City of Savage

RACE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION
[REDI] REPORT

CITY OF
SAVAGE
MINNESOTA

2022

REPORT OUTLINE

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Linda Garrett-Johnson, The Word Applied, Inc.

Together, we create the community we want to see.

To be successful, race equity work must be collaborative and community-wide. There is power in the voices of our residents, and this REDI Report was developed with broad community involvement to ensure that together, we create the community we want to see.

The City of Savage extends its deepest gratitude to the community members who volunteered to serve on the Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force. The REDI Task Force is a dedicated group of diverse residents who came together for a common goal, to improve racial equity in our community and make it a welcoming, safe community for all. We thank you for your invaluable contribution. We could not do this work without you.

Thank you to the community members who shared their lived experiences with us in the harvesting sessions. Your honesty and willingness to share your unique perspectives helped inform and legitimize our goals and recommendations.

We also thank the City Council and City staff who participated in the REDI Task Force and the process. You challenged us to be bold in our ideas and forward-thinking. We look forward to working together to implement the recommendations to make Savage a more equitable and inclusive community.

Lastly, we would like to thank Linda Garrett-Johnson and The Word Applied, Inc. for their close partnership throughout this initiative. Linda's expertise and guidance were crucial to the success of this project.

DEFINITIONS

BIPOC is an acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Disparity is a noticeable difference in a social or economic condition considered unfairly unequal.

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. Though the definition of diversity can be broad, for purposes of this assessment, we focused on racial and ethnic diversity.

Equality is when people are provided the exact same resources and opportunities, despite circumstances.

Equity is everyone has the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. It recognizes that each person has different circumstances to reach an equal outcome.

Inclusion involves authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision-making/policymaking in a way that shares power.

Racial equity means closing the gap so that race does not predict one's success while improving outcomes for all.

REDI is an acronym used by the City of Savage to stand for race, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City's race equity efforts began in earnest in 2019 when the City of Savage hosted three Community Conversations on Race. As a result of this community engagement, the City Council committed to being a leader in racial equity and inclusion to create a community where all residents feel welcome, safe, and connected. We recognize that welcoming people with different perspectives and backgrounds makes our entire community better.

In July 2021, the Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force was created to assist the City in developing recommendations on policies, practices, and strategies that would identify, address, and eliminate racial disparities. To help inform the recommendations, over the last 14 months, the REDI Task Force engaged with key external and internal stakeholders, including residents, elected officials, and city staff. In addition, the REDI Task Force used collective harvesting sessions to learn about the lived experiences of specific groups of individuals living in the City of Savage. The task force also reviewed best practices of other communities and met with key leadership staff to better understand current practices and processes. Through this collection of data, input, and feedback, the task force narrowed in and built consensus for recommendations categorized into five themes:

1. Community Experience
2. Sense of Safety
3. Diverse Representation at all levels of the City
4. Connection to Community
5. Support to BIPOC Businesses

We want to acknowledge that this report and recommendations are just the beginning of a long-term commitment to making the City of Savage a welcoming community for all. To support the successful implementation of this racial equity plan, it is crucial that those most impacted by structural racial inequity must be meaningfully involved. To ensure they have a seat at the table, the REDI Task Force recommends establishing a Community Equity Commission (CEC) comprised of BIPOC and marginalized residents who will advise, evaluate and engage with the City Council on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues in our community.
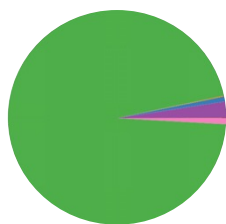
INTRODUCTION

City of Savage Overview

The City of Savage is an outer-ring suburb of the Twin Cities located in Scott County. It sits in the middle of Shakopee, Burnsville, and Prior Lake, with the Minnesota River comprising the community's northern border. Savage is recognized as a place where families can live well for less and enjoy top schools, low crime, quality parks and recreational facilities, and reasonable commutes. According to the 2022 Community Survey, 94% of residents agree Savage is a great place to live.
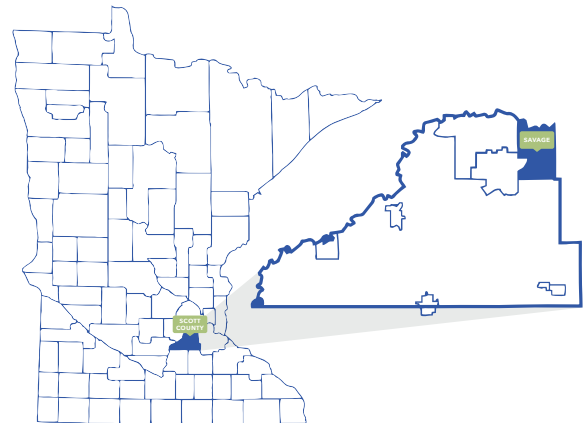
Demographics

Based on the 2020 Census[1], Savage is home to 32,245 residents and is growing in diversity. In 1990, the racial makeup of Savage was over 96% White. Today, the White proportion of the population has declined to 73%, and BIPOC residents make up 23% of our 18+ and older population and 38% of the population under age 18.

Population by Race and Ethnicity in Savage

1990	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**
96% White	90% White	81% White	73% White
4% BIPOC	10% BIPOC	19% BIPOC	27% BIPOC

[1] https://stats.metc.state.mn.us/profile/detail.aspx?c=02396543
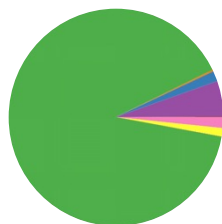
And if we think our communities are changing in diversity, our schools are also becoming more racially diverse. Three school districts service Savage, and all are growing in diversity. No matter which district you live in, students in Savage will encounter, learn and play with a very diverse population.

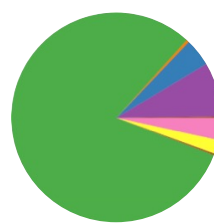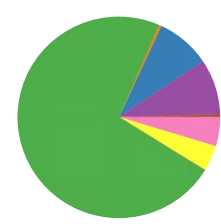| District	Student Diversity [2]	Languages Represented in District [2]
Burnsville-Eagan-Savage	69% of students identify as BIPOC	98 different languages
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools	25% of students identify as BIPOC	Over 60 languages
Shakopee School District	48% of students identify as BIPOC	71 different languages

City Structure

The City of Savage is a Statutory "Plan A" form of government. This means a city administrator is appointed by a five-member City Council and oversees all City of Savage operations.

