



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

Policy & Services Committee Staff Report

From: Chantal Gaines, Deputy City Manager

Meeting Date: November 14, 2023

Report #: 2309-2054

TITLE

Informational: Race and Equity Quarterly Updates

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Policy and Services Committee accept this informational update on the City's recent race and equity work.

BACKGROUND

As part of the City's ongoing Race and Equity work, the City Council adopted a list of assignments¹ in November 2020 and most of the assignments have been completed. This quarterly update report includes progress on the remaining two November 2020 assignments and other efforts since May 2023 (the time of the last quarterly update report at the Policy and Services Committee).

Previous quarterly updates to the Policy and Services Committee include May 9, 2023² and reports in 2022 (October, June, and February) and 2021 (September, June, and March).

ANALYSIS

Staff continues to actively move forward with the City's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. In addition to the City Council's actions in November 2020, the City has been actively engaged in many community initiatives, conversations, and events related to race, equity, and culture.

¹ Action Minutes: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/city-council-agendas-minutes/2020/november-16-2020-city-council-meeting-action-minutes.pdf>

² May 9, 2023 Update: [Meeting \(primegov.com\)](https://www.primegov.com/meeting/2309-2054)

These updates are provided at the end of this memo. The City issued a blog update in July 2023³ to share information about updates included in the May 2023 update report. Staff will continue sharing information about race and equity efforts through the City's communications channels and update the Race and Equity webpage at www.cityofpaloalto.org/raceandequity.

Updates on Work Assignments

The table below provides the remaining two assignments from the original 17 assignments given by the City Council in November 2020 pertaining to the City's Race and Equity efforts. The status updates provided below outline the most recent action and anticipated upcoming work. The 15 completed assignments are listed in detail in the prior update reports and are summarized in Attachment A. There are further updates below the table, especially for Assignment C and Completed Assignment D (related to mental health response programs).

Assignment	Work Assignment	Status
C	Starting after the full implementation of the Records Management System (RMS) and the first data collection period, direct Staff to resume annual data collection and analysis of police contact data similar to the previous Stop Data reports.	Partially Complete: The Police Department collects stop data demographics as of January 2022 and submits the data to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) per the requirements of the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA). As of Spring 2023, the City has published the RIPA Dashboard , an interactive site with includes the 2022 Palo Alto RIPA data. The Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) Data – City of Palo Alto, CA ⁴ webpage also provides a link to the raw data and other contextual information. The remaining item within this task is to onboard an independent, third-party data analyst to review the Department's 2022 RIPA data. With this being the first year of data and no prior year data comparison, this initial review will be foundational and will help the City organize for future ongoing analysis of this very important data. The agreement should be finalized this calendar year and work will begin.
	Direct Staff, in coordination with the City's overall	Ongoing: Staff is working with Ivy Planning

³ Palo Alto Race and Equity Progress Update: <https://medium.com/paloaltoconnect/palo-alto-race-equity-priorities-progress-update-5dd1f6bb697c>

⁴ <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/papdripa>

Assignment	Work Assignment	Status
L	diversity and inclusion efforts, to conduct a workforce demographic	<p>Group who has conducted focus groups and interviews as part of assessment and roadmap work. The City also hired the first Equity and Inclusion Program Manager who started in late October. His initial portfolio includes carrying forward the City workforce and Board/Commission-focused DEI efforts.</p> <p>Staff also continues to work on a workforce demographic report (as a snapshot in time).</p>

Further details

Update on Alternative Response Mental Health Programs (linked to Completed Assignment D)

North County TRUST (Trusted Response Urgent Support Team) is an alternative mental health response involving a call center and outreach team consisting of a mental health worker, a first aid provider, and a specially trained community resident with first-hand experience with mental health challenges. The City of Palo Alto, together with Mountain View and Los Altos, began a pilot program in late Spring 2023 to augment North County TRUST with outreach and education, case management, and mental health first aid training.

The pilot is made possible due to a \$2M federal grant. This year in North County, TRUST, the augmentation pilot program has made 1,000 community contacts, trained over 75 community members in mental health first aid, dispatched 267 field responses, and provided dedicated case management to 16 individuals. Additionally, the City of Palo Alto contracted with a consultant for the evaluation of the pilot and will be providing a report at the conclusion of the pilot in Fall 2024.

Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT): With the Memorandum of Understanding now signed by both the City of Palo Alto and the County of Santa Clara, the County has begun the recruitment process for clinicians. Knowing this process can take some time, it is anticipated that the first clinician could be hired, trained and in place in early 2024, with a second clinician to follow for continued support of the program.

