2022 ANNUAL REPORT
LEADING DENVER IN TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE
Mayor's Office of Social Equity & Innovation
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Dear Denverites,

The Mayor's Office of Social Equity and Innovation (OSEI) proudly delivers on Denver's mission to develop and implement the policies, programs, regulations, and initiatives of the City and County of Denver related to race, social equity, and social justice.

In 2022, OSEI worked diligently to push equity forward across city agencies and the community. To do this, OSEI staff-led projects focused on eliminating food insecurities in vulnerable communities, bridging the digital equity gap for those who need it most, creating a safe space for our employees to openly discuss and heal from race-based trauma through training and community conversations and weaving equity into the city's budgeting process. Each of these efforts, and more, have impacted the way we approach our work and engage with our community.

When we launched the agency in 2019, OSEI hit the ground running and has not slowed down. They've always kept sight of the work, even during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. They remained steadfast in bringing equity to our response so no one would be left behind. We're proud to see how this agency has grown since its inception. We will continue to support their work to ensure that race and other social identities no longer predict life outcomes for our residents and those who do business in the City and County of Denver.

Sincerely,

Mayor Michael B. Hancock
Dear Friends,

The City and County of Denver, like communities across the nation, continue to reflect on its past and make progress toward the future as it becomes an increasingly welcoming, inclusive, and equitable place to live, work, play, and thrive. The work of the Mayor’s Office of Social Equity & Innovation (OSEI) is a testament to Denver’s commitment to this vital work.

Within the Trainings and Strategies Unit, the success of the Race and Social Justice Academy Training continued in 2022, helping staff identify inequities and dismantle them through policies and practice. After completing the training, 62% of respondents indicated that they had the tools to center racial equity in their day-to-day work, and 74% of participants stated that they intended to incorporate racial equity into their work within the subsequent three months.

Recognizing that digital connectivity significantly impacts daily life, the Operations and Innovation Unit initiated a digital equity program with three primary foci. We are proud to have reached nearly 11,000 households through these efforts in 2022 and will deepen our community outreach through device accessibility in 2023.

The Data Analysis and Evaluation Unit grew in 2022 from a single analyst to an entire team. The team remains focused on centering equity in data and evaluations across city agencies and creating processes for “equity in the budget.”

In 2022, the OSEI team grew in exciting ways. As our team continues to evolve, we look forward to addressing the challenges before us with a collaborative spirit to ensure that equity remains a focus for sustainable change throughout the City and County of Denver. In 2023, we look forward to continuing to serve our mission for all residents, employees and visitors.

Kind regards,

Dr. Aisha Rousseau
Data by the Numbers

- 11,000 Community Touchpoints
- 77 Digital Equity Coalition Members
- 455 Equity Priority Buildings Identified in Partnership with the Climate Office
- 2 Internal Promotions
- 100% Response to Audit Recommendations
- 92% Mayoral Appointees Trained
- Over 50% City Staff Trained in the Race and Social Justice Academy

Mayor's Office of Social Equity & Innovation
The Mayor’s Office of Social Equity and Innovation (OSEI) was established to develop and implement the City and County of Denver policies, programs, regulations, and initiatives related to race, social equity, and social justice.

**MISSION**

We utilize best and innovative practices to lead Denver in transformative change with a commitment to equitable outcomes.

**VALUES**

Given the structural and institutional inequities that impact the Denver community, our work centers those who have been negatively impacted by racial and social injustices.

**EQUITY PROCESS**

Equity is achieved through the advancement of policies and practices that center those who are underrepresented and have been historically disadvantaged.

**VISION**

Equity is embedded in all facets of Denver’s operations.

**EQUITY**

When race and other social identities can no longer be used to predict life outcomes or the quality and depth of services received in the city.
The Mayor’s Office of Social Equity and Innovation is the nucleus that guides and informs Denver’s approach to equity by providing coaching, education, training, and resource support. Agencies are responsible for creating equity plans that align with the Mayor’s citywide goals with ongoing guidance and coaching from the Mayor’s OSEI staff. Our agency is a resource for collaborative, cross-agency coordination to support equity policies.

Research tells us that when equity is the primary focus, with diversity and inclusion as supportive facets, all segments of communities are improved. This allows individuals who have often been institutionally marginalized and historically disadvantaged to be fully engaged and supported to achieve successful outcomes. Because of this, the Mayor’s OSEI emphasizes Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, EDI, as the order of our efforts, rather than DEI.

The four pillars of the office together create the foundation for EDI work in Denver:
The City and County of Denver (CCD) adopted the Race & Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) to begin work to address racial inequities in Denver.

