

CITY OF WEST DES MOINES

Human Resources:
Workforce Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion
Strategic Plan

October 2020





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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Jane Pauba Dodge
*Human Resources
Director
(She/Her/Hers)*

Differences. Differences are where our strengths lie while our similarities offer a validation that we fit in. Although our differences and similarities are equally easy to see, it depends upon which one you are seeking to find. Through HR's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan, we are seeking to celebrate these differences so that they unite instead of divide us. How do we do this? Part of our answer lies in respecting the unique perspectives and background we all bring to work. Our differences must be considered in order to attract a diverse population that reflects the community we serve and to ensure that we retain that diverse population through long, stable employment.

Inclusion. As Dr. Steven Robbins would say, it's important that all employees feel they are "insiders." Inclusion is seen in the actions we take towards others. Think about the conversations or situations you encounter where you are exposed to new ideas and perspectives, when you "walk in someone else's shoes" – these offer an alternative way to look at things you may not have seen without someone else's perspective or experiences. Encourage those who may feel like outsiders to join the conversation! You will be a better person because of it.

Since this is the first formal DEI Plan, we have included items that have already been completed prior to this plan, not only to show that this has been an important part of doing City business, but to build the momentum of where we need to go. HR's DEI Plan is an offshoot and aligns with the City's DEI Strategic Plan, which was finalized in 2019.

Our report is intended to be fluid to meet the unique and evolving issues that may come before us. For that reason, the plan will be reviewed and re-prioritized annually to meet the needs of our growing City.

Special thanks to Claudia Schabel from Schabel Solutions Inc. for working with us and drafting this plan. We appreciate her guidance, assistance and insight.

HUMAN RESOURCES WORKFORCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGIC PLAN

The goal of the City of West Des Moines Human Resources Workforce Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan is to develop and maintain a supportive and inclusive workplace which attracts, retains and engages top talent who will provide optimal service to all residents of the City.

West Des Moines has a history of being responsive to its citizens and improvements in diversity, equity and inclusion will bolster the City's service capabilities as well as its reputation among its increasingly diverse population.



CITY OF WEST DES MOINES

Mission Statement

Our mission is to serve all people of West Des Moines respectfully and effectively. Through a variety of services, we strive to provide the quality of life desired by everyone in the community.

Our Value Statement

We, the employees of the City of West Des Moines, through teamwork and cooperation, are committed to providing the highest quality of service with honesty and integrity to everyone in the community we serve. We take pride in providing effective, dependable services while striving to achieve excellence through vision and innovation.

Commitment Statement

The members of our City organization insist that services are provided respectfully and with the highest level of responsiveness and positive impact to all people of West Des Moines.

Our Vision Statement

Inclusive. Healthy. Engaged. Safe. Given the City's demographic changes and to improve the services we provide to all residents, the City is committed to recruiting, retaining and engaging a diverse workforce.

To achieve this goal, Human Resources (HR) has committed to reviewing and making appropriate adjustments to its processes. Jane Dodge engaged Schabel Solutions Inc. to facilitate this process and develop the Human Resources Workforce Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan.

METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING THE HUMAN RESOURCES WORKFORCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGIC PLAN

The following steps were taken to develop this strategy:

1. In February 2020, Jane Dodge engaged Schabel Solutions Inc., to develop a HR diversity, equity and inclusion strategy.
2. Schabel Solutions Inc. utilized the City’s Building Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan: 2019-2024 as a point of departure for the strategy.
3. HR staff were surveyed and participated in a two-hour strategy session with Schabel Solutions on March 4, 2020.
4. Following the strategy session, Jane Dodge and Claudia Schabel met multiple times and discussed the strategy in detail to clarify goals, tasks and a timeline.

The HR Workforce Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan lays out three strategic goals:



GOAL

1

Increase representation of underrepresented populations by enhancing strategies to attract, develop and retain talent in city government.