City Council

Savage residents are represented by the mayor, who is elected every four years, and four council members who each serve four-year terms. The mayor and each Council member have one vote apiece.

The Council is responsible for setting policy that guides the development and provision of programs and services provided to the community. The Council also appoints members to four advisory commissions:

- Advisory Communications Commission (ACC)
- Economic Development Commission (EDC)
- Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission (PRNRC)
- Planning Commissions (PC)

The City of Savage is driven by a mission, vision, and set of principles that guide decisions and operations[3].

Savage City Council, left to right: Councilmembers Bob Coughlen, Matt Johnson, Mayor Janet Williams, City Administrator Brad Larson, and Councilmembers Christine Kelly, and Gene Abbott.

Equity Statement: The City of Savage is committed to welcoming all people - regardless of their race, age, sexual preference, gender identity, or ability - to foster a sense of belonging and opportunity across our community and among our staff.

Vision: Savage is an inclusive community for all ages and stages of life. A safe, welcoming place with abundant natural amenities. We honor our unique history while simultaneously planning our growth and the creation of a dynamic, full-service city.

Mission: Our mission is to maintain and enhance a high quality of life in the City. We do this through the delivery of reliable, resilient, cost-effective services and thoughtfully planned growth.

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[2] As noted 8/23/22 by PLSAS Equity and Inclusion staff
[3] https://www.cityofsavage.com/government/city-goals

Guiding Principles:

- **Public Safety -** Savage will maintain and promote a high level of public safety to meet the demands of a changing community.

- **Natural Resources & Recreation -** Savage will preserve and enhance our natural amenities and maximize recreational opportunities.

- **City Services -** Savage will provide high-quality, innovative City services to meet changing needs.

- **Community Identity -** Savage will foster a pride of place that capitalizes on our community's unique qualities and history.

- **Transportation & Transit -** Savage will facilitate the development of efficient and effective transportation systems that provide for both local and regional needs.

- **Planning & Development -** Savage will facilitate thoughtfully planned, balanced and diverse development.

City Staff

The City Administrator carries out the policies set by the City Council and other day-to-day operations of the city government. Savage has seven departments of services. Each department is managed by a department director who reports to the City Administrator. Below is the City of Savage organizational chart, illustrating the reporting structure of city leaders and departments.
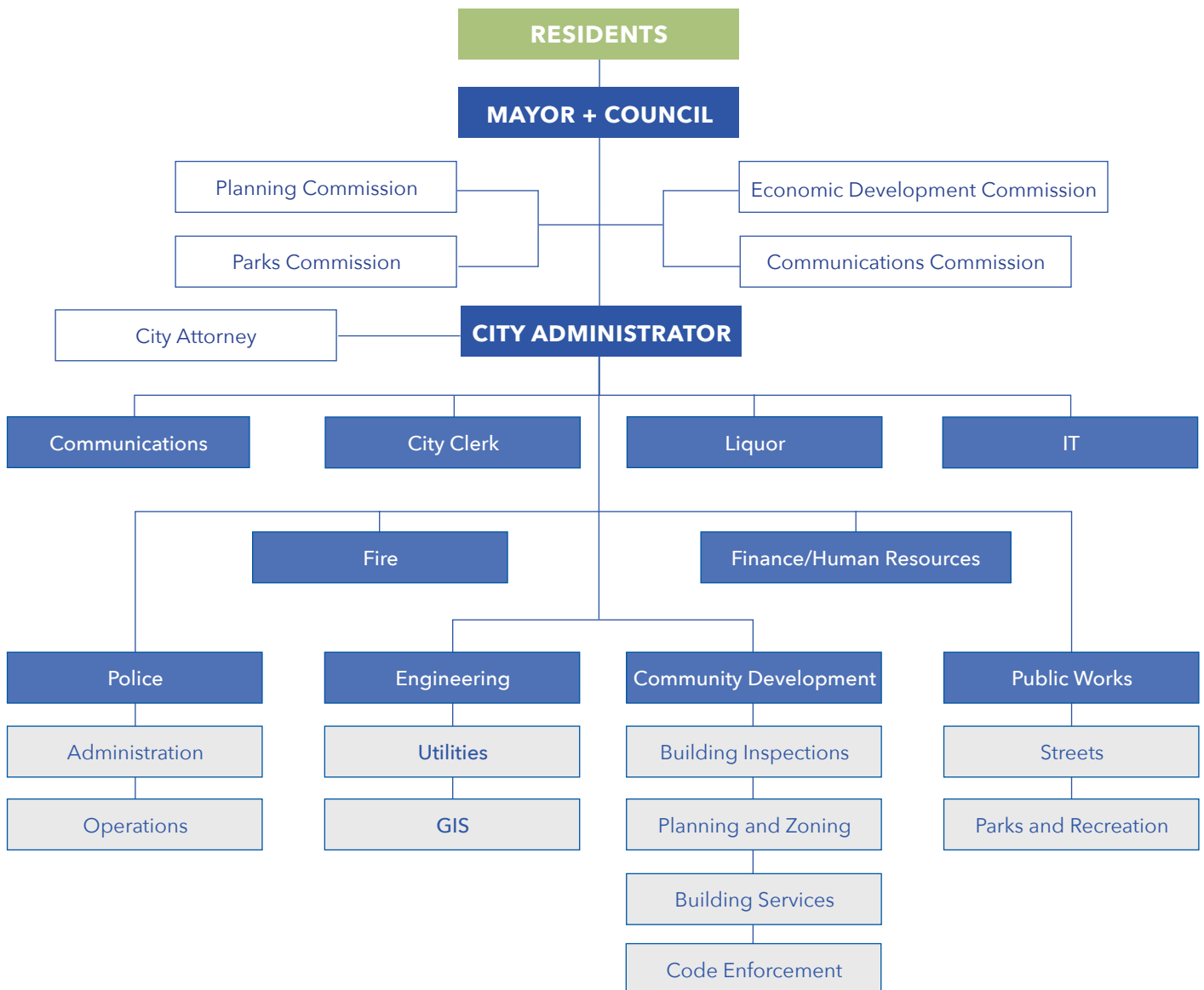
Approximately 180 full and part-time employees work at the City of Savage. In addition, throughout the year, as many as 40 seasonal employees are added to assist with maintenance and recreation programming.