Other Citywide Race and Equity/Diversity Updates

Upcoming Independent Police Auditor (IPA) Report

The Independent Police Auditor released two regular reports in 2023 and met with the City Council for their biannual study session discussions. The IPA also released a special report requested by the City Council related to Police Recruitment and Retention. The previous reports and City Council discussions with the IPA in 2023 are available online:

- Informational Report of the IPA Special Report on Recruitment and Retention was published on the May 8, 2023⁵ City Council meeting agenda.
- Informational Report of IPA Cases Completed between June – December 2022 was published on the June 5, 2023⁶ City Council meeting agenda.
- Informational Report of IPA Cases Completed between January – June 2023 was published on the September 18, 2023⁷ City Council meeting agenda.
- The IPA study session discussions with the City Council took place on June 12, 2023⁸ and October 16, 2023⁹.

Human Relations Commission

The Human Relations Commission is currently working on a referral from the City Council aimed at gaining insight into the lived experiences of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) in Palo Alto. They created a survey that has been translated into simplified and traditional Chinese. Leading up to and during AANHPI Heritage Month in May, actively reached out to the AANHPI community, including those who live, work, visit, worship, or go to school in Palo Alto, to complete the survey and/or hear their stories. The information collected in the survey will be used in a report back to the City Council. For more information, please go to www.cityofpaloalto.org/AANHPIsurvey or email AANHPI@cityofpaloalto.org.

Theatre

- The Magical Series was developed by the Children's Theatre in partnership with the Magical Bridge Foundation, with the support of the Friends of Palo Alto Children's Theatre. Magical Series offerings are mindful of developmental rather than chronological age groups, adjusted sensory environments, and smaller class and audience participation. There has been great demand for these classes and productions, which experience full rosters and waiting lists. To support increased community access

⁵ Special IPA Report on Recruitment and Retention: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/police-department/accountability/ipa-reports/february-2023-review-of-papd-recruitment-and-hiring.pdf>

⁶ Staff report and IPA report: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/police-department/accountability/ipa-reports/january-2023-independent-police-auditors-report-and-papd-use-of-force-report.pdf>

⁷ Staff report and IPA report: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/police-department/accountability/ipa-reports/june-2023-independent-police-auditors-report-and-papd-use-of-force-report.pdf>

⁸ Council Meeting Video: <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplatId=12536>

⁹ Council Meeting Video: <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplatId=13038>

to the City's Magical Series programs, the theatre is now maintaining a webpage that lists activities in all CSD locations, as well as the Magical Bridge Playground, parks and other South Bay locations. Recent and upcoming activities in the on-going series include:

- The Children's Theatre presented the original fairytale JANE AND THE BEANSTALK with Angels on Stage, a South Bay theatre company for differently abled performers, on September 23-24 in the Playhouse Series. Three of the four actors in JANE were actors with Down's Syndrome, with a fourth actor on the Autism spectrum. The production, written and rehearsed with accommodations designed for each participant, was supported by two Children's Theatre teaching artists, one of whom is a Children's Theatre alumnus and is also an actor with special needs.
- Magical Series Performances of Main Stage Productions, with smaller audiences and modified light and sound cues. Upcoming performances are scheduled for December 7, 2023 (The Velveteen Rabbit), February 8, 2024 (Meerkats – The Musical), and May 9, 2024 (Disney & Pixar's Finding Nemo, Jr.).
- Year-Round Classes that support artistic and social/emotional development, including upcoming Spectrum-Friendly Story Acting and Dance Classes, open to participants of all abilities, as well as participants who need to bring a 1:1 caregiver or aide, and a Musical Therapy Enrichment Program, led by a board-certified Music Therapist.
- The Children's Theatre now offers ASL-interpreted performances at Main Stage and Summer Hot Dog Series productions. ASL interpreters are engaged through the support of the Friends of Palo Alto Children's Theatre. All Main Stage and Summer Hot Dog Series performances now offer a "Read-Along" option, designed for mobile devices and tablets. Captioned activities provide support for the hearing-impaired community, as well as neurodivergent participants who derive a greater depth of understanding and context from a second input stream.
- In the past year, the Children's Theatre worked with the Friends of Palo Alto Children's Theatre to provide more than \$20,000 in theatre field trip transportation grants to Title-1 schools, as well as class and camp scholarships to low-income families.
- With the support of the Friends of the Palo Alto Children's Theatre, the Children's Theatre commissioned new theatrical works supported by community collaborations and cross-cultural exchanges. In May 2023, the Children's Theatre produced an adaptation of the classic Indian folktale, One Grain of Rice, directed by local theatre artist Ish Kaur with choreography by Aparna Seetharaman. Following each performance

of the play, audience members took part in a Holi Color Festival Celebration, as part of a collaboration with a community of South Asian Palo Alto residents.

