not reactive — we excuse away incidents as individuals’ faults, they don’t think about how to stop it from happening the next time.”

²⁷ LGBTQ+ specific services are important for housing, for example, due to the higher rates of homelessness that LGBT youth face and housing discrimination experienced by gay men and transgender folks. See [Five Facts about Housing Access for LGBT People](#), Housing Matters (2018).

“The City needs to admit there is a problem and that there are a lot of people who do not feel comfortable living here.”

Finding: Marginalized and underrepresented communities need to be a priority for City Council and Staff.

A few stakeholders shared some positive experiences with respect to relationship building with the City of Bend and viewed those experiences as a foundation to build on. They talked about their engagement with the Bend Police Department leaders and their support for the [Evolve project](#). Another stakeholder talked about the Latino Community Association and the Bend Police Department collaborating with Amiguitos, a childrens’ summer program. They felt like it was the “start of a relationship, it’s a beginning.”

Other positive experiences included appreciation for the “the flags during Winter Pride Fest... having those up in Downtown was really great.” One stakeholder shared how having “a public official [speak] at the Pride run last year was really impactful [and] an acknowledgment for Pride month which [increased] visibility and highlighted partnerships with [the Human Dignity Coalition and OUT Central Oregon].”

There was also some acknowledgement by one stakeholder from the Latinx community who shared that relationship building requires their commitment, too, and “many times we are stretched very thin...I don’t have much to give, sometimes the City reaches out and sometimes we can’t participate with an event or request because of resources.” They also had some difficulty in articulating the ways that the City could collaborate with their organization because, “I don’t know what the services are...I don’t know the different departments or what changes could be made.”

How does the City build equitable relationships? Authentic relationship building takes time, mutual care, and interest. Relationships should not be transactional — “I need something from you” — but personal and responsive — “What is our common ground and how can we help each other?” Relationships should also acknowledge and take into account power dynamics. An equitable relationship requires the willingness to give up and share power, and to build power from within the community.

While a few stakeholders acknowledged that there had been some relationship building with the City of Bend, most expressed that there was still a lot of room for improvement. Despite some folks feeling like City staff were receptive, one stakeholder shared that their “Relationship is ‘tolerant,’ they smile and nod, and choose not to offend us, but do not take us seriously.”

Nearly every community stakeholder expressed that they had to initiate conversations with the City or that the City only reached out when they needed something. Others shared their community had little to no relationship at all with the City of Bend. That sentiment reverberated throughout the various conversations with community stakeholders:

- *"I would like to see the members of the City go into the City, rather than expecting communities to come to them. Not just go to people when you need something, but to build real relationships."*
- *"We have been going out there and forcing our way into the conversations. I would like all our communities to be proactively invited to the table."²⁸*
- *"Reach out and connect to the community rather than making us come to your door; I don't think I've ever had a city official come to my booth and spin the wheel at Pride."*
- *"No effort from the City to be more inclusive and to welcome and invite leaders that are already doing the work in our community. Comes from who you know and foot in the door."*
- *"There has been no outreach to the Black community."²⁹*
- *"Some sort of relationship should be established" to help Warm Springs residents and tribal members "to advocate for policies that would benefit our community members." In that context, "Municipalities should ask, "What does it mean to work with a sovereign nation?"*

For many, interactions with City leadership and City staff left them feeling undervalued. One stakeholder shared that their community needed "to be a priority, not a second or fourth or fifth thought." This sentiment bubbled up frequently when folks mentioned inviting City council members to their organizations' meetings, and only one or two would respond.

Some stakeholders are being completely left out of conversations. With respect to people formerly incarcerated, one stakeholder shared that "as far as City councilors, Section 8, and HOAs, we aren't accepted...when it comes to politics, nobody wants to touch it." The youth voice is also one that is missing at the City of Bend. "I live here, but the only interaction I have with the government is reading the news and going to the DMV," the stakeholder shared.

Finding: Authentic relationship building reduces the risks of tokenizing people with marginalized and underrepresented identities.

A few stakeholders addressed potential issues of tokenism — a symbolic effort to engage a small number of people from marginalized and underrepresented groups to give the appearance of fairness. One stakeholder prioritized not being treated as an afterthought "oh, we need one of you." Another shared the importance of understanding, for example, that not everyone in or from Warm Springs speaks for the Confederated Tribes or Tribal Council: "As a person, we can only speak for ourselves." They also emphasized that there is more than one tribal community represented in Bend. In addition to Warm Springs (which is itself a confederation of three tribes), Native people in Central Oregon may be Klamath-Modoc, Burns-Paiute, or other tribal affiliations.

²⁸ These conversations took place prior to the recent outreach from the City to community members to participate in the hiring process for the new Bend Police Department chief. The overwhelming interest and engagement is testament to how much the community appreciates and needs this kind of engagement.