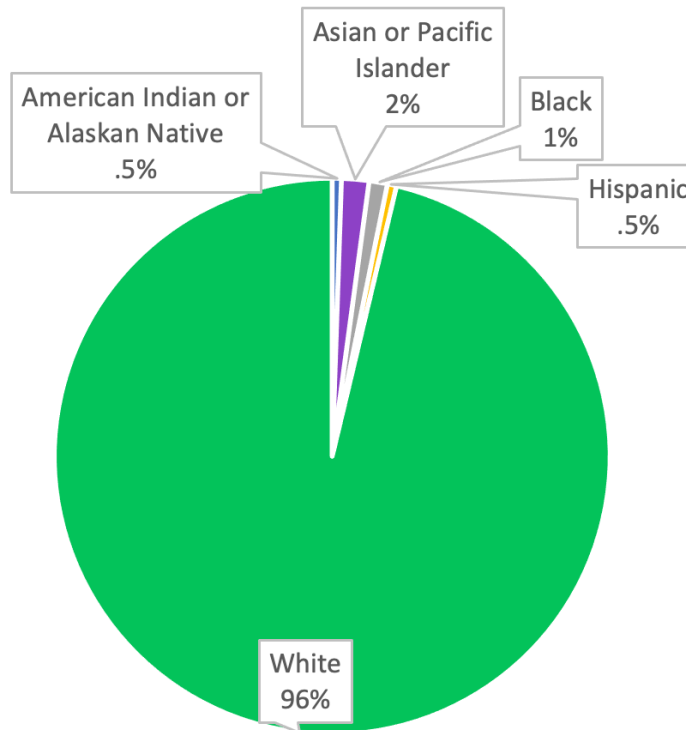| City of Savage Employees*	
Full-time staff	125
Part-time staff	53
Total	**178**

* Number fluctuates throughout the year

Of the 180 full and part-time employees, only **4% (or seven individuals) are people of color**.

2022 – City Staff
96% White
4% BIPOC

American Indian or Alaskan Native .5%

Asian or Pacific Islander 2%

Black 1%

Hispanic .5%

White 96%

Advancing Racial Equity

The City's race equity efforts began in earnest in 2019 after Police Chief Seurer attended a Community Conversation on Race in Burnsville. The Chief believed this would be a positive way to start a dialog with residents in Savage. As a result, between September 2019 and August 2020, Savage Police and the City of Savage hosted three Community Conversations on Race. The goal was to bring police, elected officials, community leaders, families, students, educators, faith community, and local businesses together to share experiences on how race plays out in our community and to generate ideas for steps we can take as individuals, groups, and as a whole community to face the challenge of race-related issues.

As a result of the Community Conversations, the City Council committed to being a leader in racial equity and inclusion to create a community where all residents feel welcome, safe, and connected. In July 2021, the City Council approved a resolution to charter a special Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force to assist the City in developing recommendations on policies, practices, and strategies that would identify, address, and eliminate racial disparities.

To authentically engage underrepresented racial and ethnic communities in this process, the REDI Task Force looked for members who represent the voices of those directly impacted by racial disparities, who are residents of Savage or work in Savage, and who had expertise or a background in race equity work. The key objectives of the REDI Task Force were to:

- Gain an understanding of community views and expectations on race equity.
- Share and explore existing DEI efforts and activities already occurring in Savage.
- Review best practices in other communities.
- Provide opportunities for public review and input on the action plan.
- Present the race equity action plan and recommendations to the City Council.

The **primary result** was the development of a set of **recommendations** containing:

- **Goals:** What do we want to obtain
- **Recommendations:** How do we get to the goal
- **Outcomes:** What changes by reaching the goal
- **Performance Measures:** How do we measure progress

The Word Applied, Inc.

The City of Savage released a request for proposal for organizations interested in supporting the City of Savage race equity initiative. All submissions were reviewed by a review team comprised of City leadership. The review team recommended Linda Garrett-Johnson, CEO/Principal Consultant of The Word Applied, Inc., and approved a contract for service. The Word Applied, Inc. is a minority-owned business whose mission is anchored in building community through authentic engagement. To this end, the goal is to reach, build trust and empower for good unengaged, or marginalized communities of people through consultation work with organizations. Linda Garrett-Johnson is a Certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt consultant with a background in Human-Centered Design and the Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter techniques. Garrett-Johnson has worked with other municipalities, including the City of Brooklyn Center, the State of Minnesota, the Apple Valley Police Department, and the MN Department of Human Services.

To help inform the recommendations included in this report, the REDI Task Force wanted to learn more about the lived experiences of specific groups of individuals living in the City of Savage.

The REDI Task Force used the Collective Story Harvesting model of hosting conversations within the community for this community engagement process. Collective Story Harvesting can be a powerful tool that brings insights, innovations, and a-ha's that exist beneath the surface of our stories. Harvesting sessions were offered as one-on-one individual phone interviews, virtual meetings, or small in-person group gatherings to maximize participation. All sessions followed the same process of:

- The facilitator asked an initial "prompting" question to start the storytelling conversation.
- Additional questions were asked to build on and gather more collective storytelling responses.
- All participants were asked the same set of questions.
- Once completed, key themes from each group were summarized.

Task Force members, city staff, and the REDI Task Force Consultant designed an outreach plan to invite participants to the Collective Story Harvesting sessions. The primary outreach strategies included:

- Personal outreach by REDI Task Force members
- Personal outreach by city staff
- Outreach to culture groups with existing connections
- Outreach through city social media platforms

Collective Harvest Session Summary

Identified groups	Input Setting	Size	Ethnicity
BIPOC Households	Virtual	6	African
Non-BIPOC Households	Small in-person gathering	11	White
Immigrant Community	Individual phone interviews	4	African and Latino
BIPOC Businesses	Individual phone interviews	2	African and Asian
Non-BIPOC Businesses	Individual phone interviews	6	White
		Total: 29	

While sample sizes for the harvest sessions were relatively small, research suggests that a sample size of two or three focus groups, small in size, will likely capture at least 80% of themes on a topic. Also, smaller focus groups can allow for more in-depth conversations.[4]

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[4] https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1525822X16639015

BIPOC and Non-BIPOC Households

The REDI Task Force was interested in knowing if our BIPOC residents living in Savage have a different lived experience than non-BIPOC residents. This information helps identify implicit bias and racial disparities in our community.

