



Cuyahoga County 2022 Equity Commission Report

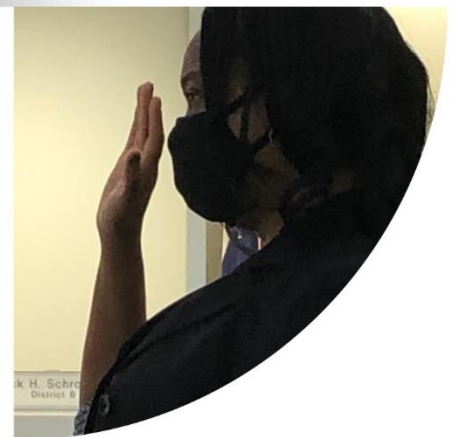


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Annual Equity Report Summary

In July 2020, amid an unprecedented pandemic and social unrest, the Cuyahoga County Equity Commission passed [Resolution No. R2020-0122](#) “declaring racism a public health crisis in Cuyahoga County.” With the passing of this resolution, the County Council and the County Executive acknowledged the needed focus and urgency to create systemic change across Cuyahoga County starting with the County government.

The Commission identified five (5) pilot agencies within the County and one (1) Board to begin the process of assessing each agency’s policies and programs through a lens of racial equity. This data review was an initial step towards gaining a better understanding of program outcomes in these agencies.

These pilot agencies have submitted updates to the [2021 Equity Report](#), issued in January 2021, and have established the following initiatives for calendar year 2022:

Department of Health & Human Services 2022 Initiatives

- Instruct all DHHS leadership and staff on Racial, Equity, and Inclusion (REI) learning principles
- Review and disaggregate DHHS employee data
- Continue to normalize conversations related to REI
- Continue to review DHHS policies to ensure they are reflective of REI principles and commitment to values
- Continue to develop infrastructure and support to HHS REI groups

Department of Development 2022 Initiatives

- Identify, implement and report on both internal and external equity initiatives
- Continue to build on internal staff equity work through its 2020-2021 pilot program
- Continue work on external equity initiatives, to include both Cleveland Central Neighborhood and Burton, Bell Carr CDC (BBC) Arbor Park Development and City of East Cleveland initiatives

Department of Public Works 2022 Initiatives

- Create an internal steering committee comprised of diverse populations to provide input into internal equity plan efforts
- Continue to use Economic Health Index for upcoming 2022 projects and set aside funding for equity zone projects
- Explore a “Build Back Cleveland” Pre-Apprenticeship program with local trade unions

Department of Equity & Inclusion 2022 Initiatives

- Proceed with administration of updated and approved SBE/MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures
- Proceed with efforts to increase utilization of the Small Business Set Aside Program
- Continue working with County departments and agencies to develop and post an updated 24-month purchasing and contracting forecast biannually by January 1st and July 1st
- Work to enhance equity program and policy development within County government, focusing on Supplier Diversity, Workforce Equity and Programs/Policies/Services Equity
- Develop and implement ombudsman process to accept and evaluate inquiries and complaints related to the County's equity initiatives from the public, and to coordinate and facilitate community involvement
- Develop and implement inaugural Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Scorecard
- Develop and implement inaugural Equity Assessment Tool for decision making
- Develop and implement Equity Zone Policy (includes Equity Zone Map)
- Implement GARE Racial Equity Employee Survey for employees under the authority of the County Executive
- Work with HR to develop ongoing plan for diversity, equity and inclusion training for County employees and leadership under authority of the County Executive

Department of Human Resources 2022 Initiatives

- Will continue to facilitate conversations on diversity and inclusion at monthly HR all-staff meetings; develop a strategic plan to increase membership of the HR DEI Steering Committee; create an internal communications plan; and identify relevant topics for discussion
- Continue to work in partnership with the Personnel Review Commission (PRC) to evaluate classified titles to determine the applicability of adding experiential equivalents
- Begin work with PRC and consultant, The Archer Company, on conducting a salary/compensation survey

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board 2022 Initiatives

- Will contract with providers that demonstrate diversity, equity and inclusion as part of their core values
- Work to maintain shared language around equity
- Continue Lunch and Learn Series on DEI inspired topics
- Develop a DEI resource list

2021 Equity Reflection from County Executive Armond Budish

The turn of the calendar year provides government, no matter how big or small, an opportunity to acknowledge the prior year's successes, reflect on ways to improve, and consider exciting possibilities that lie ahead. This past year – the second in a row fully immersed in the COVID-19 pandemic – presented many new challenges for all of us. I am proud of how our employees and community members worked jointly to tackle these difficult issues head on and come up with innovative solutions to problems both old and new.



One area where we made significant strides is our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. In May 2021, my administration and County Council enacted [legislation](#) that made Juneteenth an official County holiday – to recognize the anniversary of the date all enslaved people were freed. [Legislation](#) was also passed in May that created the [Department of Equity and Inclusion](#). Shortly thereafter, Lenora Lockett was appointed Director, the department was fully staffed, and their budget was approved by Council. This brand new department is designed to enhance diversity both internally – as it relates to recruitment, hiring, and promotion – and externally – as it relates to awarding contracts, providing services, and making other investments.

Notable progress has been made beyond just legislation, however. Over the past year:

- [The Department of Development](#) distributed 215 loans to minority-owned businesses (through the first three quarters alone), provided a \$500,000 grant towards a cold storage facility as part of a larger development project in Opportunity Corridor, and is currently processing \$3 million in new funding that will be awarded (pending Council approval) to nonprofit small business partners who have focused support for minority and women-owned businesses.
- Development also worked with multiple partners, including the Economic and Community Development Institute, the Urban League, and others, to support over 70 small businesses – at least half of which were minority-owned.
- [The Department of Health and Human Services](#) hosted *Crucial Conversations*, a bi-monthly discussion series for staff, in which 237 participants attended and engaged in dialogue regarding a variety of race-related issues – to facilitate the sharing of different viewpoints amongst employees of all backgrounds.
- The County awarded nearly \$17 million in contracts to small/minority/women-owned businesses through procurement goals established within the County's diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- The County committed significant COVID-19 resources toward minority communities, which included increasing PPE, testing sites, and access to vaccines.

- The County provided an additional \$11 million in [funding towards rental](#) and [legal assistance](#) to help keep people in homes and prevent evictions – bringing the County’s total rent relief contributions to over \$30 million since the pandemic started.
- The County [officially opened the Diversion Center](#) in May – the first-of-its-kind facility in the state – to directly connect individuals suffering from mental illness or substance abuse disorder with resources that offer better treatment options and services than incarceration.

Additionally, one of our most noteworthy 2021 equity initiatives was the official launch of our Neighborhood Surge program last May – a new initiative designed to spur economic growth and improve quality of life for historically underserved areas of our community. [Cleveland’s Central neighborhood was selected](#) for this pilot program. Significant resources, money, time, and effort have already been committed, including:

- Two job fairs hosted by the County in Central that connected over 110 residents with nearly 50 companies that participated
- [Approximately \\$330,000 contributed by the County](#) towards improving connectivity and bridging the digital divide
- Approximately \$100,000 invested by the County towards revitalizing the neighborhood’s tree canopy

While significant headway has been made, we still have a long way to go in order to accomplish all of our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals in Cuyahoga County. This year we are planning important new and continued equity investments towards affordable housing and home repair programs, rental assistance and source of income legislation, lead mitigation, and broadband expansion. Our newly-created Department of Equity and Inclusion is working hard to finalize and implement both a scorecard and assessment tool – which will be utilized in decision-making, to evaluate policies and procedures, and to track equity progress across all County departments.

We remain committed to improving operations and services within our criminal justice system. The County has dedicated funding towards supporting expungement clinics, which provide individuals with prior convictions the opportunity to put their past behind them, get a fresh start, and move forward with living their lives. Furthermore, the County Jail’s new Central Booking program is currently scheduled for implementation near the end of March. This much-needed upgrade brings all justice system stakeholders together in one location to ensure arrestees are treated fairly, diverted away from the criminal justice system when appropriate, charged correctly, provided counsel at the earliest opportunity, and released on appropriate bonds.

We hope to begin our Tuition Reimbursement Program this year, following policy adoption and Council approval. It is our belief that this program will not only incentivize our fellow community members to apply for County jobs, but that it will also help remove systemic barriers to education, hiring, and promotional opportunities within our organization.

We remain committed to our development plans in Central, as we hope to bring the recreation center renovations to fruition and add a banking institution to the neighborhood this year.

Other 2022 planned projects include racial equity training for all County Executive employees and implementation of our Equity Zones policy and map. A contract with Cuyahoga Community College was recently approved for a training program which will help improve our organizational culture and raise awareness of racial bias and racism in our workplace. Under the Equity Zone policy, the county will prioritize investments, economic resources, and other services towards designated distressed areas suffering from years of disinvestment. The equity training and policy are expected to be formally rolled out within the coming months.

Looking forward, it's clear that we have some really exciting things on the equity horizon! We are taking big steps to address systemic racism, but it will take a sustained and concerted effort from everyone if we want to reach our goals. I have full faith – through the hard work of our dedicated employees and commitment from our community members – that we will get it done! Together, our efforts will make Cuyahoga County a better place to vacay, play, and stay!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Armond Budish". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Armond Budish

Cuyahoga County Executive

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission (CCEC)

Equity Initiative Structure

Background

The [Cuyahoga County Code](#) defines equity as “fairness, justice and inclusion by and among people and across all social, economic, and political classifications regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation including gender identity, disability, age, or ancestry. An equitable community is a fair, just, and healthy community, one that cares that income, race, and neighborhood are often major predictors of high school graduation rates, incarceration rates, general health, and life expectancy. An equitable community is a connected community, one that links more people to better opportunities – among those being job opportunities, business development and wellness opportunities.”

The Cuyahoga County Equity Commission (CCEC) was appointed to oversee the County’s equity efforts. In the Summer of 2020, amid an unprecedented pandemic and social unrest, the Equity Commission was charged with the responsibility to create an Equity Plan that will improve how Cuyahoga County can better serve all residents.

Equity Commission Members

Per [County Code 206.09](#), a Cuyahoga County Equity Commission consisting of the Directors of Development, Human Resources, Health and Human Services, Equity and Inclusion (formerly Office of Procurement and Diversity), and Public Safety and Justice Services was created to oversee the County’s equity efforts.