²⁹ Allyship in Action notes that the City has been responsive to recent requests for meetings made by members of the Black community in light of the renewed, widespread interest in supporting Black lives.

THEME | Representation

The theme of representation came up in a variety of contexts, but primarily with respect to community stakeholders seeing themselves reflected in leadership and at the City as well as in decision-making.

Finding: Marginalized and underrepresented communities need to see themselves reflected at the City.

The vast majority of community stakeholders shared frustration about the lack of diversity in both elected City officials and City staff. One stakeholder specifically shared, “City council is seven white people, and those seven white people do not share the same life experiences, so when they are in these leadership roles, they shouldn’t be the ones designing and creating things for my community.” Another community stakeholder identified this as a priority for youth of color — “our kids need to see others, particularly adults, that look like them.”

Others felt like the City of Bend could build on and improve some of the work they have done so far, in particular with respect to the designation of Bend as a Welcoming City and the messaging for Welcoming Week.

One community stakeholder shared:

“I understand it’s specific to race/ethnicity/immigration status, but could we include LGBTQ+ people, too? Everyone has an immigration status and LGBTQ+ people are a part of that...we have [people who are] LGBTQ+ and people of color.”³⁰

A Note About Intersectionality

People's identities do not exist independently of each other. The overlap of identities may result in experiences of discrimination or harassment that are unique to that intersection of identities.

Another stakeholder shared the City should build on the messaging with “having a really strong program that lets the entire city and surrounding cities know that Bend is welcoming immigrants... strong programs around migrant workers and undocumented [people].”

Along similar lines, one stakeholder shared that diverse representation in media and ad campaigns was important, especially those targeted at bringing people to Bend to visit, work, and live. A theme that emerged during the training facilitated for City Council and other community leaders was that Bend is white by historical design³¹ and reflecting on the resistance to be diverse by design.

Why does representation matter? For youth from marginalized communities, portrayals of people who look like them in schools, in leadership roles, in the media not only affect how others see them, but also how they see themselves. It sends the message that everybody has a place in Bend, and helps debunk the myth that “Bend has no diversity” for the rest of the community.

³⁰ In recent community discussions around Welcoming Week, City staff shared that the Welcoming City mandate has expanded to allow for a broader lens than just welcoming immigrants and that the Welcoming Week and Pride will coincide in the same month and could provide opportunities for collaboration.

³¹ For a comprehensive timeline of the laws, policies, and events that provide this context, see [Looking Back In Order to Move Forward: An Often Untold History Affecting Oregon's Past, Present and Future](#), CFEE (2010) and [Father Luke, The KKK, and the doctrine of Americanism in Bend](#), Deschutes Historical Society (2017).

Finding: Marginalized and underrepresented communities need a seat at the tables where decisions are made.

Another common theme was a sense of exclusion from decision making processes and the desire to have a seat at the table where decisions are made.

- *"I want a fair chance to create relationships with people in power and the access."*
- *"Having folks at the table, for one ... And not asking for feedback at the end of a project, but before the planning begins."*
- *"I'll be honest, I'm a little over DEI. I'm over it, I'm not interested. I want a seat at the table."*
- *"If you want diverse representation you have to ensure diverse voices at the table."*

One stakeholder noted that having a seat at the table requires removing barriers to participation. An invitation is not enough: "A lot of these folks are low income, how are you going to compensate them? How are they going to have the time to sit there? ...Gotta look at what the challenges are to get here. ...And that's what gets left out of the DEI work."

THEME | Institutional Change

The exhaustion and frustration of nearly each and every of the community stakeholders interviewed was woven throughout their feedback. While there was cautious optimism around the diversity, equity, and inclusion work the City has just begun engaging in, there was vocal concern that there would be no meaningful change.

Finding: Marginalized communities want institutional change.

Many of the community stakeholders expressed that fundamentally, systems — especially government systems — were designed to benefit dominant culture and would continue to do so without fundamental institutional change. One stakeholder shared:

*"These exercises are really frustrating for me. In my experience (which has been a lot), **these institutions are set up to produce what we have right now.** If there are problems, if there are constituents in the City that are not being served in proportion to what their needs are (in amount or in kind), it's because that's the way it's been designed to work or not to work. ...*

If they are serious about making a difference, then the City has to look at themselves in the mirror and say 'do I really want this?'"

Another stakeholder said the change needs to be substantial. "We have been waiting a long time and to be in 2020 and it still feels like we are so far in the past," they shared, "are they just going to do the minimum, or are they committed to being better people and showing up in different ways and really leading a community that honors the people that make that community up."

Others shared profound concerns that the needs of marginalized communities, and in particular the needs of the Latinx/Hispanic community, would be “sugarcoated and downplayed so they are easier to address” and “it will be a watered down version to cater to dominant culture.”

Finding: Marginalized communities need to see action and accountability.

