

# Equity Workgroup

Thursday, March 4, 2021  
3:00 PM-4:30 PM

## Participants

### Energize Denver Task Force Members

Jennifer Gremmert, Energy Outreach Colorado  
Ariana Gonzalez, Natural Resources Defense Council  
Aaron Martinez, Urban Land Conservancy  
Jenny Wilford, Colorado Sierra Club  
Sergio Cordova, Pipefitters Local Union No. 208  
Angela Fletcher, Denver Housing Authority

### Supporting Staff and Subject Matter Experts

Katrina Managan, City and County of Denver  
Maria Thompson, City and County of Denver  
Dr. Dwinita Mosby Tyler, The Equity Project, LLC  
Ryan Golten, Consensus Building Institute  
Jeremy Hays, Upright Consulting

## Agenda

Location: Zoom <https://denvergov-org.zoom.us/j/86810970794?pwd=RDhwaVFjMjB5eIE3RIBXckIHd281dz09>

- 3-3:10pm. Intros, good news, and one big takeaway from the task force meeting on racial equity
- 3:10-3:45. Refine the draft racial equity lens (attached)
  - Dwinita:
    - (10 minutes) Share examples of other lenses
    - (25 minutes) Facilitate a discussion of which concepts and questions are the most important.
- 3:45-4:25. Discuss next steps that will enable the entire task force to use the lens
  - (10 minutes)
    - Dwinita: What does she recommend? Checkpoints? More training, etc?
    - Jeremy: Challenges he's seen in the use of past equity lenses.
  - (35 minutes) Group: Discuss how they want the task force to use the lens, how this workgroup can help, how often they want to meet, what they want their role to be, etc. How will we know the lens is working? Develop their work plan (share workforce work plan as an example.)
- 5 min. Wrap up

## Meeting Notes

### Refine the draft racial equity lens

- examples of other lenses
  - Colorado Housing Authority & Finance Authority

- How is the decision that is being made going to be perceived by others?
      - Check point to revise the equity lens of this action to evaluate the decision
      - Can work for mitigation or advancing
  - Salvation Army
    - Provides a layout of their equity lens and its procedure
      - Identify barriers to other equitable outcome
        - Discover what might be missing
        - Discover what might be holding movement back
        - Discover the problem that is being addressed
  - University of Michigan
    - Are voices being uplifted without over exhausted
      - How am “I” contributing
      - How are “My” decisions playing out
  - Does our process ensure that those that need to be represented are at the table?
    - Are there being enough questions ask to ensure that equity is the outcome?
    - Are we creating more disparities with what we are doing?
- Racial equity lens tools are not enough
  - Can become routine and deviate away from purpose
    - Equity should be a continuing topic
    - Use the equity tools as a guide not a solution

- How do we refine our equity suggestions?

*Does our PROCESS ensure that people of color are at the table, that the process is accessible, and that we're not leaving out other historically underrepresented communities in Denver?*

- What are the most important questions to ask?
  - Is it an effective question?
  - Do you feel that question is inclusive?
    - Does it hit all groups of equity inclusion?
      - People of color, disabled people, and other marginalized groups?
  - How can we capture voices who may not be at the table?
    - Not all voices may be heard, how can we ensure these people will be represented?
      - Look at what people may have said prior

*Are we ensuring the OUTCOMES prioritize and provide benefits, while not causing harm, to people of color and other historically disadvantaged communities in Denver?*

- Not causing harm can give off a different interpretation than intended
- Committing to desirable outcomes without creating difficulty for others
  - Are we limiting ourselves to not cause harm to people in a system that causes harm to people?
- Better clarity on “Not causing harm”
  - How do we not further harm?
  - Language that implies improvement
  - How can we reframe the statement without harm?

- Harm is too subjective
  - Are these statements being backed with positive reinforcement
    - Could the equity lens be based in an affirmative style?
      - Lens needs to either be affirmative or not
    - Non-affirmative questions can be used to drive the point
- How can a lens with less questions help us to hit a broader range?
  - How are these policies able to help move more marginalized members of the community into trade jobs?
    - Some of the biggest issues seen by members in the field can have to do with childcare along with other domestic or transportation means
- Include perception of how this question may be perceived by others?
  - How is our equity work being perceived?
  - How are we gathering those perceptions?
    - How can we gather the data about the different perceptions?

### Discuss next steps that will enable the entire task force to use the lens

Only once the equity lens is used in a scenario will the effectiveness of it will come to light

- Opportunity to see what the lens is missing
- Ability to see what the lens is doing a good job covering

How involved does the Equity Task Force want to be in the equity lens process?

- Narrow down the suggestions
- Have Equity Group refine suggestions
  - Present refined suggestions to larger task force for group consensus
- Create something that is flexible so that each decision we are making can be run through the equity lens
  - Works as a sort of trial run
    - Work out the bugs
    - Find areas for improvement
- Refer back to what did not work previously
  - Checkpoints
    - How can the equity lens be used or improved to tackle these issues?
- What is the best feasible way to run these equity lens scenarios?
- How do we overcome the barrier of interpretation?
  - Glass half full vs. Glass half empty