



# City of Eureka Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Project

**Final Report**



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## I. Introduction

The City of Eureka engaged Fogbreak Justice to develop and lead a comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion program. The purpose of this report is to summarize what has happened in the four phases of the program since its inception in 2020, to provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of the program, highlighting what has been accomplished, and finally, to provide recommendations for moving forward with the goal of enhancing the City's equity, inclusion, and feelings of belonging for all.

## II. Overview of the Project

### A. Four Phases

The first phase of this collaboration began with an extensive informational gathering process. Phase One, which we call the Discovery Phase, was about assessing the City's "current reality." This set the tone for the other phases and gave the City valuable insight into opportunities for growth.

Phase Two was the Foundations Phase where we engaged with the whole work community to create a communal foundation on which the commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion rests. This happened through the development of The City's Vision statement, shared values and a Mission Statement.

In the third phase, the focus was on education. There were seven formal workshops and five informal discussions on topics related to equity and inclusion. They were all well-attended and the participants almost universally rated the experiences as valuable or very valuable.

In Phase Four, the Implementation Phase, informal self-guided learning sessions and discussions as follow-up to education sessions continued while the focus of the program turned toward the larger community.

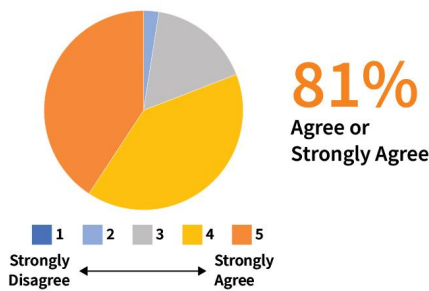
## B. Comparing Results from 2020 and 2023 (Three Snapshots)

### 1. The City Inspires Belonging Then and Now

The survey results from the August 2020 employee survey showed a City that inspires a sense of belonging and has created a supportive work environment:

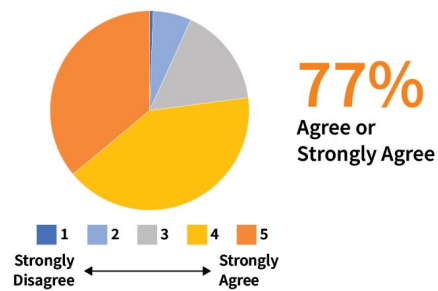
#### 35. I am proud to work for the City.

162 responses



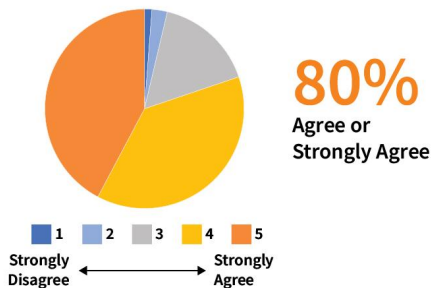
#### 41. I feel like I belong in my community.

161 responses



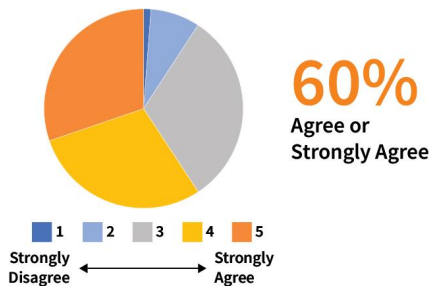
#### 39. I feel like I am accepted by my co-workers for who I am.

161 responses



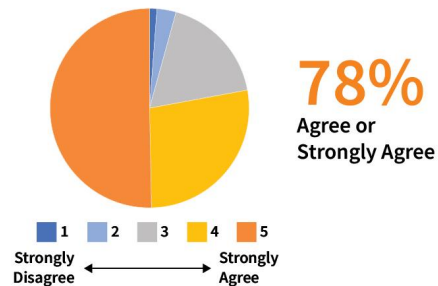
#### 3. The City respects individuals and values their differences.

162 responses



#### 2. My immediate supervisor is committed to and supports a diverse workforce.

161 responses



These positive feelings of pride and belonging still hold true in 2023:

- 80% of respondents feel that the City is committed to having and supporting a diverse workforce, up from 58% in 2020.
- 77% believe that the City respects individuals and values their differences, up from 60%.
- 83% say they are proud to work for the City, up from 81% in 2020.
- 87% of respondents say they “feel like I am accepted by my coworkers for who I am,” up from 80% in 2020.
- 80% “feel like I belong in my work community,” up from 77% in 2020.

Certainly, on balance this data shows the City trending in a positive direction.

# 87%

Of respondents agree or strongly agree...