Recommended actions:

1. Validate educational requirements in current job descriptions.
 - A. Review job description qualifications necessary to perform the job and conditions under which the work is performed. HR ensures educational and experience requirements are appropriate for the job and for specific classifications. Make adjustments, as needed.
 - B. Integrate equity and inclusion into job descriptions, expectations and measures of success.
 - C. Establish career progression plan for each position/job description.
 - D. Build employee skills and knowledge by offering consistent and equitable career development opportunities across the organization.
2. Design and establish a cross-departmental Recruiting Ambassador Program to engage hiring managers and employees in recruitment and community outreach processes.
 - A. The Recruiting Ambassador Program will help hiring managers and employees better understand how to adequately and appropriately represent the City of West Des Moines in recruiting and outreach events.
 - B. Design and roll out Recruiting Ambassador Program orientation curriculum to participants.
 - C. Design scorecard to monitor activities, measure participation and effectiveness.
3. Establish interview panels representative of diverse perspectives and backgrounds to reflect the city's population.
 - A. Recruit internal stakeholders such as hiring managers, employees or outside subject matter experts (SMEs) from different backgrounds to help ensure the completion of inclusive, effective and equitable candidate interviews. Development of strong interviewing skills and knowledge could be offered as part of the Recruiting Ambassador Program's orientation curriculum (see above).
4. Continue to evaluate Civil Service interview questions, questionnaires, scoring sheets and rubric for selection process.
 - A. All sets of interview questions should have clear criteria to assess skills and traits necessary to perform the job.
 - B. Rubric and scoring sheet should assess the quality of responses. Have criteria at each level defined clearly to ensure that scoring is accurate, unbiased and consistent. Think about how to describe performance at each scale point.
 - C. Work samples or written examinations should be deployed to assess technical skills.

GOAL

1

Increase representation of underrepresented populations by enhancing strategies to attract, develop and retain talent in city government.

5. Collaborate with appropriate departments to establish and expand partnerships with community organizations and service providers in order to improve talent sourcing and recruitment of underrepresented groups and vulnerable communities.
 - A. Collaborate with local high schools and higher education institutions to develop career pathways.
 - B. Implement pipeline development programs by utilizing youth employment programs for internships.
 - C. Assess and improve the effectiveness of current partnerships. Identify potential organizations that focus on workforce development with underrepresented groups.
 - D. Continue partnership with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to employ people with disabilities.
6. Publish the Human Resources diversity, equity and inclusion vision statement in recruitment brochure and website.
 - A. Promote the City's vision about diversity and inclusion externally and during candidate interviews. This should align with and support the official diversity commitment statement (see related content in Goal 2).
7. Develop a communications strategy to increase awareness and secure buy-in from internal and external stakeholders for Human Resources diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.
 - A. Define terms, concepts and principles in order to establish common language when educating and increasing awareness of diversity, equity and inclusion.
 - B. The Human Resources communications strategy should embed messages detailing how the City values and believes in diversity, equity and inclusion in all materials.
 - C. The Human Resources communications strategy should raise awareness about changes to HR policies and procedures.
 - D. The Human Resources communications strategy should address accessibility and language barriers proactively.
8. Create an affirmative action plan to identify gaps in representation and opportunities for targeted recruitment efforts.
 - A. Analyze appropriate data (internal and external availability, etc.) to identify any shortfalls.
 - B. Develop and implement internal and external good faith efforts that address any shortfalls.
 - C. Collect, monitor and report good faith efforts to stakeholders.

GOAL

2

Enhance leaders' understanding about the value of recruitment and retaining a diverse workforce.

Recommended actions:

1. Human Resources offers quarterly one-hour trainings to help hiring managers understand their role, the implications of hiring decisions and expected outcomes. Recruiting Ambassador Program participants should also participate in these trainings.
 - A. Identify needed topics, which might include the following:
 - The business case for inclusion
 - Inclusive leadership
 - Attracting and retaining top talent
 - Preventing discrimination and harassment
 - Unlawful interview questions
 - Interviewing candidates for culture add versus culture fit
 - Interrupting unconscious bias in the hiring process
 - Understanding the importance of having a diverse slate of candidates
 - Racial equity
 - Establishing common diversity and inclusion language
 - Working with the LGBTQ+ Community: Why Pronouns Matter
 - B. Evaluate learning outcomes on a yearly basis to ensure that learning is applied at work successfully.
 - C. Conduct assessment to determine future training needs associated with diversity, equity and inclusion.

2. Human Resources develops and publishes their official diversity commitment statement which documents that Human Resources values and supports diversity and inclusion. The statement also reflects that Human Resources will, on an ongoing basis, strive to learn about diversity, and promote acceptance of the differences of others.
 - A. Research the official statements of best practice to emulate.
 - B. Draft City of West Des Moines Human Resources statement.
 - C. Publish City of West Des Moines Human Resources statement.