Equity Commission Working Group

In September of 2020, the Equity Commission created an internal multi-agency group to support the day-to-day work and development strategies and recommendations to advance racial equity across all County agencies in Cuyahoga County. Having a working group comprised of individuals across departments helps to ensure that this important work is not being done in silos. The Working Group met on a monthly basis in calendar year 2021 but changed to a bi-monthly schedule beginning in 2022.

2021 Equity Highlights

The following are some highlights related to Equity for Cuyahoga County for calendar year 2021:

Executive Orders Advancing Supplier Diversity Equity

- [Executive Order O2021-001](#): On January 7, 2021, The Office of Procurement and Diversity was directed to propose a Cuyahoga County MWBE Contracting Program to increase participation in County contracting. This program shall include contract-by-contract goals tailored to each County project, propose criteria and periodically review and revise good-faith efforts.
- [Executive Order O2021-002](#): On January 7, 2021, all County Departments were directed to compile the Department’s Purchasing and Contracting Forecast for a period of, at a minimum, the following 24 months. Forecasts shall be posted biannually beginning July 1, 2021 and shall identify originating department and include a brief description, estimated amount, and estimated bid date. This order also calls for all departments under County jurisdiction to exercise all reasonable efforts to begin posting bids for County goods and services no fewer than 30 days prior to the bid opening date.

- [Executive Order O2021-003](#): On January 7, 2021, to support the MWBE Program and promote effective procurement, the County shall conduct outreach to contractors and vendors desiring to do business and to educate said contractors and vendors on specifics of the MWBE Program, goals, and good-faith efforts criteria. This order also directs OPD to propose a compliance program to support the MWBE program to include assessment, monitoring, verification of ownership and overall compliance.
- [Executive Order O2021-004](#): On January 7, 2021, this Executive Order directs all County departments under County jurisdiction to coordinate with OPD to expand the use of the Small Business Set Aside (SBSA) Program to enhance access of MWBE contracting opportunities. Each department, in consultation with OPD, shall determine a percentage of its contracts and purchases that it will use best efforts to award SBEs, including MWBEs certified as SBEs in any calendar year.

Ordinance Recognizing Juneteenth as a Holiday

- [Ordinance No. O2021-0005](#): On May 25, 2021, this ordinance provides for modifications to and adoption of the County Human Resources Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (“Employee Handbook”) to recognize Juneteenth as a paid County holiday. This ordinance was declared a necessity based on the passed Resolution No. [R2020-0122.pdf](#) declaring racism a public health crisis in Cuyahoga County. On June 17, 2021, President Biden signed the bill to establish Juneteenth as a Federal Holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. Juneteenth is the first Federal holiday to be approved since Martin Luther King Jr. Day, which was established in 1983. Juneteenth is the 12th Federal Holiday. Employees are encouraged to use this day to recognize the end of slavery and to celebrate the culture and achievements of African Americans.

Ordinance Establishing a Department of Equity & Inclusion

- [Ordinance No. O2021-0008](#): On May 25, 2021, this ordinance reflects the dissolution of the Office of Procurement and Diversity and its replacement by the Department of Purchasing and the Department of Equity and Inclusion.

Executive Order Establishing Cuyahoga County Equity Zones

- [Executive Order O2021-015](#): On July 26, 2021, the Department of Equity and Inclusion is directed in consultation with the County Equity Commission and Citizens’ Advisory Council on Equity to propose a map of the County identifying areas of historic disinvestment; such areas to be known as Cuyahoga County Equity Zones. This will result in providing consideration to investments in road projects, building projects, and development projects in identified Equity Zones.

Equity Commission Progress Updates

In the Cuyahoga County Equity Report issued in [January 2021](#), the Equity Commission established objectives and provided a proposed timeline to advance our equity work. The following are updates on our progress with achieving those objectives.

Objectives	Summary	Looking Forward
<p>Prioritize Racial Equity Training Opportunities for County Employees</p>	<p>RFP5368 for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant Services was issued on March 15, 2021, with a proposal due date of April 14, 2021. Three (3) proposals were submitted. An initial evaluation panel (Evaluation Panel 1) was formed that included representation from the various County departments and the Citizens’ Advisory Council on Equity (CACE). A second evaluation panel (Evaluation Panel 2) was formed that included representation from the Department of Equity and Inclusion, the Department of Human Resources, and the Clerk of Courts. Evaluation Panel 2 scheduled and held interviews with all three (3) consultants on July 27, 2021, and August 4, 2021. Based on the final scores submitted by Evaluation Panel 2, the recommended vendor for award of the contract was determined to be Cuyahoga Community College. On September 27, 2021, Notices of Intent to Award were issued to all three (3) vendors. Subsequently, Cuyahoga County and Cuyahoga Community College worked to finalize the scope of work and associated contract cost and are now in the final phase of contract preparation/approval. On January 10, 2022, the Cuyahoga County Board of Control approved a contract with Cuyahoga Community College.</p>	<p>Cuyahoga Community College will provide racial equity training to County employees and management that are under the authority of the County Executive. The DEI and HR will serve as the County’s project leads.</p>
<p>Identify Racial Equity metrics that will allow us to measure progress across the County organization</p>	<p>On May 25, 2021, Cuyahoga County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0006, establishing a Department of Purchasing, Ordinance No. O2021-0007, establishing a Department of Equity and Inclusion, and Ordinance No. O2021-0008, dissolving the Office of Procurement and Diversity and delineating various duties to either the Department of Purchasing or the Department of Equity and Inclusion. Effective June 1, 2021, an interim Director of the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) was appointed. After a hiring process, Lenora Lockett was recommended by County Executive Armond Budish for appointment as Director and, subsequently, confirmed by County Council. Director Lockett is developing the inaugural Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scorecard that will be used to measure progress across County agencies and departments.</p>	<p>Per DEI’s 2022 Equity Goals, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scorecard is targeted to be finalized in 2022.</p>

<p>Establish a budget for the Equity fund in order to advance racial equity both within the County Government and to monitor our procurement practices.</p>	<p>On May 25, 2021, Cuyahoga County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0006, establishing a Department of Purchasing, Ordinance No. O2021-0007, establishing a Department of Equity and Inclusion, and Ordinance No. O2021-0008, dissolving the Office of Procurement and Diversity and delineating various duties to either the Department of Purchasing or the Department of Equity and Inclusion. On July 20, 2021, County Council approved a budget for the remainder of CY2021 for DEI.</p>	<p>On December 7, 2021, County Council approved a biennial budget for CY2022-CY2023 that includes a budget for DEI.</p>
<p>Follow the Executive's Orders related to the Disparity Study</p>	<p>In accordance with the 2020 Disparity Study recommendations, Executive Order Nos. EO2021-0001 through EO2021-0004, DEI proceeded with reviewing and implementing improvements to its supplier diversity program by proceeding with said recommendations. On November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21.</p>	<p>DEI will proceed with the administration of the updated and approved SBE/MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures.</p>
<p>The Equity Zone initiative will be finalized for possible inclusion in the Biennial Budget</p>	<p>On July 26, 2021, County Executive Armond Budish issued Executive Order EO2021-0015 declaring and ordering the establishment of equity zones in response to historic disinvestment. Early Preliminary pilot work was done by the Clerk of Courts, County Planning Commission, Department of Development, Department of Law, and Department of Public Works. The current development team includes representation from Clerk of Courts, County Planning Commission, Department of Development, Department of Equity and Inclusion, Department of Law, Department of Public Works, and the Office of Innovation and Performance. Five (5) indicators will be used to determine Equity Zones. The Equity Zone indicators include: HOLC redlining maps, residential property values, life expectancy, poverty, and Improvement Target Areas (ITAs). The project team developed the equity zone criteria and, subsequently, an Equity Zone Map. Key next steps include finalizing the Equity Zone Map and sharing it with the public/stakeholders. On October 21, 2021, DEI provided a brief overview of the proposed Equity Zone Policy to the Municipal Economic Development Directors.</p>	<p>In calendar year 2022, the Equity Zone Map will be presented to the Mayors and Managers Association as well as the Municipal Economic Development Directors.</p> <p>In addition, the Equity Zone Policy will be utilized to provide additional consideration to establish a policy whereby future County investments in infrastructure, construction, and development projects will benefit areas of the County that suffer from historic disinvestment.</p>

<p>Countywide Equity Assessment tool will be finalized and launched</p>	<p>On May 25, 2021, Cuyahoga County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0006, establishing a Department of Purchasing, Ordinance No. O2021-0007, establishing a Department of Equity and Inclusion, and Ordinance No. O2021-0008, dissolving the Office of Procurement and Diversity and delineating various duties to either the Department of Purchasing or the Department of Equity and Inclusion. Effective June 1, 2021, an Interim Director of the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) was appointed. After a hiring process, Lenora Lockett was recommended by County Executive Armond Budish for appointment as Director and, subsequently, confirmed by County Council. Director Lockett is developing the inaugural Cuyahoga County Equity Assessment Tool that will be used in decision making and to evaluate our programs/policies/procedures using an equity lens.</p>	<p>Per DEI's 2022 Equity Goals, the inaugural Equity Assessment Tool is targeted to be finalized and implemented in 2022.</p>
<p>County Employee data will be disaggregated</p>	<p>County employee data is disaggregated by race and gender based on Average Hourly Rate by Executive Agency, by Age by Executive Agency, and by Years of Service by Executive Agency.</p>	<p>HR will continue to update as applicable.</p>
<p>County Agency Employee surveys to have been completed (at a minimum by pilot agencies).</p>	<p>At the May 6, 2021, Equity Commission Working Group Meeting, Dr. Raintry Salk, Research Manager for the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), provided details on the implementation process for the GARE Racial Equity Employee Survey. It was learned that due to the increase in requests for the GARE Racial Equity Employee Survey that the earliest available timetable for GARE to administer the survey was January 2022. A Working Group Subcommittee was formed for the implementation of the survey. The subcommittee determined that the preferred time to administer the survey would be April of 2022. After the GARE Annual Meeting in May of 2021, GARE decided to proceed with an internal assessment of its programs and policies. At the October 7, 2021, Equity Commission Working Group Meeting, Dr. Raintry Salk provided updates and further details on the GARE Racial Equity Employee Survey.</p>	<p>The County plans to proceed with the implementation of the GARE Racial Equity Employee Survey in the coming months.</p>
<p>Next tranche of County agencies will be identified</p>	<p>The Equity Commission has not initiated discussion on identifying the next tranche of County agencies.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that preliminary discussions will occur in early 2022.</p>

Pilot Agency Status Reports

Pilot Agency Recommendations

To better understand the role County staff play in eliminating racial disparities in Cuyahoga County, the five County agencies and one Board identified as pilots have submitted a status report to better implement next steps moving forward. They are included in the proceeding section. This data review is an initial step toward gaining a better understanding of program outcomes in these agencies.