*“I feel like I am accepted by my coworkers for who I am”*

# 80%

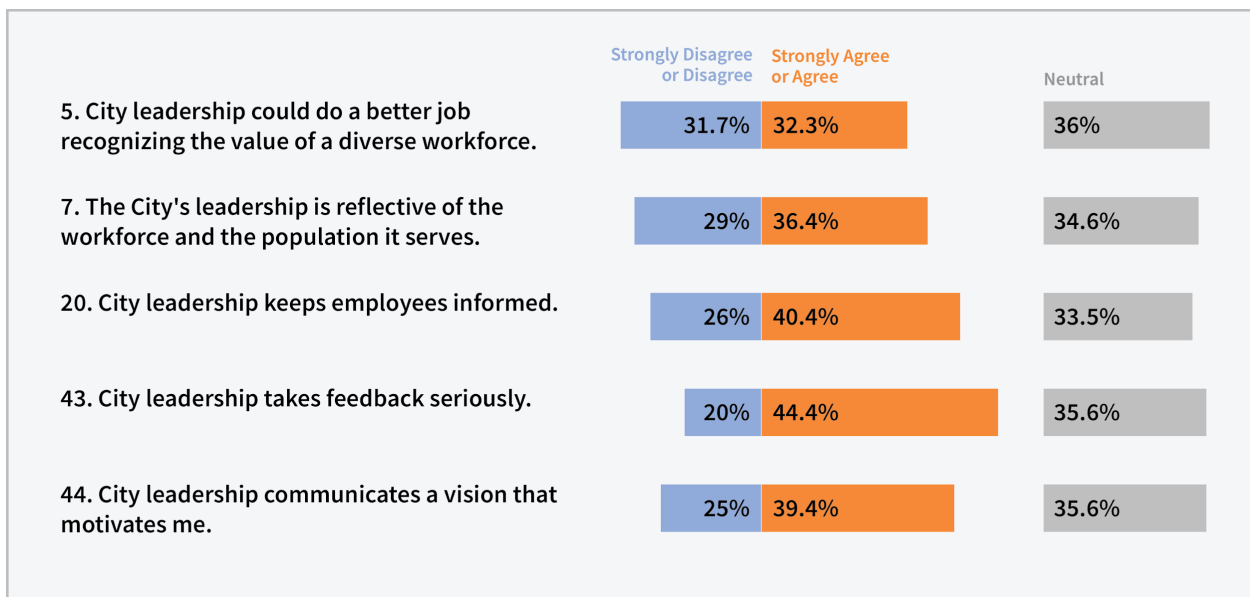
Of respondents believe that...

*“The City is committed to having and supporting a diverse workforce”*

## 2. A Call to Leadership and a Response

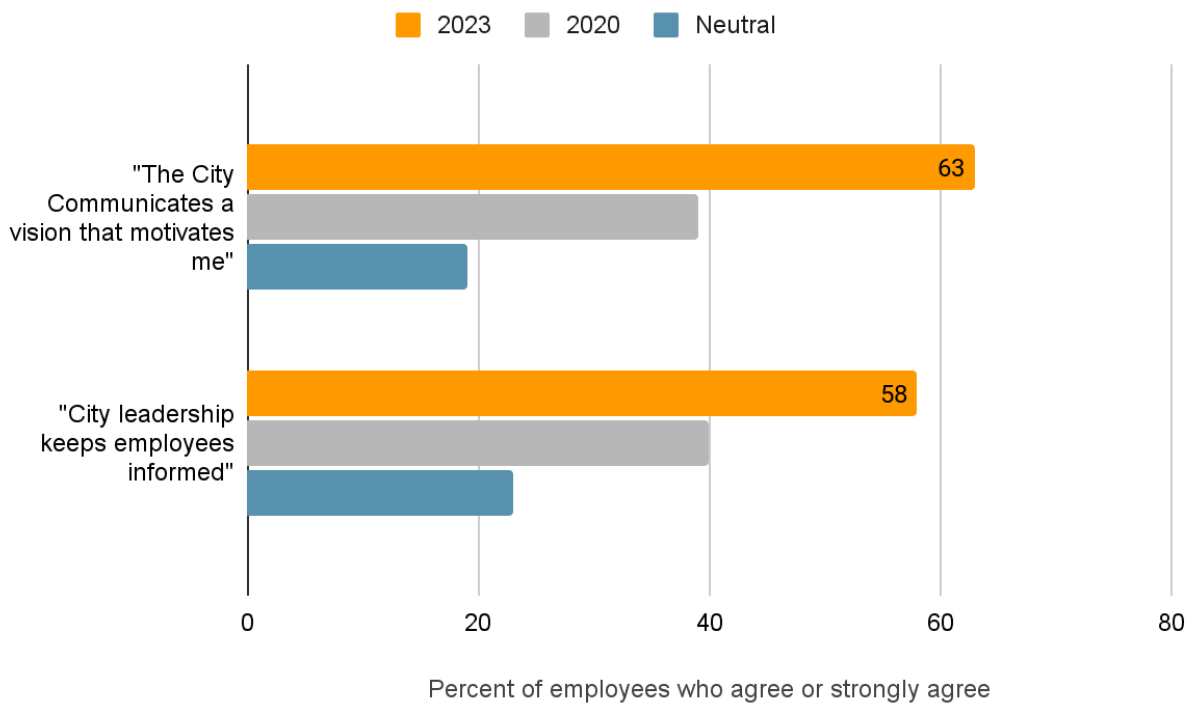
In the initial employee survey conducted in 2020, we saw a call for stronger leadership and a need for a unifying, inspiring vision for Eureka. This was based on the trend in the responses to questions about leadership which were answered with a “3” on a five-point Likert scale, which in essence was a non-answer or decision to not take a position.

