



# City of Palo Alto

## Policy and Services Committee Staff Report

(ID # 11725)

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Report Type: Action Items

Meeting Date: 11/10/2020

Summary Title: CEDAW & Citywide Diversity & Inclusion Recommendations

Title: Discussion and Recommendations Regarding the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as a Component of Citywide Diversity and Inclusion Efforts

From: City Manager

Lead Department: City Manager

### Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Policy and Services Committee accept this status report regarding CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and recommend the following to City Council:

1. Direct staff to proceed with a community summit on the status of women and girls in Palo Alto as part of the City's Diversity & Inclusion initiative for the purpose of identifying gender equality issues and next steps;
2. Direct Human Resources staff to publish demographics of the City of Palo Alto workforce for job classifications and gender;
3. Include gender equity as an integral element of the City's ongoing Diversity & Inclusion initiative.

### Background

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ([CEDAW](#)) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. Including a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and proposes an agenda for national action to end the discrimination.

In 2002, Council passed [Resolution #8217](#), in support of CEDAW ([CMR: 405:02](#)). On December 12, 2016, the Council passed [Resolution #9653](#), "Reaffirming Palo Alto's Commitment to a Diverse, Supportive, Inclusive and Protective Community." As part of the approval motion, Council moved to refer the subject matter to the Human Relations Commission (HRC), for "recommendation of implementation measures and additional elements that should be considered by the Council in the future" ([Council Action Minutes 12/12/16](#)).

In 2018 ([February 8, 2018](#)), the HRC ad hoc committee on CEDAW presented a [report](#) with a

“goal...to identify and study gender equality issues, as they affect and apply to Palo Alto.” [Meeting minutes](#) reflect the discussion, with the expectation that this would move to City Council for consideration and action. Council received this information at their October 1, 2018 meeting ([CMR: #9646](#); [Minutes](#)). Following the discussion, the Council unanimously approved a motion which included the following section related to CEDAW:

F. Direct Staff to study and return to Policy and Services Committee with options for a City ordinance endorsing the United Nations’ Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Staff’s work should include:

- i. Affirming the City’s commitment to the principals of the United Nations convention of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women;
- ii. Discussion of the potential for a gender analysis, including potential focus, scope, and phasing of an analysis, and roles of City staff, the HRC, and Council;
- iii. Policy and Services Committee should return to Council with a prioritization of one or two areas of focus;
- iv. Priorities should be given to areas where the City can make the greatest positive impact on the lives of the women and girls in Palo Alto; an
- v. Work generally within existing budgets, and City resources, and can accomplish goals within one to two years.

On June 8, 2020, the City Council adopted a Resolution ([CMR #11414](#)) affirming that Black lives matter and committed to address systemic racism and bias and approved a Race & Equity Framework and action plan. The City Council also approved a series of actions including reviewing policing practices, making changes to use-of-force policies to reduce the potential for violence, and engaging the community in ongoing, thoughtful dialogue and leadership. The Mayor also established several Council Ad Hoc committees to help further the City’s race and equity priorities and work.

As part of these recent Council Ad Hoc discussions regarding race, equity, diversity, and inclusion, plans to work on these topics have emerged and are under consideration by Council. The Citywide Diversity & Inclusion ad hoc proposes data collection and analysis, community programs and engagement, training, and other actions. Areas of data collection and other City workforce analysis include providing baseline workforce demographics and dashboards, pay equity as it relates to gender and ethnicity, hiring practices including outreach and applicant data, training for minimizing bias and strengthening a welcoming and inclusive workplace, and exploring the potential to dedicate a position or resources dedicated to workforce Diversity Equality and Inclusion (DEI). The Council had a Study Session on October 26, 2020 meeting ([CMR #11689](#)), to discuss each Ad Hoc’s progress and to provide possible direction to staff about the long-term work that needs engagement; it has been suggested that oversight and future placement of this activity will be in the Policy and Services Committee.

At the [October 13, 2020](#) Policy and Services Committee meeting, staff provided background

information and examples of the types of work the City could pursue in support of CEDAW. The Committee unanimously approved the following motion to continue the discussion related to CEDAW ([Action Minutes](#)):

**MOTION:** Chair Cormack moved, seconded by Council Member Kou to recommend the Council direct Policy and Services Committee continue discussion of this item; direct Staff return in a month with a range of options for next steps, including cost and time frames, reconciling this work with the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, such as specific areas to focus on, to consider the first format, such as a summit, an audit, a subcommittee or another partner such as a university; and to have Staff connect with Palo Alto Unified School District.