Community stakeholders shared experiencing a long history of ambivalence and a lack of meaningful action from the City of Bend.

- *“It’s like they’re not motivated to act unless not acting will embarrass them.”*
- *“It feels like the City doesn’t do much about discrimination because it doesn’t want to see it or take responsibility for it.”*
- *“It feels like anytime the community brings up something we get placated, like, ‘We were trying our best.’ Instead of, ‘I hear you, you’re right,’ and actually meaning it.”*
- *“My biggest pet peeve is that people talk a lot, and then nothing happens.”*
- *City Council has done Pride proclamations, “but it’s not backed up by any further action and that feels hollow, and like it’s supposed to be a pacifier for future support.”*
- *“I just got burned out. ... the City doesn’t take it seriously, it’s all lip service.”*
- *“The defensiveness and white tears need to stop. ... We can’t stop the work from happening because someone called you out on things.”*

This experience has led to overwhelming concerns about the City’s DEI work becoming an exercise in checking boxes. One stakeholder shared: “This isn’t about checking a goddamn box. Actually do the work, get out of uncomfortableness and do the work.” Another echoed those sentiments: “[I am] concerned about box-checking and nothing substantive will change... [that people will think] we’re trained, we’re woke, we’re good.”

Why is action and accountability important? Both City staff and elected officials have made public commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion work. The community is more engaged now than ever before. This will be a defining moment for trust and relationship building with marginalized and underrepresented communities in Bend.

Most of the community stakeholders expressed a need to see accountability and action. In the words of one stakeholder: “So rarely do we see any consequences tied to DEI goals or policies. What mechanism do you have in place to see the needs of who is most impacted? Is your raise as an employee tied to meeting DEI goals and policies.” Another stakeholder highlighted “the need for people external to the system to keep it honest and keep it moving.”

Finding: Marginalized communities need to see funding for the City’s DEI work.

Goodwill only does so much. Many community stakeholders highlighted that “money shows where the priorities are” and the importance “the power of the purse... putting money to it and making it permanent.”

“Money shows where the priorities are.”

For some, this means working into the City’s budget a line item for “translation services, PSAs that are appropriate to culture, budget for cultural days of celebration, and things like that.” For others, it was more substantial, and called on the City to hold back money from departments who do not provide concrete plans to increase staff from diverse backgrounds and re-allocating that money to departments that do.

Another stakeholder shared that the idea that “the City can’t spend that much money on so few people” is the wrong perspective to take.

“If you can’t give access to one person, it’s really 10 people” because it excludes families and support networks. If the City spent the money to include access at the front end of the process, “it’s cheaper for all.”

Community Stakeholder Recommendations

Support Marginalized and Underrepresented Communities

- Fund celebrating days honoring different cultures and identities.
- Fund urban planning education for students from historically marginalized and underrepresented communities.
- Invite students from historically marginalized and underrepresented communities to participate in City Council meetings, to engage in job shadowing opportunities, and to learn how the City works to create a pipeline of diverse talent.
- Teach communities in less affluent areas about affordable housing, urban planning, and creating a neighborhood that will allow people to thrive there. Engage all people to be a part of the process to increase the property values through collaborative development.
- When making decisions about who gets permits to hold events, prioritize those groups whose voices have historically not been included. Provide financial assistance to subsidize the cost of event permits for organizations that cannot afford events.
- Create an action plan with concrete targets with respect to hiring staff and who the City is prioritizing for contracts. Have consequences (e.g. holding 10% of your budget back), if each unit or team does not meet its target and reallocate to a team who is.
- Make DEI goals a part of each employee’s review and promotion.

Support People of Color

- Track the racial/ethnic identities of people arrested by law enforcement and traffic violations issued to track implicit bias.
- Have clear language access resources for people who do not speak English or Spanish.

Support Native/Indigenous Communities

- Recognize that there are more than one tribal community represented in Bend — beyond Warm Springs (which is itself a confederation of three tribes), people may be Klamath-Modoc, Burns-Paiute, or other tribal affiliations.
- Contribute resources (e.g. space and networking) to build capacity.
- If the City/Council is interested in doing a land acknowledgement, they should not only consult with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, but also with the Burns-Paiute and Klamath-Modoc tribes. Land acknowledgements should be a consistent practice — not a one-off — and any formal request should go through Governmental Affairs.
- The City of Bend could honor the land by setting aside a seat on the City's DEI committee for an Indigenous person — ideally someone in Bend who is connected to a local tribe.
- When engaging Warm Springs, think about what "What does it mean to work with a sovereign nation" and do not treat Warm Springs as a "county."
- "Some sort of relationship should be established" to help Warm Springs tribal members "to advocate for policies that would benefit our community members."
- Honor Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of Christopher Columbus Day.³²

Support the Latinx/Hispanic Community

- Establish Latinx liaisons for Spanish speaking residents.
- Prioritize hiring bicultural staff with bilingual differential.
- Prioritize hiring a staff translator.
- Develop safety planning and legal support for bicultural staff in public-facing positions, as they are at a higher risk of experiencing discrimination and harassment from the public.
- Provide real time closed captioned Spanish language translations of City Council meetings.
- Create opportunities for the Latinx/Hispanic community to talk to City Council with other Latinx/Hispanic people.
- Have a Facebook account for Spanish-speaking folks. The Latinx/Hispanic community is more connected to Facebook than other methods of communication.
- Create a chamber of Latinx/Hispanic business owners.