We looked at five questions about City leadership in which many respondents simply failed to take a position:



The responses told us that a sizable proportion of City employees (around one-third) did not know how they felt about leadership or were refusing to share how they felt. This indicated a lack of engagement and influence on the part of the leadership.

When asked about the same issues in 2023, there appears to be significant improvement in this area. From the 2023 survey, 63% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “City leadership communicates a vision that motivates me.” This metric is up from 39% in 2020. Only 19% had no opinion or remained neutral. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents believed that City leadership keeps employees informed. This is up significantly from 40% in 2020, when 23% reported having no opinion or remaining neutral.



The City is moving in the right direction in terms of communication and engagement of leadership.

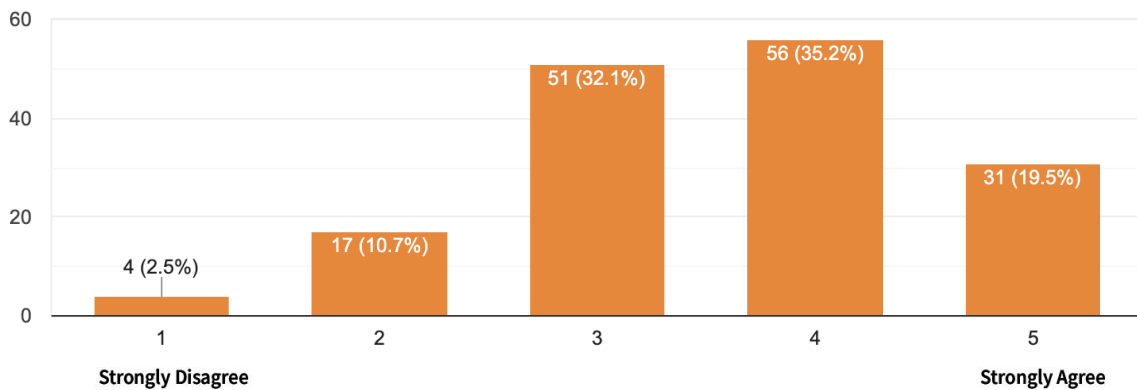
### 3. Focus on People of Color’s Survey Results

In the 2020 survey, we uncovered a divergence in responses when looking specifically at respondents who self-identified as people of color. We focused on two findings.

For the statement, “The City helps create a culture of inclusion in the Eureka community,” about half of respondents in 2020 agreed or strongly agreed (54.7%):

#### 45. The City helps create a culture of inclusion in the Eureka community.

159 responses



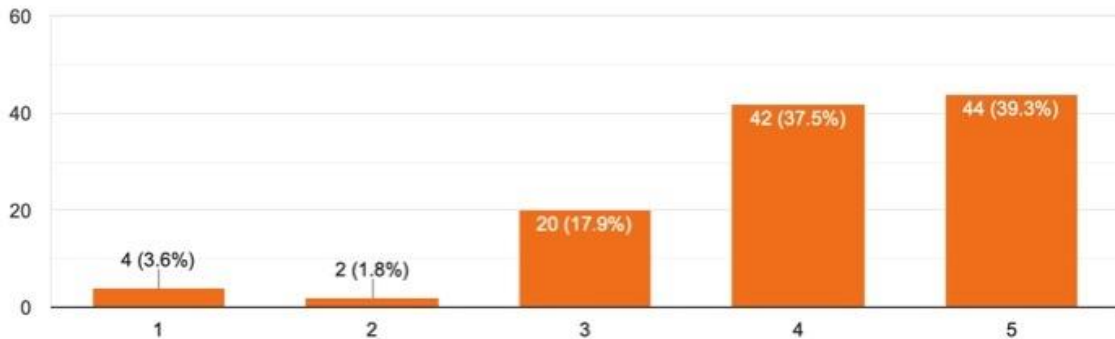
However, we discovered that only thirty-seven point five percent (37.5%) of respondents who identified as people of color responded with a 4 or 5 to this question, in contrast to the 57% of White respondents that rated the statement with a 4 or 5. Though the statistical significance is limited by virtue of those who chose to respond and the small sample size, a 20% discrepancy indicated the importance of bridging the perspective gap between people of color and White residents.