RSJI became the Mayor's Office of Social Equity & Innovation (OSEI). Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI) teams were established across all city agencies/departments.

Executive Order 146 established the Mayor's OSEI to develop and implement Denver's policies, programs, regulations, and initiatives. The Mayor's OSEI dedicated two-thirds of its staff to serve the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The Race and Social Justice (RSJ) Academy became automated. A new Chief Equity Officer was appointed. Six new positions were added to the office. Two internal staff were promoted.

Executive Order 146 was updated to more clearly define the scope and role of the office. The Digital Equity program was added. An on-demand/asynchronous RSJ training was implemented. Two new staff positions were added to the office.

The Mayor's OSEI continues to grow its team and work on addressing and eliminating racial inequities.
The 2022 *Equity in Denver: How History Impacts Equity Today* report was developed by OSEI, using research in partnership with the University of California Berkeley’s Goldman School of Public Policy. This report is designed to be a tool to help Denver understand how historical inequities are impacting our communities today by naming some of the racial histories that shaped the systems in which we live and connecting that history to the data we interpret in this report. The report is available at bit.ly/EquityInDenver.

**DIGITAL EQUITY**

According to The Pew Research Center, 7% of Americans (approximately 23 million people) do not use the internet, and 23% do not have access to a broadband connection at home (Pew Research Center, 2021). Denver falls below this national average, but an accessibility gap still exists.

The digital divide refers to the gap between those who readily access the internet with devices and those who do not. Digital connection, technology, and digital skills are necessary for today’s modern age. When searching and applying for jobs, attending work meetings, learning new skills, attending college classes, investing money, scheduling medical appointments, or even launching a small business, achieving educational and financial success today requires a Wi-Fi connection.

The City and County of Denver is proud to be engaged in advocacy in the digital equity sphere, addressing the digital divide directly by working toward a city where all residents have access to affordable high-speed internet and devices such as smartphones and computers well as digital skills support.
## DIGITAL EQUITY DATA

Percentage of Denver Population without Access to a Computer and Broadband Internet Subscription by Race/Ethnicity (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Other Race</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, not Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Denver Population without Access to a Computer and Broadband Internet Subscription by Education (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Than High School Graduate or Equivalency</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate, Some College or Associate's Degree</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIGITAL EQUITY DATA

Percentage of Denver Population without an Internet Subscription by Income (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $19,999</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 to $34,999</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 or more</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIGITAL EQUITY IN ACTION

The Mayor's OSEI defines digital equity as when an individual's neighborhood of residence, race, age, gender, immigration status, primary language, education, or income level is not predictive of their access to the internet, access to appropriate devices (such as a smartphone or computer), or their knowledge of how to use technology to meet their needs. The digital divide disproportionately affects historically underserved communities. Because of this, the Mayor's OSEI is committed to conducting strategic and equitable planning when designing the city's Digital Equity Action Plan.
DIGITAL EQUITY PROCLAMATION

Mayor Michael B. Hancock and the Mayor’s OSEI are joining a nationwide movement to amplify the need for digital inclusion. To further underscore Denver’s commitment to equity, Mayor Hancock declared October 3-7, 2022, as Digital Inclusion Week in the City and County of Denver, and he formalized this by issuing a proclamation.

The lack of digital connectivity, resources, and education continues to be a barrier for many of Denver’s most vulnerable residents. Digital Inclusion Week is an opportunity to elevate the need to close that gap and collaborate on how we, along with our community partners, can bridge the digital divide.

- Mayor Michael B. Hancock
OSEI has worked with the Department of Finance for several years to embed equity in the annual budget cycle. In 2022, agencies were asked to connect their budget requests to data indicators. OSEI provided training and guidance to budget analysts and attended budget presentations and mayoral presentations to promote equity in the budget process.

In 2022, OSEI continued work to support the leading agencies that address food insecurity in our city: the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment (DDPHE), Denver Human Services (DHS), and the Office of Children’s Affairs (OCA).

OSEI assisted with reviewing the Denver Food Vision and Denver Food Action Plan, forming a multi-agency task force called the Food Interagency Group to analyze progress on the vision, identify gaps, and create an action plan to address the gaps. In fall 2022, the group grew to 11 agencies, all participating in a workshop convened by OSEI and the Denver PEAK Team. The above agencies co-sponsored the workshop to develop an action plan to address food insecurity in 2022 and beyond. OSEI will remain an advocate in supporting the multi-agency group and agencies to advance policies and practices that promote food security in our city.
TRAININGS & STRATEGIES
Trainings & Strategies

AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

When Mayor Michael B. Hancock gave his State of the City address in 2018, he announced an equity platform. The Race and Social Justice Initiative began that year, later becoming OSEI. While equity work was being done far earlier in the administration, city agencies were called to embed equity in all facets of the city, be explicit about equity, identify gaps, and propose strategies to close those gaps.

