

# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Councilmember Raul Peralez  
Councilmember Sergio Jimenez  
Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco  
Councilmember Maya Esparza  
Councilmember Sylvia Arenas

**SUBJECT:** EQUITY STUDY SESSION

**DATE:** August 29, 2019

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

8/29/19

## RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to prepare for the upcoming study session on Equity by including the following:

1. Engagement with knowledgeable staff from Seattle, San Francisco, Oakland, or other cities with an equity program, and request for them to be part of the conversation and answer questions either in person or conference call;
2. A subject matter expert, with experience in assisting cities in assisting cities with equity programs/offices/solutions to be part of the conversation and answer questions;
3. Input from our city employees who were part of each GARE cohort;
4. A local funder with experience on Race and Equity to be part of the discussion, and answer questions;
5. For staff to be available to brief to each Council office prior to the study session.

## BACKGROUND

The conversation of equity within local jurisdictions is not a new concept. In fact, it is happening all over our nation. Within the Bay Area alone, Oakland launched their Department of Race and Equity in October 2016<sup>1</sup> and more recently San Francisco established their Office of Racial Equity in May of this year<sup>2</sup>. Across our nation 33 cities

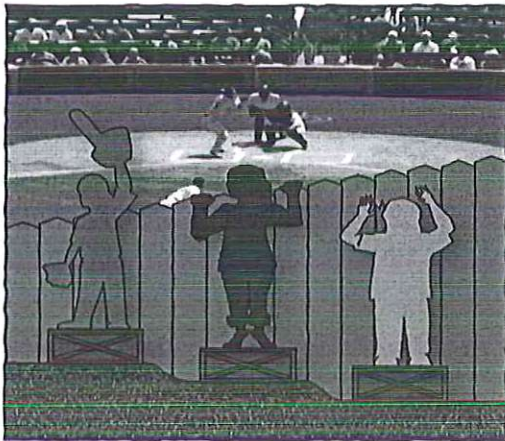
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/race-matters>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6003977-BLA-OfficeofEquity-050119-0.html>

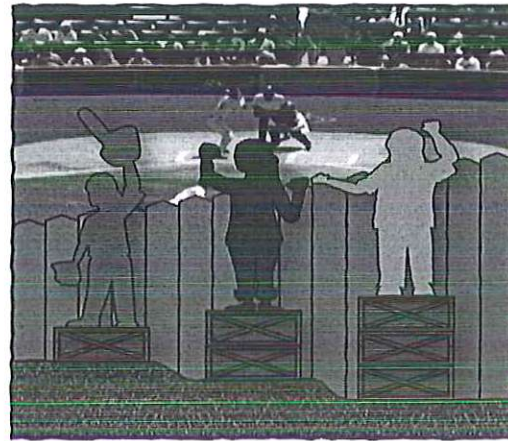
have Offices of Equity<sup>3</sup>. San José is sadly behind. However, we do have an opportunity to learn from the best practices of others.

As authors of the original equity budget memo, we are glad to see that the Equity Study Session is coming to fruition. Our budget discussions in June revealed that equity means different things to different communities. It is our job as leaders to look at equity in a multifaceted and comprehensive manner. Therefore, bringing the expertise that surrounds us is crucial to the discussion. Additionally, we have city employees, who have participated and are currently participating in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) training, we should hear from them how this training has made an impact. Let us take full advantage of this study session to educate ourselves and make informed decisions for a path forward.

As one of the most diverse cities in our nation, we as a City Council have a responsibility to represent all our residents and recognize the inequities that exist. As city policy makers it is important that through this study session, we can learn from experts, communities, and our own city employees. In recognizing inequity, we can begin to understand why it occurs and more importantly embark on finding solutions to achieve equity in all our communities.



**EQUALITY**



**EQUITY**

---

<sup>3</sup> See Footnote 2