**11. The City helps create a culture of inclusion in the Eureka community.**



112 responses

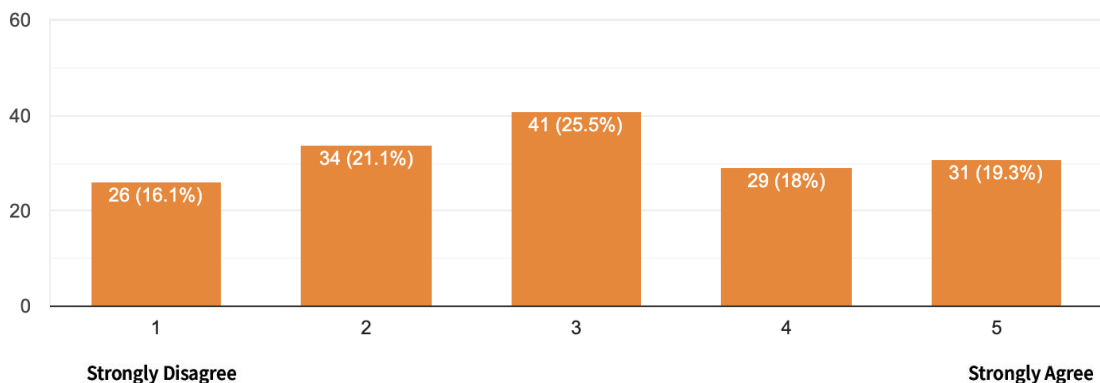


The results from the current survey are notably different with 89% of people who identify as people of color responding with a 4 or 5 to this question, meaning 89% agreed or strongly agreed that the City helps create a culture of inclusion in the Eureka community. Again, we caution that the statistical significance is limited due to a small sample size, however, it does show a remarkable shift.

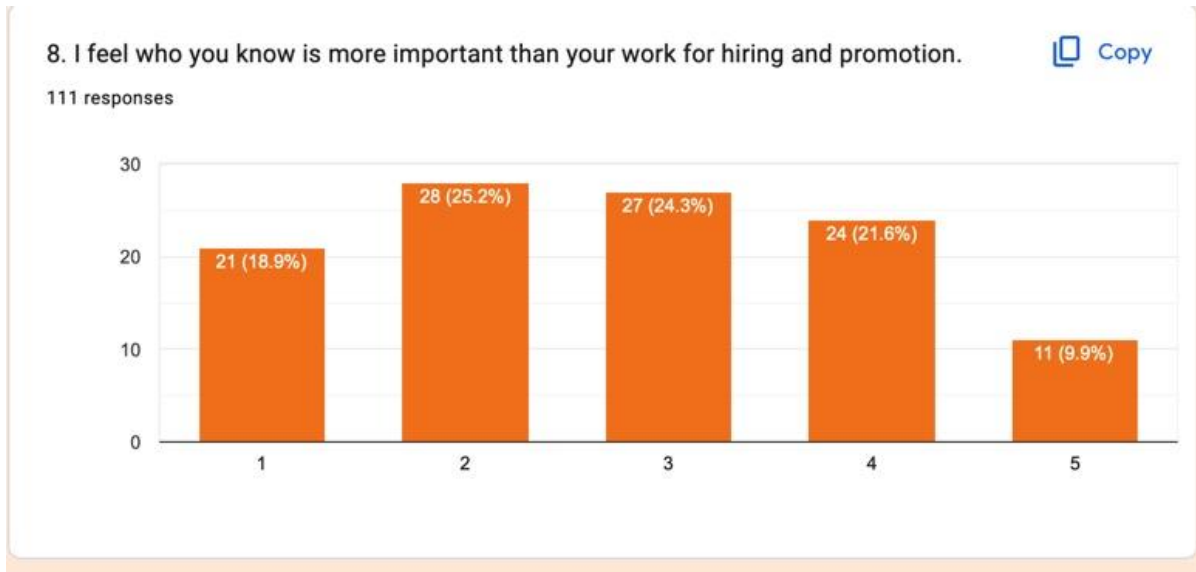
Another area of contrast between people of color and others was in regard to the City’s hiring and promotion. In 2020, 37.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “I feel who you know is more important than your work for hiring and promotion.” People of color tended to agree more (42%) than White respondents (36%).