GOAL

3

Revise and design human resources policies and procedures to foster a culture of belonging and equity.

Recommended actions:

1. Run, track, monitor and report diversity and inclusion metrics and inclusivity index provided by Schabel Solutions Inc. on a quarterly basis.
2. Explore opportunities to offer domestic partner benefits.
3. Maintain or improve the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index score - Part III "Municipality As An Employer".
 - A. Maintain LGBTQ+ inclusive medical benefits.
 - B. Develop a Transgender Employment Policy.
 - C. Review Employee Handbook policies and appropriate forms for gender neutral pronouns.
4. Assess and improve accessibility to technology and the City's facilities and buildings for people with disabilities.
 - A. Partner with local organizations such as Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Easter Seals to address accessibility concerns and inequities.
5. Conduct an employee engagement survey to assess inclusivity every other year.
6. Assess community mental health resources and address concerns and discrepancies.
7. Consider integrating equity and inclusion goals into the performance management process.
8. Conduct pay equity analysis based on gender, race/ethnicity, age and disability. If issues are identified, address as appropriate and with legal consultation.
9. Consider a pay adjustment to those serving as Recruitment Ambassadors.
10. Continue evaluation of criminal histories at the time of job offer.
11. Consider flexible work schedules for better work-life balance. Criteria should take into account marital status, age, disability status, etc.
12. Consider converting holidays into personal days to be used at employee discretion (with prior approval) to allow employees to celebrate alternative religious holidays.
13. Expand bereavement leave to cover the loss of an unborn child.
14. Evaluate the need for voluntary benefit of a short-term disability policy to address the needs of those with disabilities and/or those having children. Expand parental leave to include surrogacy.
15. Continue to work on Responder Health Program.

Implementation considerations:

1. To ensure the ongoing integration of diversity, equity and inclusion in Human Resources efforts, continue to intentionally include related discussions in day to day work, meetings and programming.
2. Review and revise plan annually by keeping in mind the goals of the City of West Des Moines and Human Resources.
3. Prioritize and implement actions.
4. Approve and follow timeline provided by Schabel Solutions Inc.

Next steps:

1. Prioritize work as a Human Resources team.
2. Finalize timeline with key milestones and deliverables.
3. Assign work to stakeholders/team members.
4. Discuss and establish processes and tools to monitor, measure and report progress. This includes leveraging the diversity and inclusion metrics and inclusivity index provided by Schabel Solutions Inc.



■ WHAT WE'VE ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED

GENERAL ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

1. Blind evaluation of application materials by removing names (reference to gender, race, etc.)

2. Structured interview questions: structured interviews ensure that a list of specific questions are asked in exactly the same way to each candidate. A structured interview consists of a previously agreed upon list of questions that guarantees each candidate interviewing for the same position will be presented with exactly the same questions in exactly the same order as previous candidates. Perhaps most importantly, structured interviews have been shown to be almost twice as effective at predicting an employee's performance once they've been hired.

3. Utilization of an EEOC recruitment list in which all job postings are sent to ensure broad communication of job opportunities for all protected classes.

LGBTQ+

1. The City's medical plan to specifically allow transgender benefits and remove discriminatory health insurance inclusions.

2. Update to the annual HRClassroom training to include LGBTQ+ related issues.

3. Change in the anti-harassment policy to add an example of potential discriminatory practice of an employee repeatedly referring to a transgender employee by the wrong pronoun.

4. Have started to roll out LGBTQ+ 101 training through Onelowa to answer questions about transitioning, use of pronouns, etc.

■ WHAT WE'VE ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED

RACE

1. Determine on a case-by-case basis the criminal history of an applicant as it relates to time of conviction, type of conviction, relationship of conviction to the job, is a repeat offender, etc.

2. Criminal history is only checked on the final candidates for the job. When a conviction is found and may be considered (see #1 above) we enter into an individualized assessment process with the applicant to explain the circumstances to ascertain its work-relatedness.

3. Adopted MLK Day as a City observed holiday for employees in 2020

DISABILITY

1. HR developed a "City Assistant" position in which we can hire a temporary employee that has a disability in order to give them job experience and skills. So far, three individuals have gone through this program.

2. Job descriptions are evaluated to only include the physical/mental requirements needed to perform the essential functions of the job.

RELIGION

1. Offer personal holidays so employees can observe religious holidays that are important to them. This ranges from one to two days per year.