Equity work varies across the city based on the organization's size, the residents the agency serves, and the service provided by the organization.

"We are a city on the rise, and our clarion call is to seize the moment and set Denver and everyone who lives here on an equitable path of prosperity for 100 years."

- Mayor Michael B. Hancock
The accomplishments of the Trainings and Strategies team included many new and revised approaches that aligned with the office's mission, vision, and values. The following include a few highlights:

- The Trainings and Strategies staff conducted training for appointees with the mayor in attendance.

- The team created and rolled out an on-demand version of the RSJ Academy, which allowed city employees to complete the academy asynchronously. Over 50% of all city staff completed the RSJ Academy throughout the year. An RSJ training dashboard was created and published online so that each agency could track the training completion rates of their team.

- Another dashboard was created and published that allowed tracking agencies’ racial equity action plans (REAPs), where Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) teams could post, share, and amend their equity action steps.

**RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (RSJ) ACADEMY**

The RSJ Academy is a citywide learning experience used to provide employees of agencies and departments with a shared language and common concepts for thinking and talking about racial equity in the City and County of Denver to examine our personal, social, and historical relatedness to racism and structural inequity, and to provide tools for collaboratively building antiracist strategies for city policies, programs, and budgets. The goal is to train all city staff as the office works to operationalize equity under the commitment to Executive Order 146.
Every city agency has an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) team comprised of staff members responsible for connecting employees in making Denver a place that promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion. The OSEI Trainings and Strategies team members meet with city agencies’ EDI teams regularly, with the goal of a biweekly frequency. Trainers and Strategists support citywide EDI teams on progress toward current goals and updates on strategies and offer a space for EDI learning.

OSEI holds larger meetings called “EDI quarterlies” four times per year. These EDI quarterly meetings provide spaces for agency EDI team members and leaders to gather and learn about OSEI news and updates, hear from highlighted EDI teams about projects, goals, or strategies they have completed, and receive training on current EDI issues.

**RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLANS (REAPS)**

Every agency under the mayor’s purview must have a racial equity action plan (REAP). These plans consist of one to three strategies created in partnership with OSEI to ensure equity is embedded into the practices and processes of each agency.

In 2022, OSEI's data and evaluation team developed and implemented a REAP dashboard for each agency to input, track and amend their REAPs. With the REAP dashboard, each EDI team could search REAPs from every other mayoral-reporting agency, helping break down silos, promoting greater transparency and collaboration across city agencies, and generating ideas for data-informed approaches to achieving equity at the institutional level.

Throughout 2022, the Trainings and Strategies team worked with agency EDI teams to focus on these REAPs. They regularly discussed progress toward achieving REAPs and reviewed and updated the strategies to ensure they remained relevant and actively engaged with the REAP dashboard.
AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

FINANCIAL STABILITY, BUSINESS, AND ECONOMY

Denver International Airport (DEN)
Denver International Airport continues to focus on its equity plan pillars: people, operations, and community. Some highlights of its equity plan include hosting EDI-focused events throughout the year, such as hiring local people of color to perform and share cultural celebrations in the main terminal. One of the initiatives in 2022 was a push for more inclusivity in serving people living with disabilities and neurodivergent populations at DEN. DEN hired a consultant from a reputable autism organization to work with DEN on inclusive internships and spaces at the airport. DEN has also initiated more focused work on nursing rooms, increased wheelchair accessibility and a centralized wheelchair dispatch.

DEN has operationalized equity through its Equity in Infrastructure Project pledge and embedding equity into its procurement and grants processes. DEN also created the Center of Equity and Excellence in Aviation (CEEA), with goals that include growing access for underserved communities and supporting women and minority-owned small businesses. CEEA programming consists of those already underway for a business development training academy, student and employee career pathways, and a research and innovation lab.

Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO)
One of DEDO’s most significant equity programs is its Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization (NEST) program. The NEST program is designed to provide longtime small business owners and residents the ability to stay in their neighborhoods during rising economic development. This program combats the impacts of gentrification and allows Denver’s historically underserved populations to preserve culture and community in their neighborhoods amidst Denver’s rapidly growing and changing landscape. NEST efforts are focused on the following areas: East Colfax, Elyria-Swansea, Globeville, Montbello, Northeast Park Hill, Sun Valley, Valverde, Villa Park, West Colfax, and Westwood.
AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

FINANCIAL STABILITY, BUSINESS, AND ECONOMY

General Services Department (GS)
The Department of General Services’ racial equity plan includes two strategies specifically focused on vendor equity. The purchasing division now tracks racial data gathered from bid solicitation responders and winners to better contribute to the citywide EDI goals. The data used in this demographic tracking, submitted voluntarily by vendors, will inform future strategies and actions to improve participation from underserved communities. In addition, the promotion of training on “How to Do Business with Denver” for potential new vendors, as well as notifications of current and upcoming solicitations, is a focus of General Services’ outreach which includes targeted presentations for community organizations with a focus on diversity. As part of its focus on wellness equity, General Services is expanding its strategies on learning and education among some of its underserved staff. Due to the nature of work and vocational culture, specific working groups, primarily field-based rather than office-based, experience a gap in digital literacy and a complete understanding of City and County of Denver benefits and financial resources. Information about (and access to) these topics resides almost exclusively online, particularly with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on city operations.

General Services is rolling out custom training to specific groups on computer literacy, understanding benefit selections, and financial literacy, among other potentially related topics, to address this digital divide within the department. The goal is to establish equity among our staff, particularly those needing this help the most. Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected and used to measure effectiveness.

This expands existing wellness equity strategies previously focused on health and physical well-being. General Services was identified as having the highest incidence of certain chronic health conditions (namely diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure), with these conditions being particularly prevalent in the same specific groups of employees mentioned above. Nationally, these conditions are higher among Black and Hispanic populations.

General Services’ tactics to address this have included targeted outreach and onboarding to promote the Vitality wellness incentive program and providing opportunities for mobile biometric screenings and connections to resources and education on wellness concerns.

These efforts support not only citywide EDI goals but also a departmental priority of fostering an engaged workforce that is healthy, safe, connected, and supported.
AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

FINANCIAL STABILITY, BUSINESS, AND ECONOMY

Denver Arts and Venues (AVD)
Denver Arts and Venues has been making significant progress in making the arts more accessible in Denver. It has implemented dual-language English and Spanish signs throughout Denver's museum exhibitions. It has also created exhibits to celebrate and teach about EDI, including exhibitions at the McNichols Building. Arts and Venues also offer EDI mini-grants to community members using a participatory grantmaking model. Finally, Arts and Venues hosts a "How to be an Anti-Racist" educational series to assist agencies across Denver in strengthening their anti-racist work.

Department of Finance (DOF)
Denver's Department of Finance has been working on setting up a community participatory budget process for a few years. This past year it launched the program, which opens up city budget monies to communities for input and prioritization of funds and community improvement projects. Over 1,100 community members from Denver's historically underserved neighborhoods participated with ideas. Those ideas were then prioritized by paid community budget delegates and put to the vote on the ballot for city residents across four different ballot areas: a citywide ballot, a far northeast Denver ballot, an east-central Denver ballot, and an east Denver ballot. City agencies will now work to implement and build out nine projects totaling $2 million within the four ballot areas.

Office of Special Events (OSE)
To ensure a collaborative and inclusive approach to serving and supporting public events held on public property and the communities that host them in the City and County of Denver, OSE created guidelines to utilize topic-specific work groups. These work groups are convened when OSE or other city departments need to solicit focused review and input from event organizers, film producers, photographers, community members, and businesses on new or updated programs, policies, or procedures that will impact the planning, permitting or management of public events and permitted film and photography projects on public property in the city. OSE also worked on a language access survey to ensure its alignment with the city's more considerable language access efforts. OSE supported the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in 2022, dedicating much of its time and staff energy to Denver's migrant crisis services.
AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

COMMUNITY, FAMILIES, CHILDREN & YOUTH

Department of Human Services (DHS)
Some agencies’ equity efforts are more naturally built-in to the work and community they serve. The Department of Human Services is an agency that provides services to one in every three Denver residents with a stated commitment to “meet the community where they are.” With the 2021 addition of an intentional EDI program, the agency is maintaining a proactive approach to ensuring that equity leads its work, both internally as an agency with a robust focus on workplace culture and externally as a provider of many essential services. DHS stepped into a prominent role with the EOC activation with the influx of migrants late in 2022. It has been committed to language access concerns and developed a bilingual unit in child welfare. Moreover, DHS increased community investments by creating the food access administrator and has grown its Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Equitable Access to Services (IDDEAS) team. This group ensures access to resources for its target community.