**17. I feel who you know is more important than your work for hiring and promotion.**

161 responses



In 2023, not only are the results more positive overall, with a smaller percentage of employees agreeing that who you know is more important than your work, responses from people of color were more favorable (34%), although still higher than the percentage of White respondents who agreed (27%).



## C. Highlighted Accomplishments

We are delighted to report that a significant number of recommendations that Fogbreak suggested were undertaken by the City. The City and its employees also developed and implemented their own ideas and programs. As reported in the following table, the City tackled and accomplished several key efforts towards inclusion and belonging.

### Overall

- A regional alliance made up of major institutions in Humboldt County together with community groups and other equity champions was created. It is called the Humboldt Equity Consortium. The Consortium intends to meet regularly to share its goals and priorities and to identify opportunities for collaboration.
- The City, in partnership with the City of Arcata, has created the Bay Cities Leadership Academy, an annual program to support and educate a diverse group of rising leaders. Participants met all day for 10 days over a sixth month period and focused much of the time on the mission, vision and values of their communities.

### Vision

- The City created a collective vision for Eureka that includes a clear and unifying Vision Statement.

*We envision an inclusive community where everyone's fundamental needs are met, where our employees respect and celebrate all walks of life, where everyone can grow and thrive, as we work with integrity for the good of Eureka.*

### Police

- More training and education was completed on issues related to race, equity and inclusion, for example, procedural justice and implicit bias, has been provided to the Eureka Police Department.
- Hired an Independent Police Auditor and instituted a Citizens Oversight of Police Practices board to provide objective review of EPD operations.

### Programming and Celebration

- Two new paid holidays were added to acknowledge and celebrate Latinx and Black history and contributions: Cesar Chavez Day and Juneteeth.
- The City is partnering with the local NAACP Chapter to host a Juneteeth event in the community.

- The City has begun the process of addressing the needs of transgender youth athletes.

### **Outreach, Transparency and Education**

- City Manager Miles Slattery has consistently communicated with the larger Eureka community about the equity and inclusion program, including dedicating his entire message in the March, 2023, City newsletter.
- There has been significant and continued outreach by the City Manager to non-profits, community organizations, and local leaders to collaborate on programs.
- Between 95-100 City employees (almost half of approximately 200 full time staff) participated in some aspect of the diversity, equity and inclusion programming. On average, the evaluations of workshops reflect that most participants found the education and events valuable or very valuable.

### **Relationships with Tribes and Native People**

- A land recognition is being presented at every City Council meeting.

*The land that Eureka rests on is known in the Wiyot language as Jaroujiji. Past actions by local, State and Federal governments removed the Wiyot and other indigenous peoples from the land and threatened to destroy their cultural practices. The City of Eureka acknowledges the Wiyot community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. This acknowledgement demonstrates the City's commitment to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism.*

### **Recruitment, Interviewing and Hiring**

- A "recruitment incentive" is only given for recruitment within the Eureka Police Department.
- The City hired several women to leadership positions. Currently four of nine department leaders are women.

### III. Phase One - Specific Discovery Methods and Findings

#### A. Procedure and Methods

On August 10, 2020, Fogbreak facilitated a kick-off event and a listening session for City and community leaders and rising leaders. There were 10 people in attendance. On August 11, 2020, Fogbreak convened another listening session with City employees. Nine people participated. In the weeks following the kick-off and listening sessions, Fogbreak conducted in-depth interviews with many City leaders, employees and community members on the phone. In all, we interviewed 16 people ranging from 30-90 minutes.

To provide an anonymous modality to report feedback, an employee survey was distributed to all City employees focused on City practices and issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion. The survey was designed using Likert-scale questions as well as short descriptive answers. With just over 50 questions the survey asked employees about their personal experiences, City policies and procedures, feelings of inclusion and belonging, and views related to the City's interactions with the larger community. The response rate was over 50% with 163 people completing the survey out of approximately 300 employees.

Of the 163 survey respondents, 35% identified female, 50% as male, and 15% identified as non-binary/other/ or preferred not to share their gender. For this same group of respondents, 65.6% identified as White, 6% as Hispanic or Latino (total 10), 8% as Mixed (13), 2.4% as Native American (4), 2.5% as other races (Asian, African American, Portuguese), and 15.3% preferred not to share their race.<sup>1</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> At times during this report we will refer to a group of people who completed the survey as “people of color.” This group includes those participants who self-identified as mixed, Asian, African American or Black, Native or Indigenous, and Hispanic or Latino.