The following is a review and summary of the County's equity initiatives by pilot agency, containing:

- A summary of where and how resources dedicated to equity initiatives were allocated
- An analysis of equity results as measured against benchmarks
- A description of how the County collected the reported data and made it accessible to the public
- Updates on benchmarks and description of changes in equity initiatives for the coming year

Pilot Agency: Department of Health and Human Services

Cuyahoga County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) consists of more than 2,300 leaders, managers, and frontline staff, who make up the workforce for eight operational divisions and offices. The four largest divisions under the DHHS umbrella are the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Job and Family Services (JFS), Office of Child Support Services (OCSS), and the Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS). There are four smaller offices, referred to as Community Initiatives, consisting of the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), the Office of Re-entry (OOR), the Office of Homeless Services (OHS), and Family and Children First Council (FCFC). As a collective, DHHS' mission is to transform lives at every age and stage, through collaboration, innovation, and service; connecting people with the opportunity to live their best lives.

Moving into the new calendar year, the DHHS REI team placed a great deal of emphasis on creating an environment where the voices of all staff could be elevated, and the work would be owned by the collective. The DHHS REI team's approach was guided by listening to staff and community partners and reviewing best practices from across the country to determine applicability. Utilizing staff and partner feedback, as well as what was learned through studying best practices, the DHHS REI team focused on the following priorities:

- Continue to research national REI best practices to help inform our strategies.
- Normalize conversations related to race equity and inclusion.
- Provide continuous training opportunities for all staff. Ensuring there are guided (formal training) and self-guided (informal training, e.g., resource library) available for staff to ground them in the principles and practices of REI.
- Utilize employee resource groups (ERGs) to collaborate with DHHS leadership and other departments, such as Contracting and Procurement and Human Resources, to review policies and practices.
- Develop metrics to monitor and track progress.

Researching national REI best practices included some DHHS REI team members attending trainings and workshops to learn methodologies of similar municipalities, as well as understand their successes and challenges with the issues they were facing. Other REI steering committee members reviewed publications of media and professional organizations such as The New York Times and the Society for Human Resource management (SHRM), to gain an understanding of how employers and businesses across the country were dealing with issues such as pay equity, working from home, and COVID-19. REI team members also presented national and local current events, and how they might be applicable and addressed within DHHS.

To assist with normalizing discussions related to race, equity and inclusion, and create a safe space for staff to be honest and authentic, the DHHS REI developed a discussion series titled *Crucial Conversations*. The *Crucial Conversation* series is a bi-monthly opportunity for staff across DHHS to convene to discuss REI topics, current events, and how the REI concepts apply to the work and operations of DHHS. Members of the Communications Employee Resource Group (ERG) identified appropriate subjects and scheduled a one-hour meeting, during staff's lunch hour, to engage in dialogue.

Throughout the *Crucial Conversation* series topics such as *Critical Race Theory*, *Voting*, and *Racism* were discussed. Due to the pandemic and many staff working from home, in-person conversations were prevented, so virtual sessions were held via Microsoft TEAMS. Participants were placed into breakout groups to discuss issues and later reconvened with the larger group to share highlights of the breakout conversations.

The following feedback was provided, specific to what staff liked best about the event:

“The facilitators were good, and it was good to small group-chat with co-workers.”

“The fact that we are beginning to have difficult and sometimes uncomfortable conversations.”

“My eyes were definitely opened to the challenges people face trying to vote.”

“Just having something like this offered to us. I think every employer should offer just general discussions nowadays.”

“The breakout rooms made it more authentic and also gave you a more secure feeling.”

In addition, staff offered feedback related to what they least liked about the event:

“The lunch period makes it rushed as one tends to skip lunch or mix lunch and the discussion.”

“More action.”

“It goes quickly”

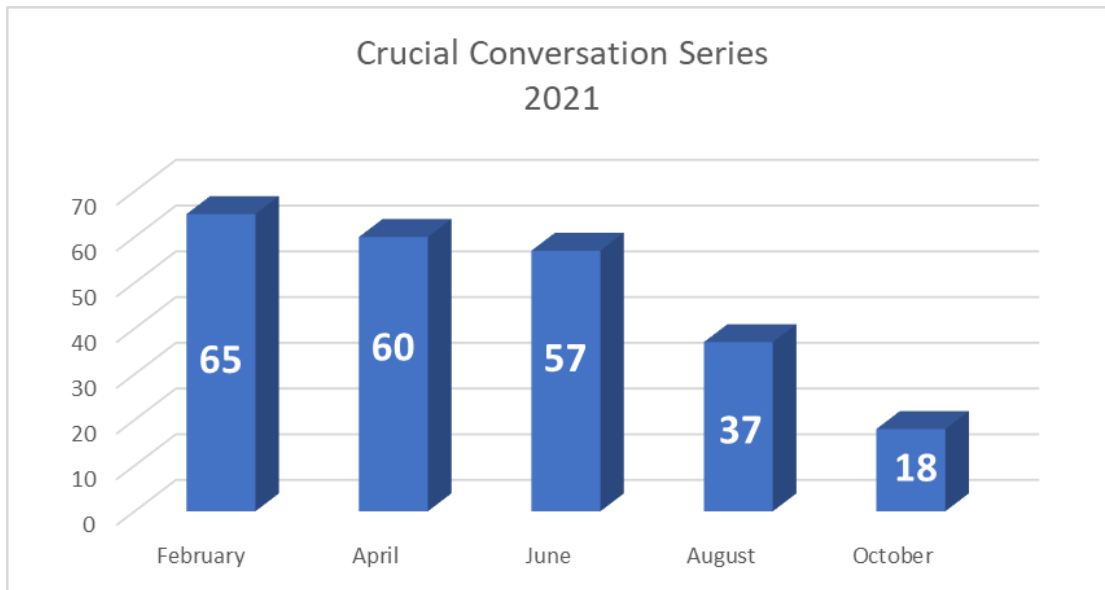
“Too short.”

“Virtual discussions like this can be rather awkward compared to in-person ones.”

“This event was short. I know the limitations of a lunch hour, but it feels like there is so much more to talk about.”

Figure 1 details the number of participants that attended the *Crucial Conversation* series by month.

Figure 1.



While the *Crucial Conversations* series was successful in normalizing REI-related discussion among DHHS staff, the REI steering committee team continued to search for additional ways to educate and engage staff. It was decided that learning the cultural observations that DHHS staff acknowledged would help the REI steering committee develop a cultural observance calendar, as well as bring enhanced awareness and inclusivity among staff. This may also be a good approach at engaging staff and increasing staff participation. In September 2021, a survey was distributed to all DHHS staff, and staff were asked to submit the cultural observances that they acknowledged. There were a total of 593 responses, highlighting observances across multiple religions and groups. Staff responses are highlighted in Table 1.

Table 1.

Religion/Group	Total responses	% of Total Responses
Secular/Federal	232	39.1%
Christianity	171	28.8%
Other	108	18.2%
Judaism	61	10.2%
Islam	12	2%
Hinduism	8	1.4%
Buddhism	1	0.3%
Total	593	100%

It is important to note that the cultural observances that DHHS staff reported acknowledging is not exhaustive and should not be used to generalize all DHHS staff. To help further learning and education of DHHS staff, instead of hosting a *Crucial Conversation* series during December of 2021, the DHHS REI steering committee hosted the *Cultural Observance Education Series*. During this series, DHHS staff volunteered to provide education on the cultural observances that they acknowledge. The cultural observance presentations included presentations on *Hanukkah*, *Kwanza*, *Juneteenth*, *Easter*, and *Christmas in Puerto Rico*.

Members of the DHHS REI steering committee collaborated with Human Resources, other Cuyahoga County departments, and community partners to identify equitable approaches to engage Cuyahoga County residents who are seeking employment. This resulted in multiple job fairs being hosted in the Central neighborhood. In addition, members of the DHHS steering are working on the *Cuyahoga County Central Surge Project* and engaging and listening to community residents and leaders regarding how to apply an equity lens to the needs of the Central neighborhood.

The following chart provides updates on the 2021 equity initiatives with details on where/how resources were dedicated, how the County collected and reported data, and how this data was made accessible to the public:

Initiatives	Summary	Looking Forward
Establish, Maintain, and Evaluate DHHS-wide REI training	To date, most of the work to achieve Goal 1 has centered on the Crucial Conversations component of the REI system, with the view that this is an informal type of REI training. The Process ERG has developed includes procedures to document frequency of and participation in Crucial Conversations, and to evaluate participant satisfaction. Implementation of those procedures is underway. Also underway are initial steps toward more formal REI education.	Cuyahoga Community College will provide racial equity training to County employees and management that are under the authority of the County Executive. The DEI group working with HR will serve as the County's project lead.
Normalize REI conversations	The work by the Communications and Resources ERGs to meet Goal 2 falls into three broad categories: 1) communicating the importance of the REI and how that work is progressing; 2) educating DHHS staff about race, equity, and inclusion through various resources; and 3) having actual conversations about race, equity, and inclusion via initiatives like Crucial Conversations.	Strategies to normalize REI conversations will continue throughout calendar year 2022 and will be adjusted as needed
Provide vehicles for workforce input	All DHHS ERGs encourage input from the DHHS workforce. The formation of the ERGs in 2020 was another way to elicit workforce input and encourage participation by DHHS employees at all levels. The Reporting ERG worked to develop reporting procedures by which each ERG could share its benchmarks and the DHHS REI goals. All DHHS staff were encouraged to register as members of the Government Alliance on Race Equity (GARE).	Strategies to normalize REI conversations will continue throughout calendar year 2022 and will be adjusted as needed
Review DHHS policies and practices with an equity lens	The Policy ERG reviewed contract and procurement procedures and developed initial recommendations for policy revisions, which include DEI doctrine. This process yielded several recommendations to change or update policies to better reflect equity and inclusion. Notably, the REI tool for policy evaluation has been adopted by DCFS and CJFS Policy Review Groups.	Review of DHHS policies and practices will continue throughout calendar year 2022.