Human Rights and Community Partnerships (HRCP)
The agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships is unique in the equity realm of the city in that its mission is directly equity related. They are home to ten commissions that advocate and protect human rights for people of different minorities. HRCP has many equity-focused efforts, including wage theft protection and assistance, Title IV resources, discrimination resources, the Division of Disability Rights, and Denver’s Snow Angels program.
Trainings & Strategies

AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

COMMUNITY, FAMILIES, CHILDREN & YOUTH

Denver Public Library (DPL)
The library has historically enacted, and continues to act, equity initiatives to ensure that it continues to serve Denver’s most vulnerable populations best. Its efforts have included providing services outdoors during the pandemic, including laptop rentals, and adapting its programming to be digitally available. It also hosted a symposium on racial equity and EDI in the workplace. DPL’s ongoing equity commitments are reflected in its strategic roadmap, which includes initiatives for ensuring that all DPL spaces are welcoming and inclusive, seeking and integrating community input on new initiatives and library openings, and continuing to offer free access to computers and the internet at all DPL locations.

Office of Children’s Affairs (OCA)
The Office of Children’s Affairs prioritized equity in its budget requests last year. They supported this work by presenting how budgets are often inequitable. It then worked in its departments to determine and address gaps through budgeting requests. OCA worked to revitalize its grantmaking process. OCA participated in a PEAK session to change the process of how OCA currently conducts business. The goal was to encourage organizations that provide quality programs to children to apply for grants through OCA. OCA was able to take the application from 26 pages to 12. It is still working on making more changes to reach its goal of a four-page application. This resulted in a 29% increase in new applicants and a 69% increase in fully funded applicants. Communities are receiving the funds they need to provide quality programs to children in Denver communities.

Mayor’s Office of Social Equity & Innovation
AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

HOUSING & HOMEOWNERSHIP

Department of Housing Stability (HOST)
The department (agency) of Housing Stability (HOST) created its new five-year strategic plan with an explicit focus on equity for each of its four primary focus areas. HOST is positioning itself with an overarching goal of race no longer predicting life outcomes for involuntary displacement, homelessness, homeownership, and housing cost burden. HOST’s EDI team is poised to implement and track the progress with groups designated for data collection and tracking, internal-agency workplace culture, and ongoing training opportunities in partnership with OSEI.

TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE & NEIGHBORHOODS

Community Planning & Development (CPD)
One of Denver Community Planning and Development’s driving goals is to “make great places possible.” With a robust EDI team and a staff devoted to equity, CPD is applying that goal with great intention to a fuller representation of our city. For example, CPD is working on a second “history in context” project to collate important Indigenous community sites, events, and stories to testify to the long history of contributions and presence of Native peoples here in Denver.

Parks and Recreation (DPR)
Denver Parks and Recreation is implementing its five-year strategic plan. This plan centers the agency’s efforts around racial equity as it prioritizes “demographic and socio-economic factors to determine which neighborhoods are more in need of equitable investment.” DPR accomplishes this objective by partnering with other community providers such as affordable housing, libraries, and others to balance better life outcomes related to open space, recreation centers, and other valuable community amenities. DPR also transferred 33 bison from the two herds it manages to Indigenous tribal nations to promote conservation and culture on tribal lands. Such a program does well to operationalize our city’s commitment to our land acknowledgment that we read at the start of each of our office’s training.
AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE & NEIGHBORHOODS

Department of Transportation & Infrastructure (DOTI)
DOTI is one of the larger agencies in the city, and its EDI team maintains a solid commitment to centering its many equity-related efforts. DOTI kicked off the Denver Moves Everyone project in an intentional collaboration with its community-based outreach partners. Focusing on safety, mobility, and sustainability, these partners worked directly with Denver communities to gather qualitative and quantitative data on the specific needs within our city. DOTI recruited additional partners to form a committee of diverse and inclusive voices representing various neighborhoods to help create DOTI's racial equity toolkit. These external connections to the community and the information collected will also serve as a road map for DOTI's growing EDI group in the future, as the toolkit has already been added to DOTI's EDI action strategies. DOTI also brings an intentional equity lens to its curbside usage across the city and numerous other projects.

Climate Action, Sustainability & Resiliency (CASR)
CASR is mandated to invest at least 50% of the $40-million-a-year Climate Protection Fund monies in under-resourced communities with programs, solutions, and incentives that focus on racial and social justice. The Promotoras Climaticas/Climate Ambassadors Program will provide $250,000 to five local nonprofit organizations to lead two-year climate literacy and climate action campaigns tailored toward racial and social justice in six NEST neighborhoods (Montbello, Westwood, Valverde, Globeville, West Colfax and Villa Park) targeting hard-to-reach community members through on-the-ground teams of promotoras/community navigators that are fluent in the local culture and languages.