## B. Key Findings from Phase One<sup>2</sup>

- Most respondents (80%) felt proud to work for the City of Eureka and felt accepted by their co-workers (80%).
- Results showed that it is imperative that leaders make a concerted effort to demonstrate their commitment to a unifying vision around equity and inclusion and communicate this through word and deed to City employees who may not be convinced that this is a priority.
- Quantitative and qualitative data revealed a perceived in-group/out-group dynamic and respondents described favoritism in the form of an ol' boys network or "who you know." This effect specifically highlighted pervasive gender bias, where women are excluded from networking opportunities, relegated to traditional roles and denied advancement opportunities.
- The City has work to do reaching out and building trust with people of color who work for the City as well as the Indigenous tribes and the Hmong and Black communities in Eureka.
- The greater community of Eureka is confronting explicit racism which must be clearly addressed, while also creating a sense of community and building bridges with the other communities.

## IV. Phase II - Foundations

The information gathered in Phase I through small group discussions, in-depth interviews with stakeholders, and the employee survey supported moving forward with the project as proposed. It confirmed our initial instincts that the employees were eager to create a unifying vision for their work community. This was accomplished in Phase Two.

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<sup>2</sup> Any survey data based upon volunteers will skew towards those who may have stronger opinions and want to have their voice heard. We keep this in mind as we review the results.

### Mission, Vision and Values Session

The Mission, Vision and Values session was a community building event where all employees were invited to attend (virtually). Over three and a half hours, employees collaborated on creating a shared set of values, defining them and then creating a vision toward which the City could aim its efforts. Over five months, this phase involved several separate sessions:

May 7	Vision, Values and Mission virtual session with 100+ employees over 3.5 hours
Jun. 21	Follow-up virtual leadership session with 17 Department leaders over 3 hours
Jul. 21	Crystallization Meeting with City Manager, Asst. City Manager, and Human Resources
Sep. 8	Department mission statements and leadership education session



Berké Brown from Fogbreak Justice led a collaborative session with Department leaders to refine the work of the larger Mission, Vision, and Values session.

The workplace community developed this Vision Statement:

We envision an inclusive community where everyone's fundamental needs are met, where our employees respect and celebrate all walks of life, where everyone can grow and thrive, as we work with integrity for the good of Eureka.

The workplace community crystallized these shared values and defined them.

**Community:** A sense of togetherness founded on respect, mutual support and kindness with awareness of privilege, power and position

**Equity:** Recognition and celebration of individuality with inclusion and impartiality as the standard

**Growth:** Forward momentum that maximizes opportunity for people to reach their potential

**Integrity:** Quality character and courageous action with a unified commitment to principles, honesty and transparency

**Service:** A steadfast commitment to improving conditions for others

The workplace community created this Mission Statement:

To meet the needs of Eureka residents, businesses and visitors by providing services and making decisions that are socially, fiscally and environmentally responsible, creating a workplace that values growth, inclusion and empathy for all.

The Vision Statement became the north star to which the work of the City was directed. The values and their definitions were reiterated at every educational session for the remainder of the program. Recommendations for further integrating the results of the Mission, Vision and Values sessions can be found in the Recommendation section of this report.



## V. Phase Three: Education

The goals of the education phase of the program were to 1) promote and embody the value of community, equity and growth, 2) define terms, educate employees and develop tools, strategies and skills toward improving equity and inclusion, and 3) meet specific challenges about fairness and inclusion raised in Phase One.

For over two years, the City and its employees were dedicated to a variety of educational sessions related to equity and inclusion. From December, 2021, until February, 2023, the City hosted seven workshops and five informal, internally-led discussions. Between 95-100 City employees (almost half of approximately 200 full time staff) participated in some aspect of the programming. On average, the evaluations of workshops reflect that most participants found the education and events valuable or very valuable.