Collective Harvest Session Theme Comparisons

BIPOC Households	Non-BIPOC Households
• **Lack of a sense of belonging:** They feel like they are an anomaly (different from what is the norm) in the Savage community. As a result, they feel isolated from the community and each other; their children often feel the same way.	• **Feel accepted and welcomed:** They feel welcomed, accepted, and part of the community.
• **Lack of safety:** Lack of a feeling of safety or support by the City or local police, specifically when dealing with racial situations.	• **No direct experience with racism:** Most had not experienced, seen, or witnessed racism. Some do not know what racism would look like. However, one person who is in an interracial relationship has experienced racism.
• **Want BIPOC representation at all levels**: The BIPOC community wants to see BIPOC representation at all levels (e.g., City Administration, Council, Commissions, Committees, etc.). They feel this is an important element that is missing in the City.	• **Acknowledged the lack of inclusion:** They recognize the need for the City to feel more inclusive to a broader, diverse group of people (e.g., older adults and the BIPOC community).
• **Amenities and events that foster relationships:** They would like to see community spaces (e.g., a community center) with affordable cultural events/activities that foster relationships and better resident interactions.	• **Amenities that appeal to a broader audience:** See the need for a community center that appeals to youth, seniors, BIPOC community and offers social activities and amenities like a public pool.
• **Lack of cultural services within the City:** BIPOC residents are leaving Savage to find cultural food and services (e.g., hair care products, beauty shops, markets, etc.) because they don't exist in Savage.	• **Feel city services are responsive to their needs:** It feels like the police and fire departments respond promptly (fast).

> " When seeing other people/families that look like you gets you excited, there is the realization that you don't have a real sense of belonging in the community.
> - A BIPOC resident living in Savage

BIPOC Business Owners – Non-BIPOC Business Owners

The REDI Task Force was interested in knowing if starting/running a business in Savage was different for BIPOC and Non-BIPOC business owners. This information helps identify policies, practices, or processes that need to be addressed.

Collective Harvest Session Theme Comparisons

BIPOC Businesses	Non-BIPOC Businesses
• **Expanding customer reach.** Some businesses started to provide BIPOC services to an existing customer base willing to travel into Savage for services.	• **Working where you live, small-town feel.** Several mentioned the small town, local business feel, and the desire to work where they live that motivated them to open a business in Savage.
• **Providing culturally-specific services.** Recognized Savage is a growing city, but saw BIPOC Savage residents leaving to go to other communities for culturally-specific services.	• **Maximizing long-term relationships.** Most spoke of building long-term relationships with city leaders, which they maximized to start their business in the City.
• **Complicated, financially expensive process.** The process is complex, lacks transparency, and requires patience. Multiple fees are incredibly high. No financing options are available for the permitting, licensing, and inspection processes which are cost prohibitive.	• **Homebased versus brick-and-mortar.** Homebased businesses are treated differently from traditional brick-and-mortar businesses with a storefront or building.
• **No base of support.** The BIPOC owners have no network of support in the City. They would like local small business networking meetings for BIPOC businesses where they can get to know each other, share resources, and get answers to frequently asked questions.	• **Where do you start?** For some, there was an apparent lack of understanding of how and where to start and open a business.
• **PPE funds were not accessible.** They found the PPE process to be complicated. When they tried to access funds, they were denied.	• **Support through connections.** Most made connections with other business owners; however, those connections are stronger in Prior Lake versus Savage.
	• **PPE funds were easily accessible.** They found the PPE process to be simple and accessible. However, they did not always access funds because they did not need them.

> " It requires many years of planning and saving money. Financially it was difficult, and there were no financing options.
>
> *- BIPOC business owner*

> " I had customers who could travel from Burnsville to Savage.
>
> *- BIPOC business owner*

> " I have been in business for 13+ years. So I had to get to know the City and the city leaders.
>
> *- Non-BIPOC business owner*

Immigrant Community

The REDI Task Force was interested in knowing what challenges immigrant families experience when moving into the Savage community. Two of our immigrant communities identified the following themes:

Collective Harvest Session Theme Comparisons

Somali (African)	Latinx
• **Language Support.** Offer interpreter or translation support to help them communicate with others in the community, find amenities within the city (e.g., stores, website, etc.), and read and clearly understand documents and processes.	• **More respectful/welcoming community.** They don't feel respected or welcomed in the community because of their skin color and the language they speak.
• **Safe, quality housing options in a good school district.** Want housing in safe neighborhoods with a quality partnership with the school district.	• **Better street signage to increase safety.** They would like to see better street signage in some areas to improve pedestrian safety.
• **More information about the city happenings.** Provide information about events and activities (e.g., what is happening and available in the City).	• **Language Support.** Offer interpreter and/or translation support. They would like to experience more people speaking their language, working in city services, etc.
• **Feel disconnected.** There is not much of a relationship between the families and the City. They would like to experience more outreach to their community (and their families) from the City (e.g., holding an open house, coming to their community to speak to them).	• **More opportunities for youth.** Summer job opportunities and activities for youth to keep them active, but where they feel a part and welcomed.
• **More amenities.** They would like to see more large playgrounds with sensory options, a splash pad, an aquatic center, etc.	
• **Outreach to them.** Phone calls, email, and community meetings are good ways to reach out to them.	

> " Language support and places for me to shop. I am not able to communicate with neighbors.
> *- Somali resident*

> " More information about what happens in our City.
> *- Somali resident*

> " For the community to be more welcoming no matter our skin color or language.
> *- Latinx resident*

City Staff Survey and Results

As an action step from the Savage Community Conversations on Race, the City of Savage joined a local government alliance for staff resources to advance race equity. The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) is a national network of training, toolkits, and resource library for local government staff. Staff used the resources provided to internally prioritize and advance the City's racial equity work.

City staff engagement and connection to the City's racial equity work are important for success. Therefore, in early 2021, the City of Savage collaborated with GARE to survey Savage employees on racial equity. The purpose of the survey was to assess racial equity knowledge, skills, and experiences among employees to inform future internal action steps toward advancing racial equity in the City. Below is a **summary of the results and respondents**.