Review and disaggregate DHHS employee data	Steps have been taken to obtain demographic, hiring, and compensation data from Human Resources (HR). Once received, data will be disaggregated and used to identify and address disparities or inequities.	Work to meet this goal will require collaboration with HR to provide data, specific to DHHS employees.
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The work of the DHHS REI ERGs has been critical to the advancement of REI efforts within DHHS. In addition to their primary job functions, the ERGs have reviewed and provided revisions for numerous policies; they have created metrics and tracking systems, drafted correspondence to staff, researched best practices, participated in events, and attend countless REI-related meetings. It would be biased not to acknowledge that ERG numbers and participation decreased the last half of 2021. This could be due to several factors, as staff have reported having low morale, anxiety around returning to work, and their workload being increased. Nonetheless, we must find a way to reinvigorate ERG membership and participation.

While the DHHS REI team made significant progress on the goals and recommendations established for 2021, there are still numerous areas that require attention and improvement. It is recommended that for 2022, the following recommendations are prioritized:

- REI education and learning is essential. Once the County administration outlines an REI curricula and education schedule, it is critical that all DHHS leadership and staff are instructed and receive continuous learning on REI principles.
- Review and disaggregate DHHS employee data. This will be key in helping County and DHHS leadership understand where gaps and disparities may exist, and where resources need to be allocated.
- Continue to normalize conversations related to REI. This includes continuing with the Critical Conversations and Cultural Observance Education series, as well as identifying innovative ways to engage and educate staff.
- Continue to review DHHS policies and practices for potential barriers related to the vendor selection and contracting process, hiring, compensation, and professional development opportunities, to ensure that these activities are reflective of REI principles and our commitment to those values.
- Continue to develop the infrastructure and provide support to the HHS REI Employee Resource Groups (ERG). This includes creating Affinity Groups and identifying ERG co-leads to help alleviate the workload of current ERG leads.

To accomplish the goal of providing superior services to the community, there must first be a priority to create and sustain a culture at DHHS that is diverse, inclusive, and equitable, from top to bottom. Establishing and maintaining such a culture is critical to DHHS’ professional development efforts, policy development, and workforce engagement, aimed at eradicating the structures of racism and inequity. Continued REI education is needed within DHHS, which may help leadership and staff to develop the attitude and behavior needed to empathize with clients and better serve the residents of Cuyahoga County, ultimately improving service provision satisfaction.

Pilot Agency: Department of Development

The Charter of Cuyahoga County, adopted by the voters in 2009, defines the mission of the Cuyahoga County Department of Development as follows:

The Department of Development shall coordinate the programs and activities of the officers, departments, agencies, boards, and commissions of the County that relate to economic development, including identification of the causes of unemployment and economic underdevelopment among segments of the population and within communities in the County and the development of programs and activities to remedy such conditions.

To carry out this mission, the Department of Development employs 33 staff and contracts with more than 15 outside nonprofit agencies to deliver services to Cuyahoga County residents and businesses. Staff are organized in two major divisions – Community Development/Housing and Economic Development/Skill Up. Administrative and business staff support both divisions.

Two-thirds of the Department’s senior leadership team, and two-fifths of all the managers and supervisors in the Department of Development, are African American.

The following chart provides updates on 2021 equity initiatives with details on where/how resources were dedicated, how the County collected and reported data, and how this data was made accessible to the public:

Initiatives	Summary	Looking Forward
Support The Cleveland Innovation Project, which emphasizes inclusion and resource access to minority tech-based businesses and talent.	The Department of Development highlighted the Cleveland Innovation Project initiative as a priority in the 2021 update of Cuyahoga County’s 5-year Economic Development plan. Funding was provided to support specific elements of the Cleveland Innovation Project: \$250,000 was committed to an initiative to transfer technology from NASA Glenn to locally based startups. This initiative is operated by JumpStart. Minority owned startups are preferred for support, and ownership of each startup is reported. \$1,450,000 was committed to continue support of the Workforce Sector Partnership initiative. This includes support for the IT Sector Partnership, which has developed innovative IT industry recruitment and training practices to increase minority representation in the IT industry. Demographics of each participant are reported.	Continue to support recruitment and training practices to increase minority representation in the IT industry.
Small business support will include new funding to small business support partners for their focused support to minority and women-owned businesses.	The Department of Development is processing competitive awards totaling \$3 million of new funding for this work. Once fully approved by County Council, these awards will support five established nonprofit small business support organizations.	County Council approval of the awards is expected by March 2022.

<p>New funds will be allocated for working capital loans to minority-owned businesses.</p>	<p>Through 3 quarters of 2021, 215 loans were made to minority owned businesses. Full year 2021 data will soon be available as several other loans were made during Q4. That information is still being collected.</p>	<p>Loans will be made on an ongoing basis. A new round of funding for additional loans will occur in 2022.</p>
<p>The Department will seek to negotiate affirmative minority hiring and subcontracting efforts in its direct economic development lending programs.</p>	<p>In 2021, the Department of Development negotiated specific affirmative hiring actions with Lincoln Electric and Orlando Baking, in connection with planned County economic development funding. Lincoln Electric has committed to highly focused outreach and recruitment of minority engineers for new well-paid engineering jobs at its Euclid location. Orlando Baking has committed to neighborhood hiring with a written minority hiring goal.</p>	<p>A formal policy recommendation for DEI goals in all direct County economic development funding will be presented to the Cuyahoga County Community Improvement Corporation in early 2022.</p>
<p>Job Hubs with access for residents of distressed communities will be supported as preferred locations for new business attraction and business growth investments.</p>	<p>The Department of Development provides \$125,000 per year operating funding for business attraction and business growth in the Aerozone hub. The Department of Development is providing \$500,000 in financial support to an initial job creating project in Opportunity Corridor – a large cold storage facility. The department continues to work with community development organizations and partners, including Burten Bell Carr Development, to leverage this project to attract new food manufacturing businesses to Opportunity Corridor.</p>	<p>Continue to work with community development organizations and partnerships with a focus on distressed communities.</p>
<p>Support the Greater Cleveland Lead Coalition and other lead safe efforts.</p>	<p>Cuyahoga County’s \$800,000 annual contribution to the Greater Cleveland Lead Safe Coalition, for 2021, was processed and expedited by the Department of Development.</p>	<p>Additional \$800,000 annual contributions are planned for each year from 2022-2025. Department of Development staff continue to participate in federally funded work, led by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, to make the homes of low-income County residents lead safe.</p>
<p>Outreach and recruitment for the Department’s innovative Skill Up program will be redesigned to significantly increase the number of businesses adopting data-driven, non-discriminatory hiring and promotion practices. This is expected to increase the number of African American workers hired and promoted and reach more African American owned businesses to provide broad business supports.</p>	<p>The Department of Development has updated its Skill Up program to “Skill Up 2.0”. Staff are currently promoting the redesigned Skill Up program through all of Cuyahoga County’s small and medium sized business support partnerships. This outreach includes speaking at business association and chamber of commerce meetings, as well as direct mailing to businesses in the Central neighborhood with follow-up telephone calls to each targeted business. The percentage of African American workers hired and promoted due to Skill Up increased from 33.8% in 2019 to 50% in 2020.</p>	<p>Proceed with the implementation of the Skill Up 2.0 Program.</p>

<p>Development has renewed its focus on HUD’s Section 3 provision which requires affirmative outreach to businesses owned by or employing low-income community residents, contracting goals for such Section 3 businesses.</p>	<p>Department of Development staff have received extensive training from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on Section 3. The “Best Effort” requirement is pushed out through all HUD funded projects that meet or exceed the \$200,000 threshold. Development staff maintain Section 3 information in the County’s LCP Tracker system.</p>	<p>Expand contracting opportunities for minority-owned businesses. Section 3 projects are housing rehabilitation, housing construction, and other public construction projects assisted under HUD programs that provide housing and community development financial assistance when the total amount of assistance to the project exceeds a threshold of \$200,000.</p>
<p>As part of the County’s Equity Zone initiative, community development and housing support resources will be focused and enhanced in designated distressed areas, complementing opportunity zones and other County programs that are directed to designated areas.</p>	<p>Upon adoption of the Cuyahoga County Equity Zones, Development will add the Equity Zones in the point calculation when reviewing grant proposals for programs where the applicable U.S. Department of HUD or Department of Treasury rules and regulations allow consideration of the Zones as a criterion.</p>	<p>In addition, the Equity Zone Policy will be utilized to provide additional consideration to establish a policy whereby future County investments in infrastructure, construction, and development projects will benefit areas of the County that suffer from historic disinvestment.</p>

For 2022, the Department of Development has identified both internal and external equity initiatives to be carried out and reported upon.

Building on its 2020-2021 pilot program for internal staff equity work, the Department of Development will engage all its staff in structured equity-related small group discussions, led by a qualified Department of Human Resources trainer, throughout 2022. This work will support greater awareness of unconscious bias, both among staff and in outside partners, which can limit the impact of the Department’s external equity initiatives. (As recommended by the Human Resources trainer, senior leaders will participate in similar countywide work.)

In 2022, the Department of Development will continue its work on each 2021 external equity initiative, with two new initiatives added. Ongoing and new initiatives are as follows:

Support Cleveland Central Neighborhood and Burton, Bell Carr CDC (BBC) Arbor Park Development with the addition of a banking institution in an underserved community. BBC seeks to add a credit union to the retail outdoor mall space either inside a new grocery store or in a vacant unit near the grocery store. Cuyahoga County has engaged a credit union that seeks to expand into the Arbor Park Central neighborhood area with a full-service banking branch to serve the East Cleveland community with a full suite of products and services designed to promote thrift, financial education, and support business growth and expansion. Programs such as financial education, 2nd chance loans, 2nd chance checking accounts and payday loan alternatives are just some of the products and services offered.

Support the City of East Cleveland with a banking initiative to create or expand banking services to underserved and unbanked residents and businesses communities. The city of East Cleveland seeks to create or welcome a credit union to its city to serve the underserved residential and business communities. Cuyahoga County has engaged a credit union that seeks to expand into East Cleveland and will consider an “affinity” full-service banking branch to serve the East Cleveland community with a full suite of products and services designed to promote thrift, financial education, and support business growth and expansion. Programs such as financial education, 2nd chance loans, 2nd chance checking accounts and payday loan alternatives are just some of the products and services offered.

Pilot Agency: Department of Public Works

The Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works includes over 600 employees who plan, design, and maintain a network of roads, bridges, sewers, and County-owned buildings, throughout the County with a \$200,000,000.00 annual operating budget. Additionally, the County Airport and the County Animal Shelter are operated by the Department of Public Works.