Here are a summary of the educational sessions:

- *Equity 101*

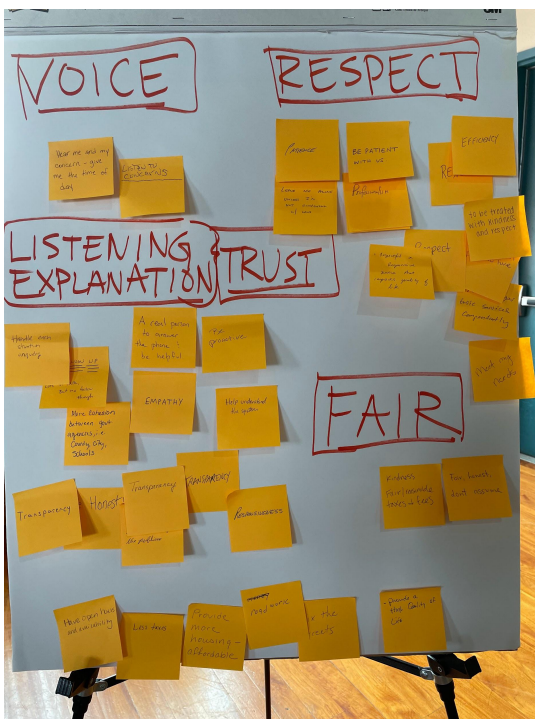
The first in the equity education series, this online course had about 40 participants. Of the participants that filled out an evaluation, 60% believed the session was valuable or very valuable. One participant said, “[This session] provided education to my coworkers and supervisors that I often have to do on my own which can be very vulnerable for me.” Another said they liked, “being able to have genuine discussions with my coworkers about these terms and topics.”

- *Difficult Conversations*

Talking about race, racism, gender and all forms of bias is uncomfortable. In this two-hour virtual educational experience, employees learned how to approach difficult yet meaningful conversations on these topics. Participants learned how to lead conversations on hard topics using Fogbreak’s B.R.A.V.E. method. Participants were also introduced to the idea of microaggressions and how seemingly small comments or actions that express bias can be addressed using a group of strategies called the PAUSE technique.

- *Procedural Justice and Implicit Bias (2 sessions, in person)*

Procedural Justice is an approach to governing that focuses on the social connection between City employees as public servants and community members. There are four pillars of procedural justice and when they are implemented residents are much more likely to comply, cooperate and engage. These educational sessions introduced the participants to the importance of this approach and taught tools and strategies within each pillar.



The pillars are:

**Voice:** Providing an opportunity for residents to tell their whole story

**Respect:** Showing respect to community members



**Trust:** Providing good explanations of what is happening and why and showing evidence of listening

**Fairness:** Increasing fairness by addressing our biases

Much of the workshop focused on tools and strategies for reducing the impact of bias.

When the pillars are addressed and community members feel that they have been treated fairly, with respect, have been listened to, and know what is happening and why, they will comply, cooperate and engage.

The workshop was very successful. The participants were engaged and committed: 86% (of evaluation respondents) said the workshop was valuable or very valuable and 97% said they were committed to implementing what they had learned into their work.

A follow-up, informal discussion session was led by internal staff that brought people together to further discuss what had been learned in the workshop. Participants discussed two questions:

*Have you had the opportunity to use any of these strategies successfully while interacting with a community member or a colleague?*

*Have you ever experienced bias (either being treated differently or by noticing your own biases)?*

- *Police Listening Session (co-facilitated with EPD)*

In preparation for future education sessions and in response to low attendance by police department employees, we took time to focus on the police department and encourage their engagement in the program.



Together with Sgt. La France, Fogbreak created a workshop for police to build community, ask questions and share concerns. It was well attended with approximately 35 sworn officers and other staff in attendance. Over 90% of participants who answered the evaluation felt that the program was valuable or very valuable. Over 67% stated that the workshop would likely impact their work for Eureka.

Participants commented:

*You actively listened to the concerns of police employees as it relates to interacting and engaging with other city departments when a lot of the topic surrounds the national narrative against our profession.*

*Excellent facilitation of valuable dialogue between members of the EPD in a “safe space.”*



Police department employees shared with each other about their challenges, their profession, and their engagement in the equity and inclusion program.

- *Race and Racial Equity (co-facilitated with EPD) (2 sessions in person)*

This workshop was developed with input from the Eureka Police Department. It was offered twice and was well-attended. Of the attendees who completed an evaluation, 64% found it valuable or very valuable. Respondents thought the most important parts of the session were:

*Hearing about others' personal experiences and also relevant perspectives and works from other professionals, as referenced by the facilitator via book citations, YouTube videos, etc.*

*Learning about the Yurok tribe because I don't know much about the indigenous tribes in our community.*

*Getting to interact with members of other city departments.*

One participant suggested: “For any city employee these types of trainings should be required. It is so important for everyone to be on the same page. I believe the people that probably need this type of training the most may not take a course like this unless they were required to do so.”