Results
- A majority of respondents agreed they thought it was valuable to examine and discuss the impacts of race and felt comfortable talking about race
- A majority also agreed they had a basic understanding of concepts related to racial equity
- While respondents provided a favorable assessment of departmental and organization-wide efforts, the majority of perspectives were derived from White, non-LatinX respondents
- It was recommended that there be a separate exploration of perspectives from employees of color

Respondents
- Survey sent to **150** staff, **91** responded
- **82** questionnaires met the completion threshold, resulting in a **54.7%** effective response rate
- Of the respondents who specified their gender, about six in ten **(61.5%)** identified as male
- Almost three-quarters **(76.8%)** specified their race and ethnicity
  - o Of those, nearly all (96.8 %) identified as White, non-LatinX
  - o The remainder (3.2%) identified as Multiracial

City Leadership Panel Discussion and Key Learnings

In addition to all staff engagement in the GARE survey, the REDI Task Force invited key leadership staff for a panel discussion. On June 14, 2022, five leaders of city departments attended the REDI Task Force meeting. At that meeting, each leader provided the Task Force members with the following information:

- Their department's areas of responsibility
- How their department is focused on racial equity and diversity
- Highlights of current department policies or initiatives

Below are **key learnings** from the leadership panel.
- The City has made racial equity a top priority
- Equity training is required for all staff annually
- There is specific equity training for positions such as police and seasonal staff that work with the public directly
- Low staff turnover in positions contributes to the challenge of proactively recruiting a diverse staff
- When there is an open position, the pool of candidates has not been diverse
- The recruitment process is aided by a software hiring tool
- There are some informal partnerships between the City and school districts, such as seasonal hiring recruitment and public safety explorer programs

Other City Best Practices

Other communities in Minnesota have engaged in similar racial equity efforts. The Task Force reviewed best practices from:

- The City of Bloomington Racial Equity Business Plan 2020[5]
- The City of Eden Prairie Race Equity Report 2021[6]
- The City of Edina Race & Equity Task Force Report 2018[7]
- The City of Northfield Racial Equity Action Plan 2020[8]
- The City of Roseville Strategic Racial Equity Action Plan 2021[9]

On December 14, 2021, the Racial Equity Coordinator from the City of Bloomington attended the REDI Task Force meeting. The Racial Equity Coordinator provided the Task Force members with the following information:

- The City of Bloomington's changing demographics
- The impetus of the City of Bloomington's racial equity work
- What racial equity work the City of Bloomington is currently involved in
- Lessons learned from the City of Bloomington's work

Below are **key learnings** from the City of Bloomington guest speaker.

- How the community was involved in racial equity work through an advisory committee and partnerships with community groups
- Approaching racial equity with a public health lens
- How faith communities were involved in racial equity work through a monthly meeting
- The importance of relationship building
- Focus on outcomes and measures of success

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[5]https://www.bloomingtonmn.gov/equity/racial-equity-and-inclusion
[6]edenprairie.org/RaceEquityReport
[7]https://www.edinamn.gov/1379/Race-Equity
[8]https://www.northfieldmn.gov/1372/Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion
[9]https://www.cityofroseville.com/3480/Racial-Equity-and-Inclusion

LESSONS LEARNED

The City of Savage has rarely used a community task force to establish recommendations on special topics. The REDI Task Force involved residents, elected officials, staff, and partners in developing recommendations for over a year. There were successes, challenges, and improvements noticed. These lessons learned were documented for future use.

What went well?
- Involving those most directly impacted by racial disparities on the task force and in the work.
- Developing relationships between the REDI Task Force members.
- Task Force members assisting in community engagement.
- Highlighting and utilizing ethnic restaurants within Savage to provide food for Task Force meetings.
- Engaging with individuals from the African, Latinx, and White communities where the Task Force had direct connections with these communities.
- The adaptability of the Task Force to address current events in the community.

What could be improved?
- The City should gather data based on race and ethnicity to the extent possible.
- Making time to build relationships with local BIPOC communities, specifically with the African American, Native American, Asian American, and immigrant communities.
- Identifying cultural networks where the BIPOC communities get their information.
- Conduct community engagement with a clear level of participation identified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the community feedback gathered throughout the initiative, the REDI Task Force has generated a list of recommendations and suggested actions for consideration by City Council and staff. This report is a working document intended to guide the City's racial equity work in the near future. New recommendations and actions will be added as needed. We look at this plan as just the beginning of our work.

Goal One: Community Experience

The vision of the City of Savage is to be an inclusive community for all. The degree to which Savage residents feel connected to the community involves feelings, beliefs, and expectations that they belong; there is a place for them, and they feel embraced and celebrated.

Recommendations:
1. Research options to invest and implement ongoing community engagement, e.g., a community engagement liaison
2. Expand City communications strategy (e.g., translation services, etc.) so it is reflective of the diversity within the community
3. Provide residents and businesses who are new to the City with welcome information

Outcomes:
1. BIPOC community feels represented and connected to the City
2. All residents and businesses new to the City are immediately welcomed and connected

Example of Performance Measures:
1. % of BIPOC residents feel a sense of belonging to the community
2. % of new residents and businesses receive welcome information

Goal Two: Sense of Safety

Community safety is achieved by building trust, facilitating positive interactions, and fostering understanding between public safety and communities of color, historically underrepresented in the community.

Recommendations:
1. Promote partnerships, transparency, and trust with the BIPOC community through regular public safety gatherings like the creation of block captains, community ambassadors, or adopt-a-cop
2. Police Department creates a community mental health resource in collaboration with the BIPOC community
3. Police Department researches and captures data on community safety and disaggregates the data by race and ethnicity
4. Police Department provides education on safety procedures to the community in collaboration with the BIPOC community.

Outcomes:
1. Relationships are built with the BIPOC community and strengthened with the community in general
2. Shared expectations for community safety are developed

Example of Performance Measures:
1. % of BIPOC residents express a sense of safety in the community

Goal Three: There is diverse representation at all levels of the City of Savage

Our community is home to people from all walks of life. Therefore, city leaders, commissioners, and a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves are more likely to understand the needs of the community.

Recommendations:
1. Expand efforts and processes to recruit persons from communities of color for staff positions at all levels and to serve as elected officials, commissioners, and committee members
2. Build partnerships to create diverse pipelines of candidates (e.g., intern opportunities targeted to BIPOC youth)
3. Develop specific diversity and inclusion goals for city departments
4. Gather human resource data by race/ethnicity
5. Evaluate the City's calendar and processes to reflect multi-cultural holidays
6. Host cultural competency training for employees annually

Outcomes:
1. A more diverse candidate pool for hiring, commissions, and committees
2. Staff and appointed officials are reflective of the community at large
3. Employees use cultural competency training to provide better customer service
4. Acknowledge and celebrate the history/background of all who live in the City.