³² Since 2016 the City of Bend has recognized both Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Support People with Disabilities

- The accessibility manager position is limited in the way they can influence other departments, such as code enforcement. Provide the ADA manager the authority to enforce City code promptly.
- Have a City Council liaison to the Central Oregon Coalition for Access to facilitate the free flow of information.

Support the LGBTQ+ Community

- Sponsor an LGBTQ+ community center.
- Rainbow crosswalks, banners, images of Pride and resources for queer folks on Visit Bend, including LGBTQ+ people in Welcoming Week, rainbow flag with black and brown stripes in front of City Hall, and City-sponsored LGBTQ+ business association or chamber of commerce are ways to send the message that the LGBTQ+ community is present and welcome in Bend.

Support People Who Are Houseless/Housing Insecure

- Provide alternate ways to provide comments to City Council, e.g., messaging function via website to put their name and phone number to get a call back.
- Provide more opportunities for organizations to provide education to committee members and councillors.
- Establish policies and regulation of landlords and property management companies to provide for accountability around housing discrimination.

Support People Who Are Formerly Incarcerated

- Establish policies and relationships to provide people who are formerly incarcerated a meaningful opportunity to earn back trust to allow access to housing.

Support Older Adults

- Support the renovation of the old Bend Senior Center.
- Recruit someone from the City to join the board of Council On Aging to both help the City understand the concerns of older adults, and also to be a bridge to the City.

Appendix E: DEI Task Force Report and Recommendations

Background

On March, 21, 2019 Bend City Council unanimously approved goals for the 2019-2021 biennium that included, for the first time, a strategy focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This strategy, which is part of Effective & Efficient City Operations, includes among its actions:

- Establish a short-term steering committee/task force to assist in identifying the needs and priorities of underrepresented communities in Bend.
- Establish a permanent commission/committee to develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan, and seek opportunities to leverage community efforts through funding and support.

Allyship in Action recruited and facilitated a diverse 14-member DEI Task Force. This short-term City task force was directed to make recommendations related to the establishment of a permanent DEI committee or commission rooted in the needs and priorities of marginalized and underrepresented communities in Bend.

Many cities, counties, and states have volunteer committees, commissions, or advisory boards tasked with responding to issues related to civil and human rights and relations, diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. Each varies somewhat in name, composition, and role, but these types of entities are increasingly common across the United States.

While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, the DEI Task Force researched and referenced dozens of existing committees and commissions to identify potential approaches for Bend. These included, but were not limited to:

CITY / POP.	NAME	SIZE	MISSION (summary)
Sioux City, IA (80,119)	Human Rights Commission	11	Enforce anti-discrimination laws and prevent and eliminate discrimination.
Beaverton, OR (88,858)	Human Rights Advisory Commission	13	Promote mutual understanding and safeguard the rights of all residents.
Lynnwood, WA (35,836)	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission	7	Provide advice and recommendations re: strategies for public engagement, removing barriers, increasing access to city services, areas for investment, root causes of inequity, and opportunities for partnerships.
Pasco, WA (73,013)	Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Commission	7	To assist the Pasco City Council in promoting inclusivity in Pasco.
Salem, OR (169,798)	Human Rights Commission	15	Advises City Council on human rights and relations issues, assists residents by hearing and resolving discrimination complaints and promoting harmony.
Portland, OR (647,805)	Human Rights Commission	8	Advises City Council and City bureaus on applying a human rights lens to policy, and advises on promoting and protecting human rights in