Technology Services (TS)
Technology Services has implemented several equity goals, including creating a sustained EDI committee that supports TS in achieving the city's broader equity goals. TS requires all interview panel staff to take four pieces of training around unconscious biases. Those taking the training work with Human Resources to increase diversity in candidate pools to promote more equitable hiring in TS. They also collaborate with the CareerWise program to provide an apprentice experience with media, marketing, cybersecurity, desktop support, networking, servers, and the service desk.

The TS EDI committee also conducts an annual survey to evaluate TS staff's feedback around EDI. The results from these surveys have helped to drive the TS EDI committee's work to build increased awareness through the communication of cultural events in the community, periodic "healing sessions" to discuss race and equity issues, and promoting staff to take the RSJ Academy.
AGENCY EQUITY EFFORTS IN DENVER

LEGAL & COMMUNITY SAFETY

Denver City Attorney Office (CAO)
The City Attorney’s Office spent 2022 building the internal systems and structures necessary to authentically and sustainably carry EDI-driven initiatives forward in the agency. With an EDI team representative of each section within the CAO, the team utilized these perspectives to develop EDI subcommittees for each section — allowing for the efficient sharing of resources, concepts, and best practices throughout the agency. The CAO sections have committed significant time to EDI-centered gatherings intended to serve as opportunities for the teams to develop their skills, leverage their strengths, and share their personal stories. Recognizing the ever-present need to ensure the agency is representative of the residents it serves, the CAO created an affinity space for current attorneys of color and is actively building relationships with bar associations that are comprised explicitly of attorneys of color to raise awareness of the meaningful impact prospective attorneys can make working for this department. The CAO is dedicated to developing an inclusive team culture that will result in the continued growth of its ability to serve residents in Denver equitably.

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

Department of Excise & Licenses (EXL)
EXL is executing the Cannabis Cares program on April 20, 2023. This is a recognition program for cannabis businesses that impact their community. The program focuses on five different areas: community, social equity, diversity and inclusion, sustainability, and contracting. Businesses will earn badges to display on their storefronts and use in advertising. EXL will hold a yearly recognition event for qualifying companies.

Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE)
DDPHE made progress on several equity initiatives in 2022, which have been prioritized by creating sprint groups. The first initiative is creating psychologically and physically safe spaces and places that highlight cultures and communities. DDPHE hopes to fulfill this goal by creating Wellness Rooms in all its facilities. Next, they have been working on Language Access training and using best practices to ensure the inclusion of their target populations. DDPHE also created a Community Engagement Committee that will help them develop a network of community engagement-oriented positions across the agency to break down silos between several departments. A sprint group is also dedicated to developing procedures to celebrate events and periods critical to the communities they serve, culminating in a monthly Health Equity Report and continuous content development.
DATA & EVALUATION
In response to requests from data analysts across city agencies, OSEI's Data and Evaluation team developed the “Race/Ethnicity Data Collection, Analysis, and Presentation” resource. This document aims to provide considerations and best practices for city staff in collecting, analyzing, and presenting data about race and ethnicity. The document gives a background on the history of race categories in the U.S. Census, best practices, and examples from internal and external agencies. This document was distributed to data-related staff and working groups across the city.

OSEI’s Data and Evaluation team worked with the Office of Climate Action, Sustainability, and Resiliency (CASR) to develop the Vulnerability to Climate Change in Denver StoryMap. The team created and identified existing climate vulnerability indexes for Denver’s four critical climate impacts: extreme heat, severe weather, drought/water scarcity, and poor air quality. OSEI developed an air quality vulnerability index to help reduce risk, increase preparedness, and focus programming and investments in Denver’s climate-vulnerable communities.

For example, this map (left) evaluates Denver’s vulnerability to poor air quality in the context of the demographic, health, and environmental conditions that can increase human vulnerability. The map shows the overall air quality vulnerability score for census tracts across Denver. The darker blue corresponds to census tracts with the highest overall vulnerability to the impacts of poor air quality.

The link to the full StoryMap is available at bit.ly/VCCDenver.
EQUITY IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

The Mayor’s OSEI Data and Evaluation team developed a resource to help agencies understand how to tie and develop equity-specific outcomes, goals, and indicators.