Example of Performance Measures:
1. % of employment applications will be from the BIPOC community
2. % of new hires will be from the BIPOC community
3. % of appointments to commissions and committees will be from the BIPOC community
4. Customer service experiences improve by % with increased satisfaction among the BIPOC community

Goal Four: Connection to community

When our BIPOC residents see themselves reflected in our community, it reassures them that they matter and that this community supports them and helps them thrive.

Recommendations:
1. Connect and engage with school districts, community organizations, faith communities, and BIPOC leaders to deepen connections with communities of color (e.g., cultural celebrations)
2. Apply a racial equity lens to projects and procedures implemented by the City
3. Continuously evaluate how city activities and programs are planned and promoted to attract more BIPOC residents
4. Acknowledge and celebrate various cultural and ethnic events and incorporate them into the community. (e.g., proclamations)

Outcomes:
1. Increase participation of BIPOC residents in community events, programs, activities, and facilities
2. Placemaking and public art projects are representative of different cultures

Example of Performance Measures:
1. # of BIPOC participants at community events, programs, and activities will increase by %
2. % of BIPOC residents who feel a sense of belonging to the community will increase by %

Goal Five: The City of Savage provides meaningful support to BIPOC businesses

Provide ongoing resources to BIPOC-owned businesses to help them thrive in Savage and overcome the unique barriers they may face as a BIPOC business.

Recommendations:
1. Create a way to understand BIPOC business challenges and develop workable solutions together
2. Create awareness of resources on topics (e.g., business setup, accessing financial resources, small business management) targeting BIPOC owners
3. Evaluate purchasing and contracting policies to address equity.

Outcomes:
1. The number of BIPOC businesses and success rate increases

Example of Performance Measures:
1. # of BIPOC businesses in Savage increase by %
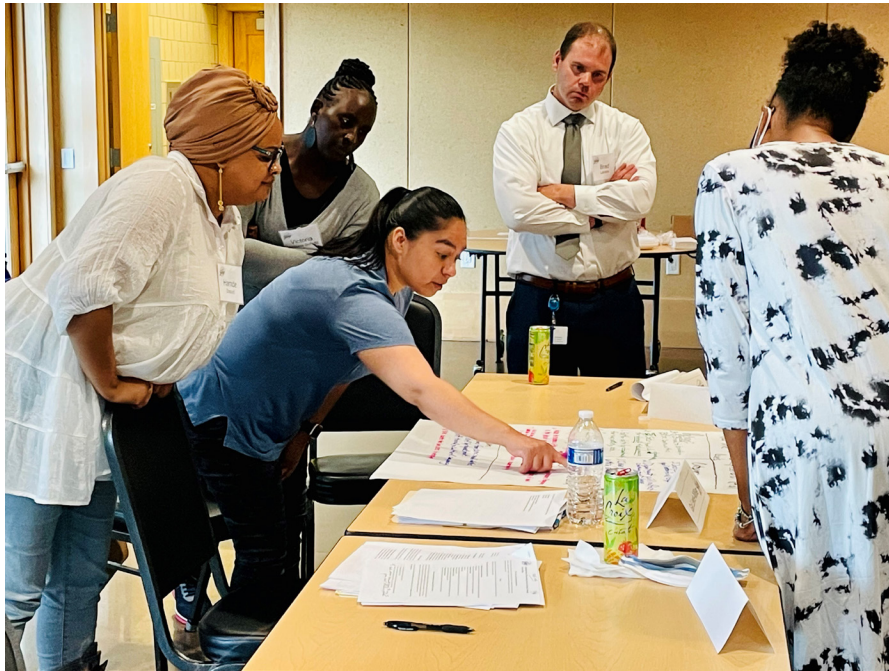
NEXT STEPS

The REDI Task Force is a one-time advisory body approved by the City Council to produce a report and recommendations on how to address racial disparities in our community. The report will be presented to the City Council on November 7, 2022.

Measures of Success

The Task Force determined four key areas for success:

- Clearly defined goals that reflect community needs.
- Framework for how the recommendations can be integrated, including timely follow-up.
- Identify systems that need to be realigned while removing barriers to equity.
- The process provides personal growth to REDI Task Force Members and allows Task Force Members to promote growth in others.

Implementation Plan

Following the presentation of the final report to the City Council, the report will be sent to City staff for implementation. The REDI Task Force suggests establishing **accountability** to meet the REDI Task Force recommendations by:

- Staff will create an implementation plan, including action steps, timelines, and performance measures for the prioritized work.
- Establish a commission on equity to provide ongoing community input
- Produce a report on the progress of the implementation plan at least quarterly to the equity commission

Community Equity Commission Recommendation

Based on input from the September 13, 2022 REDI Task Force Meeting, the REDI Task Force recommends the following for an ongoing equity commission. This recommendation will be brought separately to City Council in November 2022. Establishing a commission would require a City Code change and City Council approval.

Name	Community Equity Commission (CEC)
Purpose	Advise the City Council on diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies.
Members/ Composition	7 members, 2 non-voting alternates - Up to 2 student voting members - Appointed by the City Council - Serve without compensation - Shall be residents and/or operate a business or service within the City - Intentionally reflect the racial/ethnic diversity of the City as much as possible while also including age, gender, faith, gender identity and expression, and profession. This commission will elevate the voices of the marginalized.
Terms	3-year terms 9-year term limit 1-year term for student members

Powers/Duties	Advise • Advise on diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies that strengthen relationships among historically underrepresented populations in local government, including but not limited to ethnicity, race, age, gender, faith, sexual orientation, or nationality. Evaluate • Review city practices, policies, or procedures to provide recommendations using an equity lens. • Provide oversight to the implementation plan from the REDI Task Force report. Engage • Promote participation of underrepresented communities in the City. • Assist city staff with public education and outreach activities that promote equity, inclusion, and engagement. • Advise on events or opportunities to promote understanding that accepts, celebrates, and appreciates diversity in the community.

As this work develops and expands, staff will identify and request additional resources as needed.

REDI Task Force Charter

Purpose
Convene a Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Task Force with community members with expertise to produce a race equity action plan for the City of Savage.