An overview of the Department’s responsibilities:

- Assisting 59 municipalities located within Cuyahoga County with the maintenance and repair of over 750 route miles of County Roads
- Maintaining and repairing over 25 route miles of County Roads located within two townships
- Maintenance, repair, and capital improvements on 209 bridges and 140 culverts
- Maintenance and repair of 27 County-owned buildings
- Design, maintenance, and repair of storm and sanitary sewers located within 33 communities and two townships

In the initial assessment five (5) key areas were identified in which the department could promote Racial Equity and Inclusion, these areas included: Human Resources, Contracting and Procurement, Public Works and Infrastructure, Education and Workforce Development

The following chart provides updates on 2021 equity initiatives with details on where/how resources were dedicated, how the County collected and reported data, and how this data was made accessible to the public:

Initiatives	Summary	Looking Forward
Having a workforce that closely reflects the diversity of Cuyahoga County	Interview panels were diverse and formed to reflect the diversity of Cuyahoga County. In 2021, 51% of all new hires were minority or women. As a result of these new hires, the following areas have seen an increase in minority representation in management: Custodial Supervisor, Sanitary Engineer, and Fiscal Administrator. Within the building trades, 55% of new hires were women or minorities.	Continue to implement strategies to recruit, retain, and promote a workforce that is reflective of the diversity in Cuyahoga County.

<p>The Economic Health Index as a factor when considering Roadway Operations and/or 50/50 Infrastructure Projects sponsored by the department.</p>	<p>The Economic Health Score considers the Per Capita Income along with the percentage of households below the poverty level within a given community as a significant factor in determining the rank and scoring for infrastructure projects competing for funding provided by the Ohio Public Works Commission. Public Works has added additional points to scoring criteria for the 50/50 project selection based on whether the project is in an equity zone.</p> <p>In the fall of 2021, we provided the <i>Department of Public Works 2022 Construction Forecast</i> to the Construction Employers Association. Providing this forecast can be especially useful to small and new businesses since it gives them a tool to better plan their resources to be prepared for future procurement opportunities.</p>	<p>The department will continue to use this index for upcoming 2022 projects. Public Works will set aside separate funding for equity zone projects in 2022.</p>
<p>Contracting & Procurement</p>	<p>In 2021 Public works has collaborated with OPD to increase our utilization of SBE, MBE, WBE companies.</p> <p>Public Works continues to utilize the B2G Program to ensure that 100% of the companies doing business with the Department of Public Works maintain reasonable compliance with the County's diversity goals. The Department has provided a 24-month forecast of contract and purchasing opportunities to DEI in accordance with the Executive Order O2021-002. During the past year, the Department of Public Works has awarded a total of 16 contracts to various engineering firms. Of the 13 firms, 5 contracts were awarded to SBE/MBE/WBE firms. The remainder of the firms were required to meet a 30% goal for SBE, MBE, or WBE participation unless they received a waiver based on Good Faith Effort.</p> <p>In 2021 the Department of Public Works awarded 17 construction contracts in the Road and Bridge, Sanitary, and Facilities Sections. Of the 17 contracts, 8 contracts were awarded to either SBE, MBE, or WBE companies. The remainder of the contracts required a 30% participation goal for SBE, MBE, or WBE companies unless provided a waiver based on Good Faith Effort.</p> <p>Many of our small business owners/new contractors struggle with the paperwork required when responding to an RFP. In response, Public Works has met with Department of Purchasing and DEI to discuss options to streamline bidding documents produced by our departments.</p>	<p>The department plans to continue these strategies and adjust as needed.</p>

<p>Education: Engage in community outreach to improve workforce development outcomes</p>	<p>In 2021 Department representatives will again be involved in the True2U Mentoring Program Cleveland, sponsored by the CMSD. “True2U” is a volunteer mentoring program that helps every 8th grader in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District develop good decision-making skills and encourages them to leverage their strengths and interests as they start out on their paths to high school, college, and/or career choices. Mentors use their unique backgrounds and the True2U curriculum to assist students in better understanding themselves and the opportunities available to them. This program exposes minority students to potential career paths represented within the department.</p>	<p>The department is also exploring a Pre-Apprenticeship program with the local trade unions. This pilot program “Build Back Cleveland” looks to expose more young people within the community to the building trade industry. There are currently 3 individuals in the pilot program and these individuals will have a unique opportunity to shadow different journeyman trades.</p>
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The department has since taken on and executed many initiatives moving the department toward its goals. The initiatives that have been started are moving the department in the right direction, but we are constantly evaluating and seeing where we could improve on the initial development plan.

New initiatives for 2022 include creating a steering committee. Public Works is investigating creating a steering committee made up of a diverse population that will help provide input into the department’s continued equity plan efforts.

This committee will help propose new initiatives, ensure that all initiatives align with Public Works goals surrounding equity and inclusion, and will be responsible for monitoring and tracking the department’s ongoing initiatives.

Pilot Agency: Department of Equity and Inclusion

Prior to May 25, 2021, the Office of Procurement and Diversity (OPD) developed, administered, and enforced several diversity programs related to county purchasing and contracting. On May 25, 2021, Cuyahoga County Council approved [Ordinance No. O2021-0006](#) establishing a Department of Purchasing, [Ordinance No. O2021-0007](#) establishing a Department of Equity and Inclusion, and [Ordinance No. O2021-0008](#) dissolving the Office of Procurement and Diversity and delineating various duties to either the Department of Purchasing or the Department of Equity and Inclusion. Specifically, The Department of Equity and Inclusion shall be responsible for enhancing equity in program and policy development within County government by coordinating with the County Equity Commission, the Citizens Advisory Council on Equity, and the various departments under the jurisdiction of the County Executive.

The Department’s duties include:

- Increasing participation of minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE) in County contracting and purchasing opportunities
- Working with the Office of Innovation and Performance, developing metrics and reports regarding whether County agencies meet or exceed their MWBE contracting goals
- Working with the Human Resources Department to develop and implement programs, training, and assessment to build a culture of equity, with respect to race, gender, and sexual orientation throughout County government, including in hiring and promotion
- Serving as an ombudsman to accept and evaluate inquiries and complaints from the public regarding implementation of the County’s equity initiatives and to coordinate and facilitate community input

The Department of Equity and Inclusion conducts a Disparity Study every five (5) years. All such studies are designed to meet the legal standards established by court rulings with respect to the constitutionality of programs intended to encourage greater participation of women and minorities in our economy. The Department of Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with the County Equity Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Council on Equity, evaluates the recommendations of the Disparity Study and provides advice to the Executive regarding the implementation of said recommendations, if any. The Department of Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with the County Equity Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Council on Equity, shall monitor the effectiveness of the implemented recommendations and shall report same to the Executive and Council at least once per calendar year.

For the county's purchasing and contracting operations, there are three (3) phases of focus for DEI's efforts related to supplier diversity and inclusion initiatives: certification, compliance, and outreach.

- Certification involves reviewing and evaluating applications by businesses for the county's various diversity initiatives.
- Compliance involves implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives in accordance with the County Code and Executive Orders and monitoring contracts/purchases for compliance. Monitoring includes, but is not limited to, a statistical analysis of each construction trade, business service, professional service, and commodity to determine whether the utilization of SBEs, MBEs, and WBEs is proportionate to the established goal. DEI is authorized to collect data and information necessary to monitor diversity and equity initiatives related to county procurements.
- Outreach involves coordinating and participating in community outreach events to increase visibility, awareness and to improve understanding of the county's various diversity and inclusion programs.

DEI's Equity Report (See Appendix) for calendar year 2021 provides extensive data on our efforts and results in the three (3) focus areas. The following tables are highlights from the report. Per Figure 1, in CY 2021, there were a total of 439 certifications approved for the SBE/MBE/WBE program. Many businesses applied for and met the requirements for multiple certification categories. Per Figure 2, in CY2021, of approximately \$122.7 M in contracts awarded, approximately \$16.9 M was awarded to SBEs/MBEs/WBEs through the county's diversity goals established as part of the county's diversity and inclusion initiatives for its procurement process. Per Figure 3, for CY2012 through CY2021, of approximately \$1,252.3 M in contracts awarded, approximately \$112.1 M was awarded to SBEs/MBEs/WBEs through the county's diversity goals established as part of the county's diversity and inclusion initiatives for its procurement process. Per Figure 4, for the period CY2012 through CY2021, of the approximately \$578.5 M in contracts awarded with participation goals for SBE/MBE/WBE vendors through the county's diversity goals established as part of the county's diversity and inclusion initiatives, \$104.3 M (to date) has been documented to have been paid to SBE/MBE/WBE vendors for goods and services rendered. For the period CY2012 through CY2021, Figure 5 shows the breakdown by certification category of \$104.3 M (to date) that has been documented to have been paid to SBE/MBE/WBE vendors for goods and services rendered.

Figure 1 - Certifications Approved – CY2021

CERTIFICATION CATEGORY	CERTIFICATIONS APPROVED
SBE	126
SBE/MBE	90
SBE/WBE	116
SBE/MBE/WBE	64
MBE	22
WBE	16
MBE/WBE	5
TOTAL ALL CERTIFICATIONS	439

