

## City of Fort Collins Survey Responses

### **1. What policies or programs has your municipality implemented or considered implementing to support racial equity, diversity, and inclusion within your organization?**

In 2015 the City of Fort Collins established an internal, cross-functional equity team to address known disparity gaps. With the onset of our efforts, we focused primarily on the following key objectives:

- Creating and Sustaining a culture of equity and belonging
- Eliminating bias and other barriers from Citywide processes
- Providing consistent inclusive messaging
- Increasing workforce diversity
- Strengthening staff capacity for equity, diversity and inclusion work

In 2017, the City joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, and adopted their theory of change framework, which focuses on addressing racial disparity in order to elevate equitable outcomes for all. The City has centered its work on the premise we are striving to create equity for all by leading with race. In 2020, we crafted an organizational strategic objective that aligns our efforts to this strategy: “Advance equity for all, leading with race, so that a person’s identity or identities is not a predictor of outcomes.”

Our internal programming efforts include not only the creation of an internal team, but also the creation of Employee Resource Groups, or affinity-based teams. These teams have separate charters with objectives ranging in scope from networking, providing peer support to analyzing policy and suggesting changes. Currently, we have four of these identity based groups: one focusing on women, another on employees of color, one for single parents and caregivers, and one for LGBTQIA+ employees.

Over the years, we have held multiple internal trainings and events, including those designed to capture employee experience. We have also instituted an Ethics hotline and conducted a pay equity study based on gender and ethnicity.

In 2020, in response to COVID and the national occurrences of police violence, we formed an internal Racial Equity Rapid Response team, which serves as an advisory group to staff. A few highlights of the team’s work include deploying a streamlined equity lens into the 2021 budget process, helping craft inclusive, culturally appropriate messages, and creating an opportunity index to map vulnerable populations so we could more effectively deliver critical communications.

This year we also designed an internal racial justice curriculum for staff, by staff, that is currently being beta-tested. The curriculum includes a racial history of Fort Collins, key concepts and terms, and an exploration of anti-Black racism and the Black Lives Matter movement.

### **2. What policies or programs has your municipality implemented or considered implementing to support racial equity, diversity, and inclusion within your community?**

The City of Fort Collins has worked to support racial equity, diversity and inclusion within our community in various ways. Our efforts can be described as:

- Supportive, inclusive messages (eg diversity appreciation banners)
- Resolutions
- Implementing use of an equity lens to examine policies and programs, including our 2021 budget
- An increased focus, and FTE support for, culturally proficient engagement with a focus on underserved populations
- Community forums
- Ad-hoc committee
- Collaboration with key institutions to address systemic barriers
- Creation of internal teams designed to address community needs (eg, Vulnerable and Susceptible Populations)
- EDI considerations embedded into RFP processes

Currently, we have a project underway with the CUNY Institute for Local and State Governance to establish a baseline of equality gaps in the community, which will result in indicators selected by the community for us to track going forward for increased accountability and transparency. Data will be input into an external facing dashboard, and will allow us to more effectively align resources and interventions.

We also currently have several Council priorities related to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, including:

- Reimagining public engagement
- Identifying and mitigating barriers to transit
- Equitable participation in culture and recreation programs
- Affordable and accessible childcare
- Affordable housing
- Reimagine boards and commissions
- Mobile home park preservation and resident protections

This year, we are also undertaking the creation and adoption of principles of community, which will serve as fundamental to our operational excellence and help ensure equitable service delivery.

Our Economic Health department hosted a Latinx business listening session, women-owned business listening session and focused on both in our business retention and expansion engagement. Economic Health is also promoting a new Small Business Assistance Program (applicants can received up to \$7,500 in direct assistance to offset impacts of COVID) to our Spanish speaking and latinx-owned businesses in advance of promotion more widely. This department is also looking to hire an hourly disadvantage business engagement specialist.

The City of Fort Collins is also in the middle of a community-scale planning effort to update three major environmental plans – the Climate Action Plan, Energy Policy, and Road to Zero Waste Plan. The effort, called Our Climate Future, is centering in equity, leading with race. The effort centers equity in both process and outcome. To serve both of these goals, Fort Collins is reframing its traditional approach of focusing on technical solutions to putting community priorities at the heart of the planning process and final strategy recommendations. The planning

effort has employed new practices to improve equity and is applying an equity lens to strategy development with people of color and historically underrepresented groups involved in each phase.

We continue to focus on strengthening our staff capacity for delivering equitable services, and in ensuring voices that have been historically excluded from civic engagement are involved in decision making and policy design. We are also working to better understanding the impacts of interpersonal, institutional and systemic racism as experienced by members of our community to inform our efforts.

For links to projects, programs, resolutions and leadership statements, visit:  
<https://www.fcgov.com/socialsustainability/equity.php>.