Objective
With assistance from a facilitating consultant, the Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force is directed to conduct a thorough review of City policies, services, and ordinances to identify recommended changes. The Task Force will provide updates to City Council and will report recommendations in the form of an action plan, including ways in which success will be measured toward becoming a more inclusive and responsive community.

The key objectives of the REDI Task Force are:
- Gain an understanding of community views and expectations on race equity using the input from participants who attended the previous community conversations on race events.
- Share and explore existing DEI efforts and activities already occurring in Savage.
- Review best practices in other communities.
- Identify short and long-term goals and potential community partners.
- Develop an action plan that includes outcomes and actions that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely.
- Provide opportunities for public review and input on the action plan.
- Present the race equity action plan and recommendations to the City Council.

Timeline
September 2021 through September 2022. This temporary task force will dissolve when the action report is complete and presented to City Council or when dissolved or extended by the City Council.

Key Dates
July 6, 2021	Council authorizes the establishment of the REDI Task Force
August 16, 2021	City Council appoints REDI Task Force members
December 13, 2021	Task Force presents initial findings report for Council (work session)
September 19, 2022	Task Force presents a final strategy to Council
By December 31, 2022	Council will adopt the final strategy

Meetings
The Task Force will establish their schedule, including meeting times and dates as needed to complete the work.
- Conclusion of work must fall into the indicated timeline
- Meetings are public
- It is likely the Task Force will meet early afternoons/evenings on weeknights

Level of Authority

City Council
- The Council conducts the establishment and appointments of a City Council Task Force.
- The Council has the authority to appoint/remove members.

City Administrator

- The City Administrator has the authority to:
  - o Designate the Staff Liaison and any additional staff support needed
  - o Authorize financial resources
  - o Enter into a service contract with a subject matter expert/consultant
  - o Make recommendations to Council on adjustments to this Task Force charge

Task Force

- The Task force is advisory to the City Council.
- The Task Force has the authority to:
  - o Conduct public engagement and collect input using the City's public engagement protocols
  - o Make adjustments/refinements to the strategy based on input and research
  - o Recommend the final strategy, which will be presented to Council for consideration

Task Force Leadership

- City Council will designate a member of the Task Force to serve as the Chair and another member as the Vice Chair. The role of the Chair will include:
  - o Prepare agenda
  - o Lead meetings and facilitate discussions
  - o Maintain meeting decorum
  - o Encourage participation of all members
- The Vice-Chair will support the Chair as needed and perform the chair's duties if the Chair is unavailable.

Staff Liaison

- City Administrator will designate the staff liaison to the Task Force. Liaison role includes:
  - o Support Task Force chair in preparing agendas and meeting materials
  - o Provide technical expertise and access to City resources
  - o Relay information from City Council to Task Force and vice versa
  - o Submit packet materials for City Council review. The Task Force does not direct the work of the liaison.

Resources Available

- The Task Force will have access to City resources available for advisory groups, such as meeting rooms and supplies.
- A consultant facilitator will be hired to assist in meeting facilitation, gathering data, and writing the action plan.

Outcomes

- An action plan that addresses specific actions the City can take to become a more inclusive and responsive community.
- A presentation of the action plan to the City Council.

Membership

City Council will appoint up to twenty members with various perspectives and experiences in the community. To authentically engage underrepresented racial and ethnic communities in this process, the REDI Task Force will prioritize the voices of those directly impacted by racial disparities. Priority will also be given to members who are:

- Residents of Savage or individuals who work in Savage
- Experts in race equity work or a connection to race equity work
- Able to commit to the full one-year term from September 2021 – September 2022

Appointed members should expect:

- Appointed members will be asked to fulfill their work until Council adopts the final strategy by December 2022.
- Appointment members are asked to serve on a volunteer basis (no compensation).
- Appointed members should expect to meet at least monthly with additional off-line work.
- Appointed members should consider project timeline before appointments.

Community Conversations on Race Summary

To: Linda Garrett- Johnson
From: Emily Gunderson, Communications Manager
Date: September 24, 2021
Re: Community Conversations on Race summary

Purpose

The Community Conversations on Race began after Police Chief Seurer attended a similar event in Burnsville in March 2019. The purpose of hosting these dialogues was to bring police, elected officials, community leaders, families, students, educators, faith communities, and local businesses together to help dismantle racism and build a stronger community. The goals of the Community Conversations on Race events were to:

- Help participants better understand how race plays out in our community
- Provide an opportunity for all voices to be heard
- Develop a deeper awareness of diversity, culture, and equity
- Discuss how to keep the conversations ongoing

General Themes

The general themes that came out of the community conversations were:

- Engagement
- Resources
- Connection

Ideas that were generated included:

- Human Rights Commission/Equity Resource Group
- City Book Club
- Community events designed to help people connect

Figure 1: Idea board from Community Conversations on race
August 12, 2020

What was accomplished?

- Community Conversations on Race
  - o September 26, 2019
  - o February 12, 2020
  - o August 12, 2020
- Town Hall on Policing and Race
  - o July 22, 2021
- Annual race equity training for staff
  - o 2020- Implicit bias
  - o 2021- Diversity
- Joined Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)
  - o 11/2020
- Implemented employee organizational assessment
  - o 8/2021
- Hired a consultant to review the hiring process and job descriptions
  - o 6/2021

What is left to do?

- Launch Police Explorer program
- Launch Fire Corp volunteer program and Fire Explorer program
- Ongoing staff training
  - o 2022 – Cultural competence
- Decide on community involvement
- Develop and implement a racial equity action plan

Community Engagement Process

Race, Equity, Diversity, And Inclusion Task Force
Collective Story Gathering (Outline And Process)

Facilitator Checklist:

- Keep a count of the total number of participants
- Track the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of individuals who want to be kept informed or those who want to be a part of feedback on the Task Force Action plan

Definitions

- BIPOC – Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
- Microaggressions - Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group.
    o Example: Complimenting a person raised in the United States on their English simply because they are not white.
    o Example: Treating someone as a second-class citizen because of their gender, race, or sexual orientation.

Agenda
Welcome & REDI Task Force Overview   Facilitator

- REDI Task Force, the goals are to ~
    o Gain an understanding of community views and expectations on race equity using the input from participants who attended the previous community conversations on race events.
    o Share and explore existing DEI efforts and activities already occurring in Savage.
    o Review best practices in other communities.
- REDI Task Force, the key deliverables are to ~
    o Identify short and long-term goals and potential community partners.
    o Develop an action plan that includes outcomes and actions that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely.
    o Provide opportunities for public review and input on the action plan.
    o Present the race equity action plan and recommendations to the City Council.