Figure 2 – CY2021 Diversity Awards

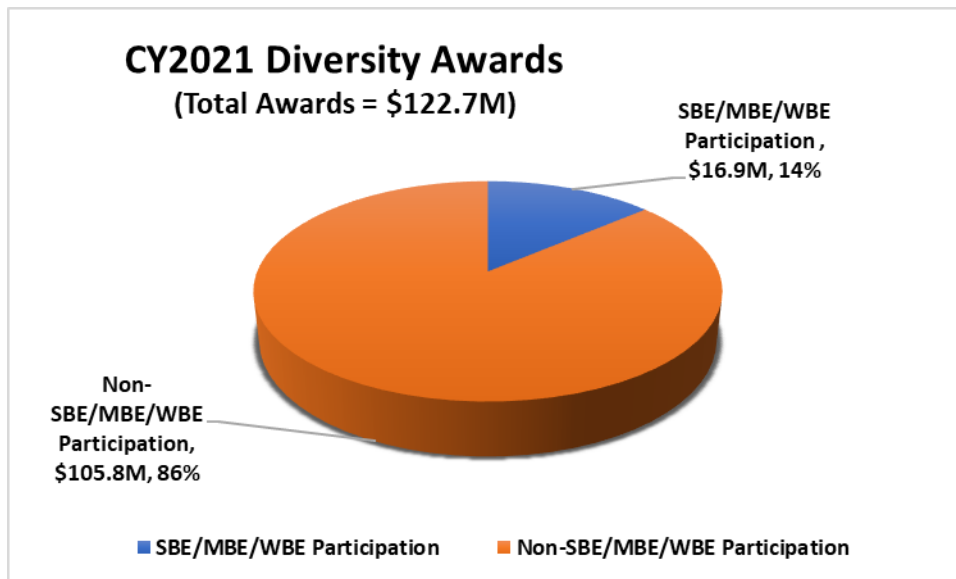


Figure 3 – CY2012 - CY2021 Diversity Awards

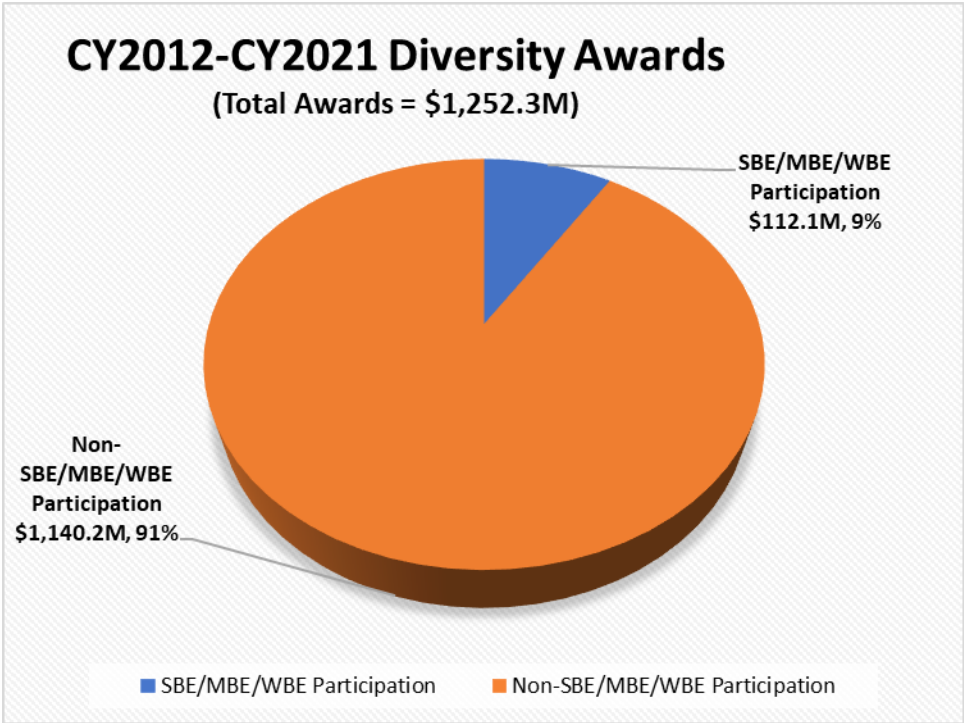


Figure 4 – CY2012 - CY2021 Payments to SBE/MBE/WBEs

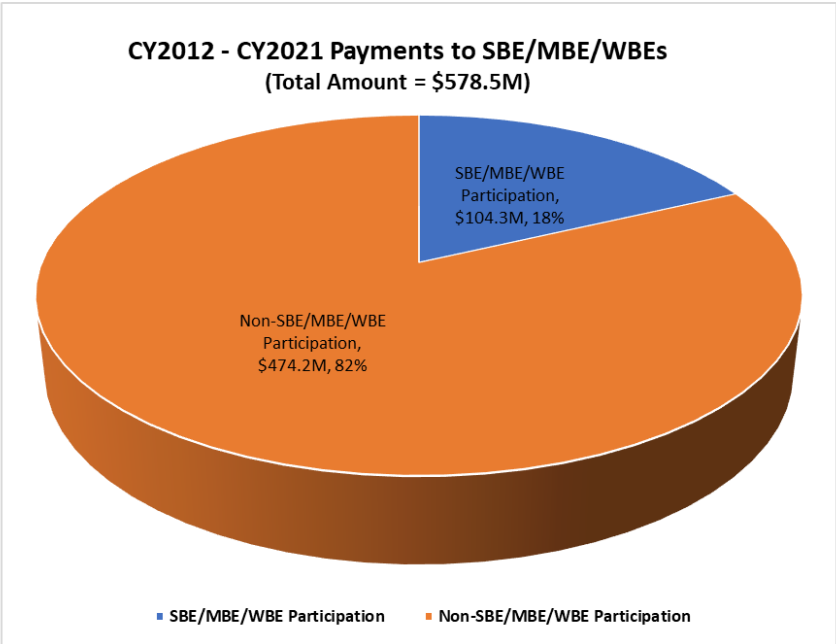
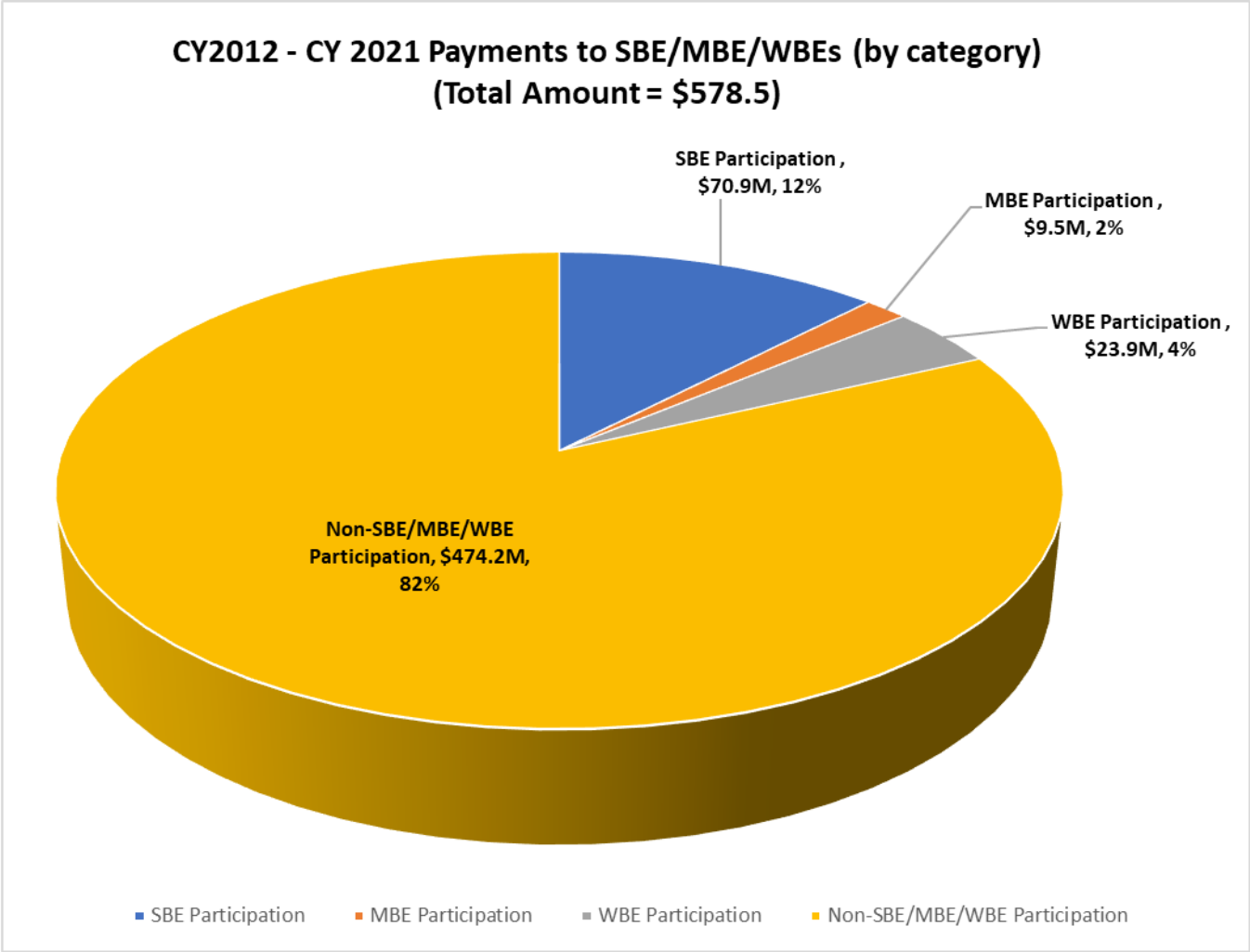


Figure 5 – CY2012 - CY2021 Payments to SBE/MBE/WBEs (By Category)



In the Cuyahoga County Equity Report issued in January 2021, the Office of Procurement and Diversity (OPD) made a commitment to implement the eight (8) recommendations of the 2020 Disparity Study. The OPD’s Diversity Division worked toward achieving these goals. With the creation of the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI), the OPD’s Diversity Division employees were transferred to DEI, and DEI proceeded with fulfilling the commitment to implement the eight (8) recommendations of the 2020 Disparity Study.

The following chart provides updates on 2021 equity initiatives with details on where/how resources were dedicated, how the County collected and reported data, and how this data was made accessible to the public:

Initiatives	Summary	Looking Forward
MWBE subcontractor goals with definitive Good Faith Efforts Requirements	In accordance with Executive Order No. EO2021-0001 , DEI proceeded with reviewing and implementing improvements to its supplier diversity program to use contract-by-contract goal setting, definitive Good Faith Effort Criteria, and data collection reform. On November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21. This policy includes the implementation of contract-by-contract MBE/WBE goals with definitive Good Faith Effort Requirements.	DEI will proceed with the administration of the updated and approved SBE/MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures.
Enhanced contract compliance	In accordance with Executive Order No. EO2021-0003 , DEI proceeded with reviewing and implementing improvements to its supplier diversity program to enhance contract compliance. On November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21. This policy includes enhanced contract compliance policies and procedures.	DEI will proceed with the administration of the updated and approved SBE/MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures.