### **Discussion**

It is important to have data-driven decisions for any policy changes or other project we aim to do. It could be difficult to determine the best course of action without further study; this cannot be only anecdotal but should be grounded in expert analysis. This analysis would create an understanding of the baseline climate for Palo Alto and provide insight to the next steps toward greater gender equity for the City workforce and the community.

### Workforce Demographic Data

As part of the race and equity work in the City, staff propose that workforce demographics be analyzed to establish a baseline of information. Changes to this baseline allows the City to track progress on inclusion with staff at all levels, with monitoring over time. This information will be included in the citywide diversity and inclusion work where baseline demographic data will be done in the coming months to inform future policy changes or practices.

### Summit

Hosting a community leaders' summit to explore issues, opportunities, actions, and strategies that can be utilized to positively affect the lives of women and girls in Palo Alto will gather the most influential people and specialists on the topic to be addressed. These experts will share ideas and collaborate on how to move forward with projects or will suggest other research topics to pursue. The goal of the summit is to gauge the needs of woman and girls in the community, which goes beyond what the city can/should do, and may identify issues, needs, and actions that do not include a gender analysis, but rather focus on policy change or collaborative activities with outside organizations. Results can then be referred to Policy and Services as part of the ongoing Diversity & Inclusion work for prioritization and further recommendation.

Like the vaping summit organized by the Healthy City/Healthy Community group, summits can be open or by invitation only.

### Other Communities of Practice

Staff have continued to follow the Santa Clara County CEDAW work and the other jurisdictions studying the topic. As staff follow the progress of the County CEDAW committee, they will consider how Santa Clara County's work could inform Palo Alto. Using the results of the summit, the baseline demographic data, and information from the County CEDAW task force, staff could further develop specific recommendations for Palo Alto for Policy and Services Committee consideration and prioritization. As noted previously by Policy and Services, the Palo Alto Unified School District, Stanford, and other regional experts can provide some additional exploration and support.

Because of their reduced size and their current focus on race, equity, and the homeless, the Human Relations Commission (HRC) leadership have expressed to staff that they do not feel that they have the capacity to take on any work related to CEDAW at this time.

### **Timeline, Resource Impact**

Work on the baseline workforce demographic study is currently underway as part of the ongoing race and equity work in the City. For anything more complex, such as internal Human Resources focused studies, with in-depth research, survey, or other data collection and analysis required, current staffing levels do not provide capacity to accomplish such a study. Consultants have provided the Human Resources department with costs ranging from \$15,000-50,000, depending upon the scope of the analysis for internally-focused pay equity study to include gender and race. Timeline depends upon availability and scope.

A City-sponsored event, such as a virtual summit on the status of women and girls could offer insight into local needs and guide future plans for studies, policy changes, and action. Staff could coordinate speakers and provide the virtual venue for this program, similar to a past summit on the topic of vaping. Staff confirm that this could be coordinated within six months, depending upon availability of participants; a report could require more staff time.

Alternatives to the specific recommended actions are numerous, and staff is prepared to support the Policy and Services Committee's discussion. Key considerations in the staff recommendation are the ability to advance the work involved with available resources, and coordinating CEDAW work with citywide diversity and inclusion efforts.

### **Policy Implications**

This work aligns with the following goals from the 2030 Comprehensive Plan:

*Goal C-1: Deliver community services effectively and efficiently.*

*Policy C1.2.3 Identify barriers to participation in City programming and facilities across gender, age, socioeconomic and ethnic groups and sexual identity and orientation, as well as mental and physical abilities, and adopt strategies to remove barriers to participation.*

This work also aligns with the following existing policy, from the Parks Master Plan:

*Goal 1: Provide high-quality facilities and services that are accessible, affordable, inclusive and distributed equitably across Palo Alto.*

*Policy 1.A Emphasize equity and affordability in the provision of programs and services and the facilitation of partnerships, to create recreation opportunities that:*

- Advance skills, build community and improve the quality of life among participants, especially Palo Alto youth, teens and seniors; and*
- Are available at a wide range of facilities, at an increased number of locations that are well distributed throughout the City.*

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

The Mayor and City Council have engaged on various Ad Hoc committees to identify actions and recommend plans on the topics of racial equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the summer and fall of 2020. These efforts have incorporated community outreach, programs, and data gathering on the topic of race, racial equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Prior HRC Committee work has included studies of gender and related discrimination in Palo Alto, and the CSD staff have continued to plan options for studies and future engagement.

The staff members working on diversity and inclusion have reached out to PAUSD and Stanford for collaboration; this will be on-going, and staff will seek out more information about any studies that PAUSD has completed related to gender.

### **Environmental Review**

This is not a project as defined in CEQA and no environmental review is required.