			Portland.
Billing, MT (109,642)	Human Relations Commission	9	Promote mutual understanding and respect, discourage and prevent discriminatory practices, promote programs of community education, review and study complaints, Inform and make recommendations to the mayor and city council.
San Diego, CA (1.42 million)	Human Relations Commission	17	Conduct programs designed to bring groups together, mediate disagreements re: discriminatory practices, process complaints or make referrals, prepare and disseminate educational material relating to prejudice and discrimination and recommended ways and means of eliminating prejudice/discrimination.
East Lansing, MI (48,844)	Human Relations Commission	9	Protects and promotes human dignity and respect; establishes and implements procedures to address human relations complaints.
Reno, NV (248,853)	Human Rights Commission	14	Make recommendations to the City Council with regard to the development of programs for the promotion of social justice, diversity/inclusion, equal opportunity and human dignity among all citizens and visitors of the city.
South Bend, IN (102,245)	Human Rights Commission	9	Study and act upon problems which involve relationships between members of different ethnic groups, sexes, sexual orientation or gender identity, nationalities, the disabled, and families with children. To stimulate community awareness of equal protection of the law in protected areas through education, collaboration, and coordination with other community agencies.
Boulder, CO (322,514)	Human Relations Commission	5	Encourage education programs; conduct research to define key issues;; and enforce the City's Human Rights Ordinance that prohibits discrimination by serving as a quasi-judicial hearing board for human rights ordinance cases.
Austin, TX (950,715)	Human Rights Commission	7	Advise and consult with the city council on all matters involving racial, religious or ethnic discrimination and devise practices to promote equal opportunity. Advisory body on non-discrimination policies, aid in forming local community groups, investigate complaints of prejudice and discrimination and conduct educational programs.

Task Force Membership and Process

Allyship in Action invited community members to participate in the DEI Task Force based on their connection to marginalized and/or underrepresented communities, their experience working with strategic planning processes, and/or their civic engagement.

Allyship in Action is grateful for the contributions of the volunteers serving on this Task Force, including: Adrianna Geuvarra, Denise LaBuda, Erika McAlpine, Erika Spaet, Frances Waldrop, Gordon

Price, Jen Rusk, Jessica Amascual, Joanne Mina, Kecia Kubota, Rabbi Johanna Hershenson, Rodri Gaspar, Romir Chatterjee, and Whitney Swander.

The DEI Task Force convened its first meeting in February 2020. Due to the COVID pandemic, all subsequent engagement was remote. Allyship in Action facilitated feedback from the Task Force using a combination of video meetings and online surveys.

The group's process included the following:

- Identifying ways the needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities that could be addressed by a DEI committee or commission.
- Evaluating existing models for DEI-related committees and commissions to identify common roles, responsibilities, authorities, membership criteria, application processes, and group compositions.
- Determining which key qualities would best meet the identified needs and priorities.
- Considering whether a committee or a commission is best suited to this work.
- Drafting recommendations for City Council drawing from this research, evaluation, and consultation.

Allyship in Action gathered and synthesized the feedback from these meetings and surveys into draft recommendations that were then refined by the Task Force. The Task Force identified priority recommendations using a consensus decision making model because the model is inclusive, participatory, collaborative, shares power, and seeks agreement. Task Force members were asked to vote if they were in "agreement," had "reservations," were "standing aside," or "blocking" the recommendations.

In the consensus voting process, Task Force members were provided the opportunity to vote on each of the key provisions prior to voting on the entire recommendation package. This was done to allow Task Force members to share specific reservations or concerns and to allow Allyship in Action to include their full comments in this report:

- Two Task Force members expressed reservations about the provision "Add one or more DEI-specific questions to the application process to get more information about the applicants' experiences working on equity issues." One expressed concern that they were "not sure one question is enough." Another commented that they advocate "for the inclusion of similar or like questions for all commissions/committees in the future."
- Two Task Force members also expressed reservations regarding the provision "Establish the means and the process to provide financial compensation (such as a stipend) to [committee or commission] members that request it to offset the costs of participating (childcare, transportation, lost wages, etc.)." They did not provide comments.
- One Task Force member expressed reservations regarding the provision "Update the City's definition of "citizen" (ex. Citizen Committees) to make clear that undocumented immigrants are invited to engage in civic life." Another commented, "Does the word resident make sense?"
- Two Task Force members expressed reservations regarding the provision "Ensure that the membership of the [committee or commission] includes: No more than 15 and not less than 8 members..." Only one explained why, "15 seems unwieldy, and 8 people would need to

be available for any given meeting to form [a] quorum...12 would require 7 for quorum. etc. Something to consider.”

The full draft recommendations were approved by the Task Force by consensus, with 9 in agreement, 1 with reservations (but willing to let the draft go forward), and 4 abstaining.

After getting feedback from the Council's Stewardship Subcommittee, the DEI Task Force held two additional meetings to review this feedback and finalize the recommendations. The final DEI Task Force recommendations were approved by majority vote of Task Force members at its July 27, 2020 meeting.

The framing to follow reflects the needs, priorities, and other considerations of the Task Force that ultimately informed its recommendations. The Task Force hopes that this report will provide a framework for the establishment of a permanent Human Rights and Equity Commission and serve as a guiding document for its inaugural commissioners..

Needs and Priorities

Task Force members described the need for a multifaceted Commission with a responsibility to historically marginalized and underrepresented communities in Bend, to the City Council, and to the community as a whole.