<p>Increased staffing and resources</p>	<p>On May 25, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0007 creating the Department of Equity and Inclusion. Subsequently, four (4) existing employees from the Office of Procurement and Diversity were transferred to the Department of Equity and Inclusion and an Interim Director was appointed. In July of 2021, three (3) additional Contract Compliance Officers were hired, and County Council approved Resolution No. R2021-0169 – which established a budget for DEI for the remainder of CY 2021. As a result of a hiring process, Lenora M. Lockett was recommended for appointment as Director of the Department of Equity and Inclusion by the Cuyahoga County Executive and confirmed by County Council on September 28, 2021. In October of 2021, one (1) additional Contract Compliance Officer was hired.</p>	<p>As part of Cuyahoga County’s biennial budget process, DEI’s budget for CY2022 & CY2023 was approved on December 7, 2021.</p>
<p>Staff training</p>	<p>From August 30, 2021, through September 5, 2021, four (4) of DEI’s Contract Compliance Officers attended the American Contract Compliance Association’s National Training Institute that was held in San Antonio, Texas. On August 19, 2021, and September 2, 2021, as part of the Department of Purchasing’s Purchasing Refresh Training to County procurement staff, DEI provided an overview of proposed changes to the SBE and MBE/WBE Policies. On November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21. After the approval of these policies, DEI provided training to vendors and county procurement staff. DEI provided a virtual webinar to businesses on Tuesday, November 23, 2021. DEI also provided a virtual webinar on Wednesday, December 1, 2021, and a virtual (with in-person option) webinar on Tuesday, December 7, 2021, to County procurement personnel.</p>	<p>DEI will continue to offer staff training on diversity, equity, and inclusion as it relates to County goals, programs, and procedures to vendors and county staff. Furthermore, DEI will pursue training for DEI staff on best practices for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. This includes maximizing the benefits of its GARE Membership and attending the ACCA’s National Training Institute.</p>

<p>Increased utilization of Small Business Set Aside Program</p>	<p>In 2016, Ordinance No. O2016-0004 established the Small Business Set Aside Program. The Department of Public Works has served as the pilot agency for this program. Since inception in 2016, there have been twelve (12) approved contract awards for this program. In accordance with Executive Order No. EO2021-0002 and Executive Order No. EO2021-0004, DEI worked with County agencies and departments to develop and post a 24-month purchasing and contracting forecast for Cuyahoga County. The initial forecast was posted by the July 1, 2021 deadline and will be updated biannually by January 1st and July 1st. Beginning with the development of the initial forecast, SBE Set Aside items are determined from the list of procurements. In the initial forecast, more than ten (10) procurements were deemed candidates for the Small Business Set Aside Program. On November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21. This policy includes the requirement and procedure for increasing utilization of the Small Business Set Aside Program as part of the development and posting of the County’s purchasing and contracting forecast. The semi-annual update of the forecast was posted on December 20, 2021 and includes more than fifteen (15) procurements deemed candidates for the Small Business Set Aside Program.</p>	<p>DEI will continue its efforts to increase utilization of the Small Business Set Aside Program.</p>
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Contract forecasting	<p>In accordance with Executive Order No. EO2021-0002 and Executive Order No. EO2021-0004, DEI worked with County agencies and departments to develop and post a 24-month purchasing and contracting forecast for Cuyahoga County. The initial forecast was posted by the July 1, 2021, deadline and will be updated biannually by January 1st and July 1st. Beginning with the development of the initial forecast, SBE Set Aside items are determined from the list of procurements. On November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21. This policy includes the requirements and procedures for increasing utilization of the Small Business Set Aside Program as part of the development and posting of the County’s purchasing and contracting forecast. The semi-annual update of the forecast was posted on December 2021, in advance of the January 1st deadline.</p>	<p>DEI will continue working with County departments and agencies to develop and post an updated 24-month purchasing and contracting forecast biannually by January 1st and July 1st.</p>
Coordinated vendor outreach	<p>In accordance with the 2020 Disparity Study recommendation and Executive Order No. EO2021-0003, DEI proceeded with enhanced and coordinated vendor outreach. Furthermore, on November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21. This policy also includes the implementation of enhanced vendor outreach. The types of enhanced and coordinated vendor outreach implemented include: vendor training, notification of informal bid/RFP/RFQ opportunities, daily email notifications (on workdays) of business opportunities with Cuyahoga County, a minimum 30-day solicitation posting period for formal bids/RFPs/RFQs, and biannual posting of updated purchasing and contracting forecast.</p>	<p>DEI will continue its efforts at coordinated vendor outreach to increase awareness and effectiveness of its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.</p>

In 2022, in accordance with its founding principles, the Department of Equity and Inclusion shall work to enhance equity in program and policy development within County government. DEI’s work will be in three (3) areas of focus: Supplier Diversity, Workforce Equity, and Programs/Policies/Services Equity.

Major tasks/goals to complete by the end of CY2022:

- Develop and implement ombudsman process to accept and evaluate inquiries and complaints from the general public regarding implementation of the County's equity initiatives and to coordinate and facilitate community input
- Develop inaugural Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Scorecard Criteria and implement the Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Scorecard Program, which includes providing training to departments on the program
- Develop inaugural Equity Assessment Tool for use in decision making
- Develop and implement Equity Zone Policy, which includes development of Equity Zone Map
- Finalize award/hiring of consultant to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training to county employees and leadership under the authority of the County Executive
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion training provided by consultant (with oversight by DEI/HR) to county employees and leadership under the authority of the County Executive
- Implement the GARE Racial Equity Employee Survey for employees under the authority of the County Executive
- Work with HR to develop ongoing plan for diversity, equity and inclusion training for county employees and leadership under the authority of the County Executive
- Draft the 2023 Equity Report (publication deadline: January 31, 2023)

The above detailed tasks are in addition to the ongoing equity initiatives previously implemented (including the 2020 Disparity Study recommendations).

Pilot Agency: Department of Human Resources

The Department of Human Resources contributes to the organization's viability and success through the strategic management of its human capital, and services. Human Resources assists departments in attracting, motivating, developing, and retaining talented individuals in a positive, diverse, healthy, and safe environment. Issues of racial inequities and inclusiveness are addressed, and employees can work for an employer where it is a common belief that all things are possible.

The County's Human Resources department is comprised of Talent Acquisition and Training and Development; Compensation and Benefits, and Employee Wellness; Payroll and Employee Services; Employee/Labor Relations, including Workers Compensation, Workplace Safety and Compliance; and a general HR Manager team dedicated to providing daily HR specific services across County agencies.

The HR Department consists of a team of close to 65 professionals who handle a myriad of tasks and benefits for over 5,000 employees.

Over the past year, the Department of Human Resources (HR) has taken steps to ensure that, internally, its own employees understand the County's initiatives around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion continue to be extremely important and relevant, and that HR has a viable role in their success.

The HR DEI Steering Committee was formally established in 2021 and originally consisted of the following five members: HR Manager for Jail Services, Organizational and Employee Development Director, OED Training Specialist, Employee Benefits Analyst, and the HR Director for Total Rewards. The Steering Committee members met once a month for an hour. As some committee members have transitioned to other roles, the team going into 2022 will initially consist of the HR Manager for Jail Services, Employee Benefits Analyst, and the HR Director for Total Rewards. Conversations around diversity and inclusion had been included as part of HR’s monthly all-staff meetings prior to the establishment of a HR DEI Steering Committee. However, with the establishment of the committee, more formal presentations were developed to address the themes of “Our Why” and “All In.” In our Fall 2021 staff meetings, we discussed and identified the following topics which will be addressed in 2022:

- The Importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Your Why)
- Stereotypes
- Gender Identity in the Workplace
- Becoming Diversity Champions

County Wide Collaborations

Our Talent Acquisition Team is committed to improving our diversity recruiting strategies and increased their activities in several areas. They attended and will continue to participate in the Central Neighborhood Surge project, hosting job fairs and addressing issues that relate to employment readiness and opportunities. We are committed to sending emails and hot jobs to the Central Neighborhood committee on a regular basis. We work with the committee and residents to help them with the application process, Civil Service testing and the interview process. After hiring, we’ll have a tracking mechanism to help ensure the candidate is successful and thriving in their new role.

To address the ongoing need of Corrections Officers, the Talent Acquisition Team worked in partnership the Personnel Review Committee, Sherriff’s Office, Communications Team, HR managers, and several cross-departmental volunteers to host two hiring events. The first event was held on October 20, 2021, at the Personnel Review Commission location on Lorain Ave. The second hiring event for Corrections Officers was held at Tri-C Eastern Campus on December 14th. In total, the events garnered more than 200 attendees, and over 100 tentative job offers were extended for the position of Corrections Officer. In 2022, a hiring event was held on January 19th, and another is scheduled for February 16th. Tentative future dates have been set aside for the months of March and April. The Talent Acquisition Team continues to take advantage of various opportunities to be proactive: advertising and/or media; posting signage on local bus transportation; creating radio and TV advertising; and producing yard signs for display. DEI strategies remain an important facet in talent acquisition, retention, and development.

The County’s most recent engagement is joining with the Workforce Development Team on the Workforce Funders Group and the [Workforce Connect](#) IT project. The initial goal is to identify ways that HR can be a partner in this initiative in reaching out to the community to help identify ways to develop the workforce, especially as it relates to marginalized communities.

Within the Public Works facilities section, the trades division was identified as an area that did not have a workforce that matched the diverse demographics of Cuyahoga County. This group is represented by the [Cleveland Building and Construction Trades Council \(CBCTC\)](#) Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the County and, per the CBA, we are required to hire members from the specific union halls. In the past this has limited our ability to recruit a diverse workforce as we are tied to a predetermined list. To overcome this issue, in collaboration with the Department of Public Works, Talent Acquisition met with the unions and were able to get language added to the contract that ensures the unions are providing us with a diverse applicant pool. The requirement is 30% of candidates they send must represent diverse racial and/or gender communities. Since this has been added to the contract, twenty (20) people have been hired and eleven (11) of them have been diverse candidates; this has been considered a success. This process is continuing as we move into the interview stage for candidates in 2022.

We are focusing on providing and growing a strong and robust Employee Wellness Program. The Employee Wellness Program works collaboratively with its community and strategic partners to support a workplace that thrives; one that supports strong mental health; and employee health and wellbeing. An important aspect of diversity and inclusion is ensuring that everyone feels that the program is for all. One simple step that we can make is ensuring our communications are representative and respectful of all cultures. We carefully review images, graphics and employee pictures that are featured. We are cognizant of appropriate terminology and language levels that we use to convey written information and key concepts.

The following chart provides updates on 2021 equity initiatives with details on where/how resources were dedicated, how the County collected and reported data, and how this data was made accessible to the public:

Initiatives	Summary	Looking Forward
Diversity and Inclusion Training	We recognize DEI work provides a strategic advantage to any business. However, for the work to have impact, it must continue at the County level. To accomplish that, there should be at least a uniform understanding of the terminology and concepts conveyed during conversations, programming, metric discussions, and future planning. The work must have buy-in at the Executive Level and continue to move throughout the organization. To that end, Human Resources has the privilege of partnering with the Department of Equity and Inclusion to provide DEI training to the County. Via the RFP process, a trusted vendor (Tri-C) has been selected to provide the initial training. At the very least, training will be designed to target informing and improving on organizational culture and increasing awareness of the impact of racial bias and racism in the workplace. The County’s commitment is to deploy effective strategies to address each issue.	Training is scheduled to begin in 2022.