DENVER PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROGRAM

In 2021, Denver launched its first official participatory budgeting program. After submitting over 1,100 ideas, residents developed proposals and voted to invest $2 million in nine community projects. The Mayor’s OSEI Data and Evaluation team was involved early in the project, helping to define goals, set criteria for overrepresenting groups historically underrepresented in civic processes, and gather data from idea collection and voting. The OSEI staff cleaned and visualized demographic data from participants to understand the extent to which the first cycle accomplished its goals.
DENVER EQUITY PRIORITY BUILDINGS

The Mayor’s OSEI Data and Evaluation team worked with CASR to develop the Equity Priority Buildings Tool, which identifies potential buildings that are 25,000 square feet and larger to receive support in meeting Denver building performance requirements. These buildings serve frontline communities with less access to wealth, resources, and political power, and they may face more barriers to adapting to a changing climate.

The tool includes an equity index that ranks each census tract in Denver, in order of priority, based on environmental and socioeconomic indicators. This tool is helping prioritize funding in areas where it will have the most significant impact. Questions about this tool can be directed to berenice.garciallez@denvergov.org.
EQUITY IN AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDING

In 2021 and 2022, the Mayor's OSEI supported the Department of Finance in developing the 2022 ARPA Annual Report. The Department of Finance used guidance from OSEI to create a framework for this federal funding to be distributed equitably that supports those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. The Department of Finance used the existing budget equity framework to inform the set of equity questions that would help guide ARPA distributions. The Mayor's OSEI's Data and Evaluation team also helped draft the report section on promoting equitable outcomes.

INTERNAL OSEI SUPPORT

In addition to supporting agencies across the city with equity-related data projects, the Data and Evaluation team also supports the rest of the OSEI team in tracking its work and progress. In 2022, this included creating and sharing two dashboards: an RSJ training dashboard and a REAP dashboard. These dashboards have been shared with all city staff to support them in understanding progress toward these goals. The Data and Evaluation team also helped the Operations and Innovation team by supporting the interagency food group and digital equity program in identifying baseline data and developing metrics to evaluate their work.
Racial Equity Council

The Racial Equity Council (REC) is an external council that initially convened in 2021 with members of over 20 organizations, including community advocates and universities, to advise city agencies on citywide equity disparities. The group serves as a direct link with the community that helps to guide aspects of our work.

Equity Core Council

The Equity Core Council (ECC) is an internal council of city staff who lead equity work within their respective agencies. The ECC convenes to brainstorm and collaborate on equity-focused work happening within the city.

Digital Equity Coalition

The Denver Digital Equity Coalition is a group of local stakeholders, including representatives from various city agencies and nonprofits, working collaboratively to address the digital divide and improve digital equity in the city of Denver.

The Denver Digital Equity Coalition works towards a future where everyone in Denver can use technology to meet their needs and goals. They promote equitable access to quality devices, internet, and training to create a digitally equitable Denver.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT
The Digital Equity Program Manager and other OSEI staff partnered with various agencies to distribute resources for digital equity during the Inflation Relief Project. While the Inflation Relief Project was focused on food distribution, it provided an opportunity to distribute postcards with information about digital equity simultaneously. The Inflation Relief Project reached 4,000 Denver residents who have experienced food insecurity due to financial hardship due to the economic impact of COVID-19 and inflation. Each resident received a $200 grocery store gift card.

The project also supported three culturally relevant food box distribution events in high-need areas. Gift cards were provided through the Agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships, Denver Human Services, the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment, the Denver Office of Economic Development and Opportunity, and the Office of Children’s Affairs to local community nonprofit partners for distribution to residents who use their services based on referrals. The inflation relief package also included the distribution of 8,000 food boxes at three food box distribution events in October. In total, OSEI conducted outreach to approximately 11,000 households to connect them to digital equity resources.
Chief Equity Officer, Dr. Rousseau, along with Director of Operations and Innovation Jessica Calderon and Digital Equity Program Manager Anya Dickson-Arguello were invited to meet with the Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission, Geoffrey Starks. Attendance at the community roundtable included representation from trusted community partners, such as Denver Public Schools and Denver Indian Center, and private sector service providers, such as Comcast and Starry Internet.

Key insights were shared with the commissioner, whose team works to refine details around the recently launched Affordable Connectivity Program’s “Your Home, Your Internet” program. Denver is a proud partner in the pilot program, in which an estimated 48 million households nationwide qualify for free or low-cost high-speed home internet. Starks highlighted the importance of virtual learning, job readiness, and telehealth resources, which are sometimes solely accessible online.