The Task Force articulated specific **needs** including:

- A place to bring concerns or complaints of discrimination;
- A way to address alleged violations of the Bend Equal Rights Ordinance that does not involve BOLI or going to court;
- A mechanism for ensuring that the voices of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities are included in all aspects of City decision making;
- Better outreach to and engagement with marginalized and underrepresented communities;
- Tools and resources to support City Council and staff in engaging in DEI work; and
- To be taken seriously and appropriately supported and resourced.

The Task Force identified **priorities** that centered around themes of accountability and intentionality, including:

- A forum for community concerns or complaints related to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Intentional and proactive inclusion of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities in goal-setting and planning processes;
- A driver for change that has the power/authority to hold City Council accountable; and
- Rooting the Commission's response role in restorative justice principles.

The Task Force also identified **other considerations**, including:

- Some members may need stipends to offset costs associated with serving on the Commission;

- The Commission's role and responsibilities should be a realistic reflection of its authority, capacity, and resources;
- The Commission will need the support of a dedicated staff member to both begin and sustain its work;
- The existing standard application includes potential barriers to participation for some members of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities; and
- City Council and staff will need other sources of support to bridge the gap until the Commission is up and running.

Key Qualities

Purpose

Task Force members advocated for a multifaceted Commission with a responsibility to historically marginalized and underrepresented communities in Bend, to the City Council, and to the community as a whole.

Task Force members were primarily concerned with the Commission's ability to serve as a driver of meaningful change with the capacity to hold City Council accountable to its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They also expressed the importance of having a forum for community members with concerns or complaints related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Responding to Complaints

Most Task Force members said the Commission should “respond to incidents of bias or discrimination” and several advocated for the Commission to be able to hear complaints of discrimination and engage in non-punitive resolution. Many Human Rights Commissions have responsibilities that include responding to complaints of discrimination, including the Commissions in Salem, Billings, and Boulder. These roles are often tied to a non-discrimination ordinance.

“One of the main objectives should be to provide those who face bias with a place where they can bring issues to the notice of the City,” one member said.

Bend Code Ch. 5.25 (see Appendix B) prohibits discrimination based on a variety of protected classes. It also states that individuals may file complaints of discrimination with the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) or file a lawsuit. However, Task Force members said reporting to BOLI or filing a lawsuit may be overwhelming or inaccessible to people experiencing discrimination. They suggested the Commission could hear complaints and offer referrals and non-punitive resolutions.

“People need an avenue,” one member said. “It could be an opportunity for restorative justice or reconciliation.”

A majority of Task Force members who provided feedback said the Commission should “respond to incidents of bias or discrimination.” Several members of the Task Force advocated strongly for the Commission to be able to hear complaints of discrimination, engage in fact-finding, draw conclusions, and take action to support resolution.

Many, but not all, DEI or human rights committees and commissions have responsibilities that include responding to complaints of discrimination. The response roles of these committees and commissions are often tied to the city's non-discrimination ordinance. In Bend, City Code Ch. 5.25

([Bend Equal Rights Ordinance](#)) prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, marital status, age (if the individual is 18 years of age or older), or physical or mental impairment, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

The Code currently advises individuals alleging acts of discrimination that they may file a complaint with the commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries or file a lawsuit.

5.25.030 Enforcement.

A. Any person claiming to be aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory act under the provisions of this chapter may file a complaint with the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries under procedures established in ORS 659A.820. The Commissioner shall have the same power to enforce the provisions of this chapter as the Commissioner has to enforce alleged violations within the Commissioner's statutory authority.

B. Any person claiming to be aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory act under the provisions of this chapter shall have a cause of action in any court of competent authority. Election of remedies and other procedural issues relating to the interplay between administrative proceedings and private rights of action shall be handled as provided for in ORS 659A.870 through 659A.880. The court may grant such relief as is provided in ORS 659A.885. [Ord. NS-2142, 2010]

However, Task Force members noted that both reporting to BOLI and filing a lawsuit may be overwhelming to people experiencing discrimination. They suggested that the Commission could be charged with hearing and resolving discrimination complaints and to make recommendations to the City Council. The authority of the Commission would be grounded in restorative justice principles.

Advising the City

DEI Task Force members suggested that the Commission advise the City Council on emerging practices and trends related to equity in public services and civic engagement; the evolving needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities; and the potential equity impacts of City policies and practices.

They also advocated for the Commission's advisory role to extend beyond topics explicitly related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and include proactive engagement in City goal-setting and planning processes.

This could include:

- Keeping City councilors and staff apprised of emerging practices and trends related to equity in public services and civic engagement as well as emerging and evolving needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities.
- Providing feedback on the potential equity impacts of topics ranging from utility rates to zoning to sidewalks.

- Making recommendations to the City Council regarding issues that directly affect historically marginalized or underrepresented communities as well as highlight policies or practices that are likely to have a disproportionate impact on these communities.