- *Fairness in Hiring, Interviewing, and Evaluation*

This was one of the most successful workshops, with a focus on creating a culture of belonging, using specific tools for recruiting and hiring, and fairness measures for evaluating employees. 81% of respondents to the evaluation felt that the workshop was valuable or very valuable. Almost 90% stated they intended to use one or more strategies in their work for the City. There were several tool-kits for participants to use in their daily work including this interview scorecard:

### Interview Scorecard

- Do you ask the same questions to every person you interview and give same time?
- Do you ask behavioral interview questions related to required traits?
- Do you administer skills-based assessments? Best interviewing has the candidate do the job they will be expected to do.
- Do you use a consistent rating scale?
- Do you provide candidates and interviewers with a handout detailing expectations?
- Do you address resumé gaps head on?
- Do you avoid asking about prior salary?

- *Privilege and Allyship (in person)*

This workshop was held in person at the Adorni center. Although 24 participated in the educational session, only eight completed the evaluation. In it, all respondents said the workshop was valuable or very valuable and all took away tools and strategies that they intended to use in their work. One respondent thought the most valuable aspect was “Identifying actionable things that our department could do to be allies, with consideration to our scope of work for the City.” Another said that for them it was “Hearing other peoples stories and viewpoints.”



City employees collaborated on ways they could be allies to others in the City and others in the larger community.

## VI. Phase Four: Implementation

The goals of the fourth and final phase of the program were four-fold:

- To complete the foundational educational sessions
- To gradually transition the program to internal staff
- To summarize the program in a comprehensive report
- To begin to turn outward to the larger community

There was a smooth transition between the third and fourth phases of the program because of overlapping goals and processes. Education workshops will continue beyond the program as bi-annual or quarterly events. Co-facilitation of prior educational sessions and internally-led information sessions have begun to transition the program to more internally-driven.

### A. Gathering of community leaders in Leadership Summit



In February, the City convened a Leadership Summit of community leaders working toward equity and inclusion in our community. Several leaders came from the education space: Cal Poly Humboldt, the County Office of Education, and Eureka City Schools. Other attendees represented Equity Arcata and several Latinx community groups. The City presented an overview of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program and then invited the community leaders to share their priorities and current projects. We brainstormed collaborations and ways to support each other's priorities. Attendees unanimously wanted more intra-group communication and opportunities to work together.

Another meeting was held on March 8, 2023 and all community leaders were welcomed. Additional representatives from Humboldt County Human Rights Commission, NAACP, and College of the Redwoods attended. The group decided to call itself the Humboldt Equity Consortium and to meet monthly in order to create on-going communication. The priority of

the group is to share events and programs and help amplify each other's work. The Consortium is considering starting a speaker series open to the public.

## B. Follow-up Employee Survey and Final Report

In March, 2023, a shorter, follow-up survey was distributed to all City employees focused on City equity and inclusion. Again, the survey included Likert-scale questions (11) and included space for open-ended comments and feedback. One hundred and twelve employees responded (down from 163 responses in the first survey but still a significant number given approximately 200 full time employees).

Of the 112 survey participants, 46% identified female, 38% as male, and 16% identified as non-binary/other or preferred not to share their gender. For this same group of participants, 73% (80 people) identified as White, 8% (9) as Hispanic or Latino, 4% (4) as Mixed, 4% (4) as Native American, 5% (5) as other races (Asian, African American, Other), and 16% (17) preferred not to share their race.

Findings from the 2023 survey are highlighted in the section called “Comparing Results from 2020 and 2023 (Three Snapshots)” starting on page 4 of this report.

This final report, including recommendations for moving forward, is part of the implementation plan.



## VII. CONCLUSION

After spending over three years with the City of Eureka, we were uniformly impressed with the City's deep commitment to equity and inclusion. Phase I revealed strong positive feelings about the City's commitment to diversity and equity including a nearly unanimous consensus that immediate supervisors are supportive of diversity and equity. Similarly there was a resounding pride in working for the City. And yet, there were many areas in need of attention.

There was a strong desire to have a unifying vision for the City. This was boldly accomplished with this initiative. There was a perceived in-group/out-group dynamic and concern about favoritism in the form of an ol' boys network or "who you know." There has been significant progress in this area including less concern about "who you know" in hiring and advancement and a significant increase in leadership positions held by women.

The City and its employees were engaged participants in training and education related to equity and inclusion. Through the Mission, Vision and Values sessions, formal trainings, interactive workshops and five informal, internally-led discussions, employees learned and grew together. Between 95-100 City employees (almost half of approximately 200 full time staff) participated in some aspect of the programming.

While so much has been accomplished, there is always work to do. Educational programming will continue on a regular basis. A comprehensive list of recommendations will be reviewed and prioritized. Engagement with the larger community will expand. We look forward to seeing the City of Eureka thrive as it solidifies its position as a leader in what cities across California and the nation can do to create a more equitable and inclusive workplace and community.