"Internet connectivity is a vital part of being able to participate in modern society."

- FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks
In October, OSEI provided agency leadership and mayoral appointees with two RSJ Academy trainings to further underscore the equity commitment from city leaders and appointees. City leaders are committed to equity as they continue building a welcoming city where race and other social identities can no longer be used to predict life outcomes or the level of service received by the City and County of Denver. Equity is a value embedded in all that the City and County of Denver do, from public safety and emergency response to budgeting and interactions with Denver residents.

The Mayor’s OSEI team members attended the Mayor Michael B. Hancock and the Agency of Human Rights and Community Partnerships awards ceremony. Organizations and individuals who have displayed steadfast commitments through their work to promoting inclusion, advocacy, and opportunity were honored.
ANTI-CHINESE PLAQUE REMOVAL

Mayor Hancock and OSEI joined community members and some of Denver's historic Chinese community families to remove an anti-Chinese plaque from a building in the heart of LoDo — at the corner of 20th Street and Blake Street. The plaque removal served as a follow-up to Denver's official apology to the Chinese community earlier this year for the anti-Chinese riot on October 31, 1880, and other racist and discriminatory actions toward Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in subsequent years.

"Removing this historically inaccurate and harmful plaque is a physical manifestation of the ongoing work the city is pursuing to ensure our residents experience true equity and justice."
- Chief Equity Officer Dr. Aisha Rousseau

Dr. Rousseau also spoke at the Denver Office of Storytelling's #IAmDenver advance screening of "Reclaiming Denver's Chinatown." The documentary honors the history of the Chinese community in Denver and includes footage of the plaque removal.
The Colorado Inclusive Economy held a summit of nearly 300 Chief Executive Officers and other C-suite leaders from across Colorado to discuss efforts, challenges, and progress related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

OSEI Chief Equity Officer Dr. Aisha Rousseau was honored to serve on a panel skillfully moderated by Dwinita Mosby Tyler, Ph.D., alongside panelists Roberto Montoya, Ph.D.; Michael Benitez Jr., Ph.D., and the incomparable Dr. Cornel West (“Brother West”).
The Mayor's OSEI Training and Strategy team provided RSJ Academy training to the mayoral commissions. The Training and Strategy team work with the Agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships during Commissioner Partnership Day.

**HOPE COMMUNITIES RESOURCE & FOOD BANK EVENT**

The Mayor's OSEI staff attended the Hope Communities resource and food bank event called "Tent Topics" to share resources with East Colfax residents and help make them aware of the Mayor's OSEI mission and goals as well as answer questions from the community.

**EMERGENCY MIGRANT SHELTERS**

As over 5,000 migrants arrived in Denver, the City and County of Denver and community partners initiated sheltering efforts to assist with their arrival. The staff of The Mayor's OSEI helped by working shifts at the shelters and donating items to the community partners.
WHAT'S NEXT
2023
The Digital Equity Program will release its digital equity plan in 2023 and continue to work with the Digital Equity Coalition to share best practices and resources and gain momentum for digital equity efforts in our city. The team will pilot a community device loaner program to increase device access.

The RSJ Academy will continue as the Mayor's OSEI works toward training all staff in 2023.

Agency EDI teams will continue to work on their equity strategies. The Mayor's OSEI will offer a strategy workshop in 2023 and data training to ensure agencies are utilizing best practices and measuring their outcomes related to equity.

The Mayor's OSEI team will continue to support agencies and EDI teams in developing their REAP plans.

Councils will continue convening and will work toward increasing their membership.

Equity in Sports with National Cycling League: The first ever gender-equal and racially diverse-owned professional league revolutionizing professional cycling into a world-class spectator sport while integrating the latest sporting technology to enhance the sporting experience will be brought to Denver in August.
The Staff

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The work of the Mayor's OSEI would not be possible without the vital work of our many partners inside the City and County of Denver and the greater Denver community.

DENVER MAYOR
Michael B. Hancock

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
Amanda Sandoval, District 1
Kevin Flynn, District 2
Jamie Torres, District 3
Kendra Black, District 4
Amanda Sawyer, District 5
Paul Kashmann, District 6
Jolon Clark, District 7
Christopher Herndon, District 8
Candi CdeBaca, District 9
Chris Hinds, District 10
Stacie Gilmore, District 11, Council President
Robin Kniech, At-Large
Deborah Ortega, At-Large

INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COUNCILS
Racial Equity Council
Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Teams
Digital Equity Coalition

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

DENVER
OFFICE OF SOCIAL EQUITY & INNOVATION
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