- In Summer 2023, the Children's Theatre participated in a 5th annual collaboration with the Stanford University Compression Forum, offering paid internships to high school seniors and incoming college freshman. The participants, almost all of whom come from under-represented / under-served backgrounds, took part in a research project that explored the practical and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in art.

Art Center

The Art Center continues to provide free Project Look school tours and transportation to K-5 students in East Palo Alto through the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation and also free access to our Cultural Kaleidoscope artists-in-the-schools program. The Art Center also continues its monthly hands-on artmaking sessions for low-income Palo Alto seniors through monthly sessions at Stevenson House and Alta Housing funded through the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation.

Public Art

The PAC allocated funds for a new call for artists for the next residency at the October 19 meeting, and that call should be going out in the next month.

Library

- Adults:
 - Weekly ESL Conversation Group meets virtually every week to discuss a different topic in English.
 - Weekly Tai Chi Program
 - June:
 - Stay Woke Book Club: Read and discussed *Calling for a Blanket Dance*
 - UNAFF Documentary Viewing of *A Decent Home*
 - A Life in Color: Artist talk with Indian abstract artist, Chandrika Marla
 - Documentary Screening of *Take this Hammer*, for Juneteenth
- Kids:
 - June: Make an Alebrije! (Craft program with multicultural artists on making Mexican spirit animals)
 - July: Joint Author Event with Nicole Chen and Margaret Chiu Greanias
- Teens:

- July: Two Author Events with Jane Kuo and Kara H.L. Chen
- Pride: Two Pride Month Storytime & Crafts at the JMZ
- Summer Reading for a Cause 2024: Share Your Story
 - This summer's inclusive theme provided a wonderful opportunity for participants to share their stories in various ways, as part of our traditional reading program. We changed the program name to "Summer Reading for a Cause," in order to continue in our altruistic program that we started in 2022. We challenged our community to read/listen to 20,000 books from June 1 to August 1, so that we can donate \$2500 to [Foundation for a College Education](#), a local non-profit that provides mentoring and tutoring for first-generation, low-income students of color, in order to increase their attendance and graduation from a four-year college or university. This summer, we had 2,036 participants read/listen to 24,721 books. We provided 188 programs for 7,700 attendees from June 1 to August 31.
- Celebrating Cultures:
 - Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month:
 - September 15: Bilingual Family Storytime: Celebrate Latinx & Hispanic Heritage Month!
 - September 20: Button Making Pop-up for Teens: Celebrate Latinx Heritage Month!
 - September 23: Family Storytime: Celebrate Latinx & Hispanic Heritage Month!
 - September 24: Zumba for All Ages!
 - October 5: Author Talk with Poet Antonio Lopez, East Palo Alto Vice Mayor
 - October 14: Zumba for All Ages!
 - Librarians also wrote up blog posts and book lists

Upcoming initiatives for all ages:

- Native American Heritage Month:
 - November 4: Family Storytime: Celebrate Native American Heritage Month!
 - November 7: Family Storytime: Celebrate Native American Heritage Month!
 - November 14: Brown Bag Book Club reading *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich
 - November 15: Button Making Pop-up for Teens: Celebrate Native American Heritage Month!
- Diwali (November 12):
 - November 8: Little Ones Storytime: Celebrate Diwali!
 - November 10: Family Storytime: Celebrate Diwali!

- November 19: Festival of Lights: A Diwali Celebration

Fiscal/ Resource Impact

The work described within this report is being accomplished within current budgets unless otherwise noted.

Stakeholder Engagement

Community engagement is an integral part of Palo Alto's race and equity work. Engaging the community at large to provide feedback for the City's Race and Equity strategy has been a priority throughout this process as shown in the Framework. The City continues to engage the community through a series of Race and Equity conversations. Updates on the City's ongoing efforts can be found on the Race and Equity webpage on the City website (www.cityofpaloalto.org/raceandequity). Staff is also planning an updated Community blog with the information contained within this report. The blog will be posted on the City's Medium page at: <https://medium.com/paloaltoconnect>.

Environmental Review

Not a project.

Attachment

Attachment A – R&E Assignments Completed as of the November 2023 Quarterly Report