    Timeline: September 2021 – September 2022

What is Collective Story Gathering?   Facilitator
- Collective Story Gathering is a powerful storytelling tool.
- It is an ideal way to surface the many insights, innovations, and a-ha's that exist beneath the surface of our stories.

REDI Task Force Collective Story Gathering Sessions   Facilitator
- The REDI Task Force would like to understand better the lived experience stories of five specific groups of individuals who live in the City to gain an understanding that will help inform the development of the City's Pillars of Strategic Action. Groups will have the same questions as we gather and learn from you about your lived experiences in the City of Savage.
- The REDI Task Force would like your open, honest feedback

Collective Story Gathering   Facilitator/Group
- Ask them to introduce themselves (first name only) AND ask the Initial Question for that specific group
- Collective Gathering of stories shared
    o Gather (write down) the groups' responses to the story that was shared
    o Next, frame each of the additional questions (and gather the collective responses to those questions by the group)
- NOTE:
    o Ask the question first, then document as many as possible responses using whole sentences under that specific question

o It is okay to ask the group to slow down so you can capture their responses

o Remind them that their names will NOT be used in the final report

Closing Facilitator/Group
- Describe how the REDI Task Force circle back with this group
- Describe what will be done with the stories (and responses) provided
- Ask the participants, "What does providing feedback to the City of Savage regularly look like to you?" AND CAPTURE THEIR RESPONSES
- Ask the participants if they have an interest in being involved after this session AND CAPTURE THEIR RESPONSES

Adjourn (Thank them for their participation) All

Questions - Households

1. What attracted you to live in the City of Savage (and why do you like living here)?
2. What can the City of Savage do to help people feel welcomed and have a sense of belonging?
3. Have you experienced, seen, or witnessed racism or microaggressions here in Savage? If yes, how does this impact your ability to feel psychologically/physically safe?
4. If you could wave a magic wand, what three amenities you would like to see established or developed in the City of Savage?
5. If you have children, do you feel their needs are being met by services provided by the city (Ex: recreational programs, etc.)? Why or why not?
6. Are your basic needs met as a resident (Ex: housing, access to employment/internship, shopping, cultural food or supplies, etc.)? Why or why not?
7. Is there anything else you would like to share that would be helpful for the REDI Task Force?
8. What does providing feedback to the City of Savage regularly look like to you?
9. Besides receiving information through the Savage Pacer, city Newsletter and Website, Facebook, and Instagram, how would you like to receive information? And what has (or has not) worked using these mediums? What is the best way to communicate with you?
10. Do you have an interest in being involved after this session? Example: 1) Provide feedback on the Strategic Action Plan, 2) become a Savage Community Engagement Ambassador, or 3) serve on a Commission or Committee

Questions - Businesses

1. What attracted you to open a business in Savage?
2. What steps do you need to take to start your business in the City?
3. What are the pain points/barriers to starting (or locating) a business/organization in the City?
4. Do you feel supported by the City as a business owner/organization?
5. How can the City encourage/support BIPOC-owned businesses?
6. Do you have a network of support from other business owners or organizations?
7. How are you getting the word out about your business/organization to the residents of Savage?

Questions - Immigrant Community

1. What barriers did you face as a new immigrant moving into Savage?
2. As a new immigrant, what support do you need from the Savage community?
3. How can we better support and reach out to community members who may experience barriers due to their immigration (legal) status?
4. How can the City of Savage help to orient you to the community?

City Leadership Panel 6/14/2022

Payroll/Benefits Specialist, Finance/Human Resources Department

- **Area of responsibility:** The Finance Department is responsible for the City's financial management and human resource activities.

- **Focus on racial equity and diversity/highlights of policies:**
  - Equity training is required for all staff annually, and there is specific equity training for police and seasonal staff
  - Low staff turnover in all positions contributes to the challenge of proactively recruiting a diverse staff
  - However, when there is an open position, the pool of candidates has not been diverse
  - There is currently no structure for universal training for staff
  - Applicant screening for open staff positions is primarily done by a software hiring tool (NeoGov)

Public Works Director, Public Works/Parks and Recreation Department

- **Area of responsibility:** Public Works Administration oversees and administers the City's public works projects ordered by the City Council efficiently and effectively. Parks and Recreation oversee the development and administration of parks, recreation programs, and facility operations efficiently and effectively. In addition, Parks and Recreation Administration provides operating and policy directives to Park Maintenance, Recreation Services, Savage Sports Center, and McColl Pond Environmental Learning & Event Center (ELC).

- **Focus on racial equity and diversity/highlights of policies:**
  - Seasonal staff al (majority college and high school students) are often recruited from relationships that have been forged with school district staff at both Burnsville and Prior Lake High schools
  - Training in the areas of diversity and customer service is a focus for seasonal staff

Community Development Director, Community Development Department

- **Area of responsibility:** The primary task of the Building Inspections Division is to ensure new construction within the City meets minimum standards as regulated by code. These codes promote safe building practices and limit future risks to the public.

- **Focus on racial equity and diversity/highlights of policies:**
  - Department focus for training is in the area of customer service and ensuring the appropriate management of city ordinances

Police Captain, Police Department

- **Area of responsibility:** The primary purpose of the Police Department is committed to protecting life and property, providing professional police service, and strengthening partnerships. In addition, the Division is charged with enforcing various state and local laws, ordinances, and regulations.

- **Focus on racial equity and diversity/highlights of policies:**
  - The police department desires to provide good customer services in the areas of safety and quality of life
  - Diversity training for officers is done through the League of MN Cities
  - Department policies are linked to diversity expectations
  - They currently have a small applicant pool for officers, impacting their ability to recruit a more diverse force proactively

City Administrator, Administration Department

- **Area of responsibility:** The Administration Department, led by the City Administrator, includes the City Clerk, Communications, and IT divisions. These divisions provide services for the City, including holding elections, maintaining IT infrastructure, and providing information to residents and businesses. In addition, the Administration Department is responsible for executing the citywide goals and policies adopted by the City Council.

- **Focus on racial equity and diversity/highlights of policies:**
  - The City has made race/equity a top priority
  - They have begun to introduce Diversity Training in areas such as microaggressions, etc. for all staff, with specific training for supervisors