Action Planning

The City Council expressed in its goal language a desire for the Commission to create a DEI action plan, and most Task Force members agreed that this was an appropriate role for the Commission. However, multiple members emphasized the importance of being able to hold the City Council accountable to this plan.

“Action plans don't work if people aren't invested in implementing them,” one member said. “I would support creating one if it is the job of the Commission to guide the execution by the City.”

Serving as a Liaison

Task Force members said the Commission's role should include a variety of activities focused on community relations. They recommended Commission duties include building relationships, serving as liaisons, recommending partnerships, and informing Council of the needs of historically marginalized communities.

“We can talk about rights in addition to laws and policies,” one member said, “but if we don't break the ice to create opportunities for relationship building we're only doing one part of it. This is essential.”

Advocating for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Most human rights/DEI commissions engage in education and awareness raising; promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion; and advocating for the needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities.

Task Force members agreed that the Commission's role should also include advocacy activities such as promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion; preventing discrimination; and assisting community members in accessing resources.

Membership

Task Force members said membership should be open to people who live or work in the Bend, or are otherwise a part of the Bend community.

“I wouldn't want to exclude folks that live just outside of the city but consider Bend their community,” one member said.

Others emphasized that membership should be open to people who are undocumented/not U.S. citizens and suggested expanding the definition of citizen to be more inclusive. While Bend City Code does not require committee and commission members to be citizens, it does refer to members as “citizens” and the groups are referred to as “Citizen Committees” on the City's website.

Most Task Force members agreed that a significant portion of the Commission should identify as members of one or more historically marginalized communities. But many pointed out that identity

is not a qualifying factor on its own, and that the Commission would also benefit from a diversity of identities and skill sets.

“[It] definitely should have a high ratio of members from historically marginalized communities, but I don't think 100 percent should necessarily be,” one member said. “[We] need to make sure that the commission has diverse skill sets as well.”

Selection Process

Task Force members recommended that the standard application for Commission membership be revised to remove barriers and increase access. They also suggested adding supplemental questions specific to diversity, equity, and inclusion and giving applicants sufficient opportunity to describe their relevant experience, such as a resume and references. “It's important that people who serve have some demonstrated commitment,” one member said.

But Task Members emphasized that this “commitment” should not be defined in narrow terms. “We should avoid getting caught up in credentials,” one member said, “but they should have some investment in justice.”

Some Task Force members suggested involving community members in the selection process, whether via public forum, input from Task Force members, or consultation with Allyship in Action.

Meetings

Task Force members highlighted how frequently public meetings are inaccessible due to their time or location. They suggested that the Commission schedule meetings with consideration for days and times that are most accessible to members of the public, and with options for remote participation. They also supported offering Commission members some type of compensation by request (such as a per-meeting stipend) to offset costs or lost income associated with serving on the Commission and reduce barriers to participation.

Committee vs. Commission

Members preferred a commission to a committee, saying that a commission carries greater weight and authority and better reflects how integral diversity, equity, and inclusion are to the work of the City in all zones.

Task Force members also emphasized the importance of selecting a name for the Commission that accurately reflects its work, is familiar to people from different generations and backgrounds, and does not rely on jargon or insider terms. Some members preferred “Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Commission,” while others advocated for “Human Rights Commission” or “Human Rights and Equity Commission.”

These members argued that using the phrase “human rights” or “human rights and equity” has the following advantages:

- The language of “human rights” may be more accessible and relatable to the general public. One member said: “Human rights is a starting point everyone can relate to.”
- It's easier to say than Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Commission and less connected to current buzzwords.

- The United Nations [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) is a good thing to connect to. One member said: “It’s important for people to remember that human rights exist at every level.”³³
- It signals an affinity and similarity with other Human Rights Commissions.
- The name is more broadly recognizable to folks who are looking for signs that a community is inclusive.

Guiding Principles and Framework

The City of Bend DEI Task Force recommendations are guided by the fundamental principle that to achieve the equity and inclusion goals of City Council, and to ensure the success of the work of the Human Rights and Equity Commission, the City of Bend under the direction of the City Manager must be directed to:

Apply equity and social justice foundational practices to City actions and endeavor to integrate these practices into the City's: strategic, operational and business plans; management and reporting systems for accountability and performance; and budgets in order to eliminate inequities and create opportunities for all people and communities.

To that end, application, membership, and the services of this Commission and all City committees should be accessible to all, including:

1. Community members who do not read, write, and/or speak English.
2. Community members of all immigration statuses.
3. Community members without access to a personal computer, printer, smart phone, and/or tablet.
4. Community members caring for children or others.
5. Community members without access to a vehicle or rideshare services.
6. Community members with diverse abilities and access needs, including people who have physical, mental, sensory, and intellectual/developmental disabilities. This list is by no means exhaustive, but it gives an example of the variety of abilities and access needs desired.