<p>Tuition Reimbursement Program</p>	<p>Where employees simply cannot afford to start or continue their educational endeavors, tuition reimbursement provides that incentive. Tuition reimbursement makes good logical sense in that it helps to create a skilled up workforce ready for promotional opportunities. The Tuition Reimbursement Program has a 1.2-million-dollar budget set aside. The program is available to begin once the following are complete: County Council approval, a policy is formally developed, and the agreements with the schools have been finalized. An RFP was issued, and three higher-ed institutions, (Tri-C, Cleveland State University and Baldwin Wallace University) responded that they would provide tuition at a reduced rate. We believe this program is an important step in addressing issues of equity and inclusion that will assist in removing barriers to education, employment, and/or promotional opportunities.</p>	<p>It is our expectation that the Tuition Reimbursement program will officially begin in the summer of 2022.</p>
<p>Modified educational requirements for position</p>	<p>HR worked in partnership with the Personnel Review Commission to review classified titles to determine where experiential equivalents may be applied, in lieu of educational requirements. This means that several years of experience in a position may be sufficient qualification in lieu of a degree. Therefore, individuals who may not have had the opportunity to acquire a college degree may still qualify for a position or a promotion in County service where they may not have been qualified previously.</p>	<p>HR will continue to work in partnership with the Personnel Review Commission to review classified titles to determine where experiential equivalents may be applied, in lieu of educational requirements.</p>

In 2022, the HR DEI Steering Committee will continue to facilitate conversations on diversity and inclusion at each of the HR monthly all-staff meetings, develop a strategic plan to increase membership, create an internal communications plan and identify relevant topics for discussion. The committee is seeking additional HR Staff to join our team to continue the DEI work both internal to HR and external to include collaborations with other departments, agencies, and community partners.

In the first quarter of 2022, HR will begin working with the PRC and our consultant, The Archer Company to discuss conducting a salary/compensation survey. While employees have received market and equity adjustments as appropriate over the years, a complete review of Salary Schedule A has not been conducted in more than ten years. Compensation surveys help organizations recruit, retain, and develop their most valued asset – their employees. The goal is to ensure that benefit packages and pay structures are in line with the market and best practices. The completion of this project allows HR to move forward in conducting a Pay Equity study, to evaluate whether employees are compensated equitably when they perform the same or similar duties. Our goal is to have the first step of the survey process completed by the end of the second quarter.

Pilot Agency: Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board & OhioMeansJobs/Cleveland-Cuyahoga County

Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board (CCWDB) is a twenty-four-member board, appointed by City of Cleveland Mayor and Cuyahoga County Executive. The majority represent local businesses and the balance represent higher education, economic development, organized labor, and other workforce-related programs. The Governor designated the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County to continue as local Workforce Area #3 under Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). The Elected Officials appoint all members as required by WIOA and as described in the Intergovernmental Agreement and may add members at their discretion, if Board membership is composed of no less than fifty-one (51) percent business members, fulfills the requirements of membership as outlined in WIOA and does not exceed the number of forty (40) total members. Business members are appointed from individuals nominated by business organizations who represent jobs in-demand and small business.

The CCWDB is responsible for the strategic functions of workforce development as well as the oversight of the operations and services delivered through the OhioMeansJobs|Cleveland-Cuyahoga County (OMJ|CC) centers and access points.

Our Mission:

To develop and implement innovative partnerships and services that meet businesses' needs for qualified talent and provide residents access to careers and economic mobility.

Our Vision:

CCWDB will establish and provide impactful workforce services driving the success of business and economic opportunity, and improving racial and economic equity for Cleveland and Cuyahoga County residents.

The CCWDB allocates resources dedicated to equity initiatives through participation in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee. This committee consists of CCWDB Board Members, City/County staff, partner staff and community volunteers. All resources utilized by this committee have been contributed by various committee members, as the CCWDB does not have a budget. Those resources have primarily been time and subject matter expertise.

The CCWDB and OMJ|CC, with partners in the workforce ecosystem, have prioritized racial equity. The DEI Committee formed to integrate fair, inclusive, and equitable practices. The Committee participated in monthly virtual sessions throughout 2021 to determine and identify organizational areas of strength and weakness around racial equity.

In Spring 2021, we continued the work in peer conversations with employers, providers and staff through one-on-one focus group conversations and a DEI Data Assessment Tool (survey). The online assessment was conducted to understand the culture and priority of DEI in the workplace/organization. We sent the assessment via email to over 900 employers that we have worked with in the past, in addition to partner and provider agencies. With about a 10% response rate, the assessment results disclosed that one-third of our surveyed employers are open to assistance with addressing race equity in the workplace. These results were shared at our May 2021 Board Meeting which is accessible to the public.

At the May 2021 CCWDB Board Meeting the following recommendations were presented:

- Reframe our Strategic Plan with a fifth goal in DEI. Approved at the August 2021 Board Meeting.
- Leverage DEI in the RFP process to identify if partners are aligned with our priorities. Implemented in Program Year 2022 RFPs.
- Identify resources to assist employers/organizations in need of DEI support. Addressed with Urban League of Greater Cleveland Contract, October 2021.

In June 2021, the CCWDB DEI Committee was selected to present at the National Association of Workforce Boards conference (The Forum 2021). NAWB connects workforce development professionals, workforce development board members, and policymakers to help make informed decisions about how to invest in workforce strategies. The presentation included a walk-through of OMJ|CC’s journey: inequities in literacy, economics, and social injustice. Employer survey results were shared, as well as demographics, by race/ethnicity of internal staff.

In late October 2021, OMJ|CC and The Urban League of Greater Cleveland partnered, with a pilot program, to address employer resource needs, by preparing 75 adults for full time job placement or entry into apprentice or intern programs. The Urban League will also support employers with their DEI Race Equity & Inclusion efforts through the “Race and Equity Institute.” The Race and Equity Institute provides tools for employers, focusing on issues of Race and issues of Equity. With the launch of R&EI, Urban League of Greater Cleveland advances its mission to enable African Americans and other minorities to develop and realize their potential through education, research, advocacy, and provision of services. This contract will continue through June 2022.

OMJ|CC implemented a monthly Lunch & Learn series in October 2021 for staff. This series is open to OMJ administrative staff, contracted providers, and partner staff. Staff are encouraged to recommend a topic monthly and lead the presentation/discussion. The first 2 sessions of the series were on African American hair braiding and Hanukkah.

The following chart provides updates on 2021 equity initiatives with details on where/how resources were dedicated, how the County collected and reported data, and how this data was made accessible to the public:

Initiatives	Summary	Looking Forward
Revised the OMJ CC system core values	At the August 2021 Board Meeting, the following core values were established to achieve consistency across service delivery and to establish accountability in the services being provided to job seekers and employers. Customers come first. We integrate fair, inclusive, and equitable practices in all aspects of our work. We lead with compassion. We are accountable and embrace “Flexibility & Adaptability.” Access to Customer-Focused System of Services. We never settle for less; our goal is family-sustaining wages for all our customers.	Everyone throughout OMJ CC system, whether a city/county employee, contracted provider, or one-stop partner, are expected to embrace the values in their day-to-day work.
Attract providers that value diversity, equity, and inclusion	The CCWDB outlined 2 RFPs for services to begin July 2022 with a strong influence around a commitment and standard for DEI.	Services from selected vendors will begin in calendar year 2022.

OMJ|CC will continue working to become a more inclusive organization and influencer within the workforce ecosystem. We will continue our work with Cuyahoga County employers to ensure equal access to opportunities and equitable pay.

OMJ|CC will contract with providers who demonstrate that diversity, equity, and inclusion are a core part of their organizational mission. The providers' organizational cultures, programs, and services will reflect the community we serve.

The Urban League of Greater Cleveland's Race Equity Institute will begin in January 2022 and continue through June 2022.

OMJ|CC will work to maintain a common language around equity by sharing Cleveland Public Library's DEI Three Things to Know with the OMJ|CC internal workforce system monthly.

OMJ|CC will continue the Lunch & Learn Series on DEI inspired topics.

The DEI Committee will explore its role in developing a DEI resource list. The committee will work to identify resources to assist employers/organizations in need of DEI support.

Additional Resources

Cuyahoga County YouTube Channel (*Livestreams, recorded meetings*)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CuyahogaCounty>

The Cuyahoga County Equity Commission (*Meeting schedules and Archives*)

<http://bc.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/Equity-Commission.aspx>.

Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity (*Submit Public Comment, Requests for Proposals, Council Members, Reports, Meeting Schedule and Archives*)

<https://cuyahogacounty.us/executive/initiatives/citizens-advisory-council-on-equity>

Cuyahoga County Codes (*Titles 1-15*)

<https://www.cuyahogacounty.us/code/titles>

Annual Equity Reports

<https://cuyahogacounty.us/executive/initiatives/county-equity-commission>

24-month Purchasing and Contracting Forecast – forecast of planned purchases and Contracts for Cuyahoga County

<https://cuyahogacounty.us/departments-of-equity-and-inclusion/forecast>.

Certification Applications –SBEs, MBEs, WBEs

<https://cuyahogacounty.us/departments-of-equity-and-inclusion/diversity-certifications>.

Listing of Certified Diversity Vendors – A searchable listing of county certified SBEs, MBEs, WBEs is available on the County webpage

<https://opd.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/listing.aspx>.

Electronic Vendor Registration and Notification/Submission of Bids/Proposals

OPD webpage with link to the Infor ERP System’s Supplier Registrations

<https://opd.cuyahogacounty.us/>

Direct link to the Infor ERP System’s Supplier Portal

<https://ccprodlm01.cloud.infor.com:1442/lmscm/SourcingSupplier/html/SourcingSupplier?csk.SupplierGroup=CUYA&csk.CHP=LMPROC>

Cuyahoga County Performance - This webpage provides data on performance measures used to track progress on County goals and priorities. Several of the performance measures are reported using data disaggregated by race.

<https://cuyahogacounty.us/executive/results/cuyahoga-performance>

Data Collection and Public Availability listings for Department of Development

<https://www.cuyahogacounty.us/development>

Department’s Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development the demographics

Department of Development’s Five-Year Consolidated Plan and One Year Action Plans