³³ Portland's Human Rights Commission is specifically guided by the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Recommendations

The City of Bend DEI Task Force makes the following recommendations to the City Council.

Adopt an ordinance establishing a permanent Human Rights and Equity Commission.

Adopt an ordinance establishing a permanent and independent Human Rights and Equity Commission focused on responding to the needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities and providing feedback on issues related to diversity, equity, and/or inclusion in the City of Bend, with roles to include:

1. Investigating and responding to complaints of discrimination and/or violations of the Bend Equal Rights Ordinance by:
 - a. Assisting impacted parties with connecting to and navigating community resources to access care, support, education, and/or resolution.
 - b. Developing and facilitating non-punitive resolutions, such as mediation or restorative justice, supported by appropriate education and resources.
2. Advising City Council on issues relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including the equity impacts of policies and practices, the needs and priorities of marginalized and underrepresented communities, and strategies to increase engagement with these groups.
3. Creating and providing regular guidance and feedback on the implementation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan for the City of Bend that is responsive to the evolving needs of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities as well as the capacity of City Council and staff.

Remove Barriers to Service at the City

Review the standard City Committee/Commission application prior to the establishment of the Human Rights and Equity Commission and remove all unnecessary barriers to engagement by historically marginalized and/or underrepresented groups and ensure that the membership for this Commission and other committees is open and accessible.

Offset Costs of Participation to Increase Access

Establish the means and the process to provide financial compensation (such as a stipend) to Commission members that request it to offset the costs of participating (childcare, transportation, lost wages, etc.).

Create a Diverse and Representative Commission

Ensure that the membership of the Commission includes:

1. A majority of members who identify as a member of one or more historically marginalized or underrepresented communities, including but not limited to: people of color, LGBTQ people,

people with disabilities, lower income people, members of minority faith groups (e.g. Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, etc.), immigrants, youth, and people 65+.

2. At least one person who identifies as Native or Indigenous, with preference for someone with a connection to a local tribal community.
3. People who live or work in Bend or otherwise consider Bend their community.
4. People who are as reflective as possible of diverse historically marginalized and/or underrepresented communities in Bend.
5. People with experience engaging in work related to diversity, equity, and inclusion or other community organizing, as demonstrated by a resume, references, and/or responses to DEI-related questions.
6. An odd number of members between 9 and 15 that meets at a time and in a manner that is most accessible to the most members (including options for remote participation), in order to represent Bend's historically marginalized and underrepresented communities and to effectively carry out the work of the Commission.

Provide Appropriate Staff Support

Direct a staff member to serve as a liaison between the Commission and the City of Bend and support the establishment, visioning, and development of the Human Rights and Equity Commission by:

1. Providing regular opportunities for members of the general public to provide feedback on the needs and priorities of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities.
2. Facilitating learning and resources to support the work of the Commission and establishing connections with elected officials, City leadership, and other decision makers.

Appendix F: About Allyship in Action

Allyship in Action is a collaborative of Central Oregon consultants committed to engaging individuals, organizations, and communities to advance equity and social justice through customized assessment, education, and long-range planning and support.

Allyship in Action's mission is to embolden and equip individuals and organizations to advance equity and social justice through active allyship that is rooted in our community and centers those most impacted in service of our collective liberation.

Founded by **Kerani Mitchell** (she/her), **LeeAnn O'Neill** (she/her or they/them), and **Erin Rook** (he/him or they/them), Allyship in Action emerged out of the growing demand from Central Oregon businesses, nonprofits, schools, and communities that are ready to engage in meaningful equity work grounded in the rich resources available locally.



As three people with marginalized identities who grew up in small communities, we have a shared passion for equity work that is place-based and rooted in lived experience. Erin's background in journalism and DEI work at the university level, LeeAnn's experience as an attorney and in social services, and Kerani's nonprofit work and experience facilitating community conversations across Oregon complement each other to provide a diversity of viewpoints and services.

Our team intentionally consults with people of diverse identities, lived experiences, and expertise to bring authentic perspectives to issues of equity and social justice. Our collaborators bring an intimate understanding of local needs and the unique dynamics of Bend and rural Central Oregon.

Our clients include: Bend 2030, Bend Chamber of Commerce, Boys & Girls Club of Bend, Cascade Youth and Family Services, Central Oregon Health Council, Children's Forest of Central Oregon, Deschutes County District Attorney, Deschutes Public Library, High Desert Museum, Hydro Flask, Kôr Community Land Trust, Lora DiCarlo, Mosaic Medical, Oregon Natural Desert Association, Redmond Fire Department, Restorative Justice & Equity | Better Together, St. Charles Healthcare Systems, The Environmental Center, The Haven, Upper Deschutes Watershed Council, and U.S. Forest Service (Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests).