



# STRATEGIC EQUITY FRAMEWORK

Office of Racial Justice, Equity,  
and Transformative Planning

JANUARY 2026

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The Office of Racial Justice, Equity, and Transformative Planning (ORJETP) extends deep gratitude to its departmental and citywide partners whose collaboration helped shape and advance its mission. These partners include the Racial Justice Steering Committee, Government Relations, the Communications Team, the Office of Historic Resources (OHR), the Environmental Justice Unit, Code Studies, the Performance Management Unit (PMU), Graphics, the Employee Workplace Action Committee (EWAC), and the Black Planners of Los Angeles (BPLA). The Office also thanks the City Planning Executive Management team for its leadership and ongoing support, and the Los Angeles City Planning Commission for consistently uplifting equity-focused principles.

Following a challenging budget cycle, funding for ORJETP was not renewed for the 2025-26 fiscal year. This decision marks a pause in the status of the ORJETP as a formal entity within City Planning. However, this change does not end leadership's commitment to advance racial justice, equity, and transformative planning within the Department.

The ORJETP acknowledges the critical role of Mayor Karen Bass and the Los Angeles City Council in setting a citywide vision for racial equity that informed and guided the Office's work. Additionally, the Office is grateful to its interdepartmental champions, including the Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department and the Personnel Department, whose partnership and shared commitment to equity were invaluable. Finally, ORJETP thanks its community partners, educational institutions and advocacy organizations who continue to push for justice and transformative change in the City and beyond.

# Introduction and Guiding Concept

**“To transform government, we must normalize conversations about race, operationalize new behaviors and policies, and organize to achieve racial equity.”<sup>1</sup>**

Between June 2020 and January 2025, the Office of Racial Justice, Equity, and Transformative Planning (ORJETP) completed several work programs to help advance its mission of addressing inequities within the Los Angeles Planning Department and the communities it serves. The work programs described in this document constitute the ORJETP’s Strategic Framework, and primarily focus on transforming workplace culture and professional norms to create the groundwork for institutional change. These initiatives provide a roadmap to address workplace inequities and create a template for institutionalizing racial justice, equity, and inclusivity at all levels of the Department.

A relatively recent term, transformative planning borrows heavily from the criminal justice field’s concept of transformative justice and its rejection of institutional systems that cause harm to specific groups. Transformative planning recognizes ways the planning profession has contributed to the oppression of marginalized communities. It seeks to change the structure and culture of decision making, and uses collective community action to support those who have been harmed.

This evolving definition of transformative planning grounds the efforts described in this document and applies its principles to the workplace. A transformative approach to workplace equity centers the groups that have been historically marginalized or excluded from the urban planning profession and seeks to empower the voices and perspectives of groups underrepresented in decision-making. The initiatives outlined below were

<sup>1</sup> Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Racial Equity Toolkit An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity, 2016

developed to address the systemic issues and root causes of workplace inequity. The recommendations and best practices summarized in this document will serve as the foundation for pursuing transformative land use and policy solutions across the Department's long range initiatives.

## Guiding Concepts

The resources and practical guidance developed by GARE played a key role in informing the ORJETP's equity efforts. GARE is a national organization dedicated to providing support for government agencies that are seeking to advance racial justice. Their "Visualize, Normalize, Organize, Operationalize"<sup>2</sup> change model seeks to advance organizational equity in government agencies with four steps:



**Visualize** a shared understanding of racial equity to develop aspirational equity goals that can inform systemic change. The act of visualizing should take place in consultation with the communities who have been negatively impacted by the institution or practice.



**Normalize** conversations regarding race and equity, and recognize these issues as a fundamental part of effective governance. Normalizing also entails creating a common understanding and sense of urgency around racial equity within an organization, and establishing shared definitions of key concepts like race, equity, and institutional racism to discuss and analyze racial inequity.



**Organize** by building the internal infrastructure and capacity of an agency to implement equity across all levels of the organization. This step involves organizing internal teams, creating leadership buy-in, and forming cross-departmental teams to drive equity work. It also includes developing partnerships with community groups and other impacted groups to ensure efforts are supported at all levels of the organization. This fosters an inclusive environment where diverse voices are heard and valued.

2 For more information on the GARE equity framework, visit the GARE website at:  
<https://www.racialequityalliance.org/who-we-are/our-approach>



**Operationalize** new behaviors by implementing tools to change the policies, programs, and practices that perpetuate inequities. This step should be data-driven to enable the evaluation of new tools and their effectiveness at meeting equity goals and objectives.

The establishment of the ORJETP was an attempt to normalize racial equity within planning discourse and to acknowledge the manifold ways that the planning profession has harmed communities of color and undervalued professional planners from diverse backgrounds. However, creating the office was only the first step in facilitating these conversations. Gaining wide support across the Department required a strategic, multi-level approach to engage staff at every phase of their professional journey.

To this end, the ORJETP undertook the first-ever department-wide equity and racial justice listening session to better understand staff's equity values and experiences with race and discrimination in the Department. This effort led to the development of working definitions of racial justice and equity and a shared understanding of equity-related concepts. Concurrently, the ORJETP engaged the City Planning Commission (CPC) in a two-year collaboration that resulted in the creation of an equity values statement to help guide its decision making on projects and policy. The ORJETP also developed an inclusive terminology guide to help normalize inclusive language and also produced guidelines for prioritizing safety at public meetings. The ORJETP worked with the Department's Performance Management Unit (PMU) and the City Attorney's office to identify trainings that reinforce each initiative. Collectively, these efforts strengthen the Department's commitment to equity and facilitate the cultural and organizational shift needed to support transformative policy and programmatic changes.



# How the Framework is Organized

This document outlines the key work programs that make up the office's strategic priorities. Each of these work programs are discussed in the following sections which include a comprehensive overview of their objectives, initiatives, and impacts, as well as links to relevant documents. The corresponding documents and reports for each program are also attached as appendices, serving as valuable resources for reference and further context. This document aims to memorialize the office's achievements, operationalize its ongoing work, and ensure these resources are readily accessible to the Department for informed decision-making and continued progress towards equity goals.

In addition to setting the stage for future work programs, the framework advances several of the parallel goals found in corresponding equity documents within the Department, including the Black Planners of Los Angeles (BPLA) Strategic Action Plan, the Employee Workplace Action Committee (EWAC) Survey, the Personnel Department's Cultural Assessment Plan, and the City's General Plan. A comprehensive list of policies that support the ORJETP's work programs can be found in Section 8 "Consistency with Department Equity Goals."

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## I. Establishment of the Office

In June 2020, Executive Directive 27 required every department across the City to designate a racial justice officer. The directive was a direct response to the racial turmoil that was sparked by the vicious murder of George Floyd after an interaction with law enforcement in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This period of racial trauma prompted many institutions to examine their complicity in perpetuating racial inequities. Like many other institutions nation-wide, City Planning recognized the need to address systemic inequities tied to land use and zoning practices. This led to the establishment of the Department's Office of Racial Justice, Equity, and Transformative Planning (ORJETP).

City Planning appointed Principal City Planner Faisal Roble (now retired) to the position of Chief Equity Officer and took the directive of ED 27 a step further by creating a dedicated racial equity office. The office was founded with three primary goals:

1. Apply a critical lens to planning, recognizing the influence of race on planning in Los Angeles and within the profession.
2. Acknowledge the Department's role in perpetuating discriminatory planning practices and develop more equitable practices.
3. Create a Strategic Action Plan that focuses on fostering racial justice and equity within the workforce and developing equitable policies to better serve communities.

The first task of the ORJETP was to prepare a racial justice action plan outlining citywide goals to achieve equity across the city's three primary functions: workforce, operations, and services. Each City department was responsible for preparing its own action plan, and collectively they would be used to address equity deficiencies throughout the City. City Planning released its action plan in April 2021, outlining steps to:

- Ensure equitable hiring practices;
- Promote racial equity in contracting and volunteer opportunities; and
- Update the City's services and programs to increase access and opportunities for all residents.

While the ED 27 Action Plan took a broad outlook on equity concerns at the citywide level, the ORJETP was created specifically to address the historical use of zoning and land use policy as tools for segregation and a means to sustain inequities. The ORJETP developed a presentation highlighting the inequitable history of planning, and shared its plan to address pervasive and endemic inequities within the planning profession and planning practice. Such a comprehensive reimaging of policy and practice entailed a phased approach. Phase one would focus on internal initiatives to enhance workplace equity, and Phase two would aim to reimagine zoning and land use policies to address inequities and better support communities that have been marginalized by the planning processes. Both phases would be summarized in a strategic action plan, outlining a road map for improving equity outcomes and processes both internally and externally.

The establishment of the ORJETP was followed by intense media interest and inquiries from other City departments wanting to understand the role of the new office and how it intended to tackle such broad reaching inequities. Office staff had over 50 unique engagements with council offices, community based organizations (CBOs), climate advocates, religious organizations, research institutes, the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, and LA Metro. Internally, the office met with the housing policy team, project planning sections, community planning units, and made several presentations to the geographic planning teams. This initial period after the office's establishment served as a branding opportunity and highlighted the office's progressive mission.

At the same time, City Planning formed a racial justice and equity steering committee to help guide the office's work programs. The committee met biweekly and convened staff from across the Department's sections and assignments to discuss a range of equity related topics and preview ideas and work programs under development by the office. Topics of discussion included the Department's hiring practices; professional development, rotational, and promotional opportunities for staff of color; a department-wide equity training curriculum; and integrating equity into project planning findings.

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## II. Collaboration

Internal and external collaboration is a significant part of the ORJETP's work program. Coordination takes place frequently with policy and operations units, other City departments, academic institutions, CBOs, and advocacy groups, and takes the form of presentations, training, focus groups, and educational programming. The office worked closely with the Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department to inform a [Reparations Recommendation Report](#) and assisted with preparing data for an initiative exploring Black people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles. Through these important collaborations, ORJETP has established dialogue with South Los Angeles residents, California State University, Northridge (CSUN), and Mockingbird Analytics, the research consultant tasked with conducting historical research to support reparative policy recommendations.

ORJETP also conducts outreach and delivers presentations to organizations such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and Loyola Marymount University (LMU). These efforts foster dialogue around the Office's commitment to advancing racial justice and equity within the Department and across the City. The presentations aim to educate students on the City's history of racial inequity in land use, its current work programs centered on racial equity, and inclusive planning practices. The Office has also participated in interviews and supported student-led projects, including a GIS mapping initiative by a LMU student that analyzed the locations of City facilities used for public meetings, highlighting access and equity concerns in civic engagement. These coordination efforts set the foundation for future partnerships with academic institutions, CBOS, and advocacy groups to support external work efforts focused on transformative land use and zoning solutions.

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### III. Racial Justice Listening and Strategy Sessions

To commence its internal work programs aimed at transforming workplace culture, the ORJETP hired a consultant to document staff experiences with racial injustice and inequity in the workplace. The Department hired Wilson and Associates consultants, who, years prior, led similar focus groups to identify key equity challenges within the Department. While the previous focus groups highlighted staff experiences, the follow-up listening session offered staff an opportunity to provide feedback and recommendations to improve workplace outcomes, emphasizing Department accountability.

In coordination with the consultant, the ORJETP convened a co-design committee to help shape the format and goals of the listening sessions. The committee designed a total of eight (8) listening sessions, with five (5) of the sessions focused on how the Department could achieve better equity outcomes and the remaining three (3) sessions focused on strategic recommendations. The listening tour had four goals:

1. Create a safe space for staff to share their experiences around racial justice and equity
2. Understand staff perceptions of racial justice and equity as operational concepts
3. Establish agreed upon definitions of racial justice and equity
4. Identify the top five equity priorities and strategies to implement within the Department

To develop the definitions of racial justice and equity, participants were asked to vote on elements of a definition. The top voted elements were combined into one cohesive definition. The definitions below are based on staff feedback and were further refined through conversation and research within the OREJTP.

*Note: These definitions are intended for internal use. Separate, and expanded, definitions of racial justice and equity would be developed for external purposes.*

**Racial Justice:** Racial justice seeks to dismantle systems that sustain racial inequities and transform them through proactive and preventative measures that center the groups most harmed by systemic inequality. In a racially just workplace, staff who have been historically excluded from the profession feel seen, heard, and valued, and are able to achieve their full potential in the workplace.

**Equity:** Equity centers both process and outcome. An equitable process fosters an environment where people from historically marginalized groups feel safe from discrimination and free to share their ideas, questions, or concerns. The outcome of this process is the development of policies and proactive measures to enhance diversity and create equal opportunities for under-represented groups to gain professional development and advance within the Department. An equitable workplace supports the creation of transformative plans that undo past discriminatory zoning practices that resulted in unequal geographies across the City.

Participants of the listening session also assisted in identifying top equity priorities for the Department. The top five priorities and their respective implementation plans are listed below.

### Provide Consistent Racial Justice and Equity Training

#### Staff Vision

- A department that welcomes open conversations about race and the existence of racial inequity within the Department.
- Leadership has the empathy and supervision skills to support staff from equity-seeking groups (marginalized groups) when they experience racism, acts of bias, and microaggressions.
- Staff are trained to communicate why and how the Department is actively working to dismantle racism and inequities so they can be ambassadors and advocates for systemic change.

## Implementation Plan

- In coordination with PMU, develop a training curriculum to embed high quality and relevant racial justice, transformative planning, and equity related training as part of the Department's structure and commitment to staff capacity building.
- The training curriculum will include a core racial justice and equity knowledge building module, a historical overview of racial injustices in planning (nationally and in the context of Los Angeles), and additional training that addresses interpersonal aspects of racial justice and equity such as microaggressions, hate speech, implicit bias, facilitation skills, and de-escalation techniques.
- Design a module to train supervisors on how to implement anti-racist practices using cultural humility, coaching, and racial sensitivity lenses and tools.
- Establish a department-wide racial justice and equity curriculum/module for decision-making bodies to ensure that volunteer board members who review projects and interact with staff understand and are aware of their collective role in upholding the Department's racial justice and equity vision. Decision making bodies include but are not limited to Design Review Boards, Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) committees, Area Planning Commissions (APCs), and the CPC.

## Create Anti-Racist & Equity-Centered Policies and Practices

### Staff Vision

- The Department embeds racial justice and equity into its organizational culture, structures, and practices.
- Staff embody and uphold shared values regarding racial justice, equity, and transformative planning that guides their interactions with colleagues and the public.
- The Department acknowledges past, current, and ongoing neglect and harm to Black communities, neighborhoods of color, and low wealth communities, and provides tools and resources to assist planners in instituting transformative planning practices. Divisions, work programs and staffing are supported and funded through a racial justice and equity lens that considers a community/geography's history and needs.

## Implementation Plan

- Equip the ORJETP with staff capacity and resources to conduct external outreach in communities and replicate “listening sessions” similar to the ones conducted internally.
- Develop a tool to analyze work programs by geography, scope, and staffing, to align resources throughout City Planning’s work programs using a racial justice lens to achieve place-based equity.
- Develop tools and provide resources for racial justice and equity analysis to assist planners in instituting transformative planning practices. This can include data analysis tools for policy planning work programs, and equitable finding guides for project planners.

## Create a Racial Justice and Equity Strategic Action Plan & Team

### Staff Vision

- The Department has a clear vision, mission statement, and set of guiding values for its racial justice and equity work, as well as a clear framework for dismantling structural forms of racism, discrimination, and prejudice internally (within LA City Planning) and externally (within planning practice).
- The Department has agreed upon definitions of racial justice and equity, and a Racial Justice and Equity Framework that articulates its goals with a corresponding budget to fund strategies and activities.

### Implementation Plan

- Equip the program with staffing capacity and resources to manage and execute all aspects of the strategic planning process.
- Develop clear language and definitions that are informed by outreach and engagement to the groups impacted (internal/external).
- Coordination with Media and Government Relations.
- Coordinate with BPLA to codify the [BPLA Action Plan](#) and EWAC to address findings and recommendations from the EWAC Racial Justice Survey.

## Develop Racial Justice and Equity Career and Professional Development Pathways for BIPOC Staff

### Staff Vision

- A department where all employment practices, including recruitment, hiring, mentorship, assignments, rotations, and promotions are rooted in a racial justice and equity lens.
- Participants envisioned a supportive environment where they feel valued, could achieve career advancement from any assignment within the Department, and are given the agency to have input in their rotations, while also considering the needs of the Department.
- The Department supports staff from groups that are historically underrepresented in the Department, in particular Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) staff, and their equal representation in policy assignments and at the senior level and above.

### Implementation Plan

- Audit current hiring, promotional, and rotational practices and develop criteria to achieve more equitable hiring to ensure the process does not continue to exclude candidates from historically marginalized and underrepresented groups.
- Adopt new hiring, promotional, and rotational practices that address racial inequity coupled with a commitment to removing or not reproducing systemic barriers that have characterized past Departmental culture. Encourage practices that value the non-traditional assets and characteristics that can be overlooked when evaluating staff for promotion, rotation, and other professional opportunities.

## Diversify Senior Leadership Team

### Staff Vision

- A department where senior leadership is more racially and ethnically diverse. This vision would require the Department to expand how it has operationalized “diversity” to include identities such as: African Americans, Latinos, Indigenous people, disabled people, transgender and non-binary people, people that speak English with an accent, and other historically marginalized identities who aren’t currently, and haven’t previously been, represented at the senior leadership level.

### Implementation Plan

- Develop a strategy and criteria to aid in expanding the Deputy and Executive Officer candidate pool to those who are experienced in/have championed racial justice and equity work.
- Emphasize a commitment to racial justice, equity and transformative planning in all job descriptions, including new deputies.

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## IV. City Planning Commission (CPC) Coordination

The aftermath of the 2020 civil uprising presented a unique opportunity where the heads of institutions and those in power heeded calls for change and began to look critically at their own roles in sustaining inequity. In Los Angeles, the Department's City Planning Commission (CPC), which plays a key role in deciding policy-related matters and projects of large impact, formed an equity subcommittee with the goal of identifying how racial inequities impact the City's land use policies and practices.

On January 21, 2021, with the assistance of the ORJETP, the CPC held the City's first Equity Day. The citywide event convened speakers from several of Los Angeles's Community Based Organizations (CBOs) operating in historically underserved communities such as South Los Angeles and Boyle Heights. After hearing presentations on the history of these communities, attendees provided public comment reflecting on the following themes:

- Ensuring equitable housing outcomes
- Investing in equitable futures
- Access to quality amenities and jobs
- Promoting equitable environmental and health outcomes
- Equitable transit and mobility
- Equitable land use and urban design

With more than 300 attendees, the public comments collected during Equity Day were used to develop a statement to inform the CPC's deliberation and decision-making on planning-related projects and policies.

Equity Day was an initial step in assessing the CPC's equity priorities. In June 2021, the ORJETP helped organize a follow up event to unpack the themes identified during Equity Day and translate the City's equity priorities into a usable framework for decision making. To realize this goal, in March 2022,

a facilitator from GARE led the Commission in a group discussion on how to visualize, organize, and operationalize racial equity in response to the earlier collected public feedback. The conversation explored themes related to racial equity and results based accountability. To construct a results statement, the commissioners began by conducting a current state assessment to understand the reality of circumstances that some Angelenos face. After identifying the key issues contributing to racial and equity disparities in Los Angeles, they drafted a statement articulating how an equitable planning process could repair the damage caused by decades of exclusionary planning practices.

In September 2022, the ORJETP facilitated a special meeting to ratify the values statement and memorialize the Commission's equity journey. The statement was ratified in October 2022 and reads:

*Equitable planning demands that race does not determine whether or not one thrives in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles City Planning Commission prioritizes a planning process that centers the needs of those most harmed by systemic racism. Our goal is the creation of affordable, prosperous, resilient and healthy communities where all Angelenos experience the feeling that they belong.*

## V. Workplace Safety and Violence Prevention

### Public Safety Listening Session

ORJETP organized its first Department-wide Public Safety Listening Session on August 2, 2023. The session was inspired by a letter from BPLA to the Director of Planning, highlighting concerns about enhancing safety, inclusivity, and community participation at public meetings, specifically in regards to advocating for unarmed safety approaches.

To adequately explore how public safety intersects with equity and inclusion, particularly in communities of color that have historically had strained relationships with law enforcement, the ORJETP held a Department-wide listening session to understand how staff were impacted by issues of safety in the workplace. The objectives of the listening session were to:

- Assess existing safety practices at public meetings.
- Identify strategies to create safer, more inclusive spaces for both staff and the public.
- Explore non-armed approaches to public safety, in response to BPLA's advocacy.
- Gather feedback from participants through breakout sessions and post-session surveys.
- Develop new policies that uphold safety at public meetings and reflect the department's commitment to equity, inclusivity, and community participation.

The listening session began with a presentation on the historical relationship between law enforcement and communities of color in Los Angeles. Participants divided into breakout groups to discuss the following topics:

**Public Safety at Meetings:** Discussions focused on how the presence of police at public meetings can affect the participation of marginalized communities. Many participants supported the idea of exploring unarmed safety measures that would foster a more inclusive atmosphere.

**Workplace Safety:** Breakout groups discussed safety in the workplace, particularly for staff members who interact with constituents at City Planning public meetings. Some staff expressed concerns about the presence of law enforcement, while others pointed to the need for better safety protocols overall.

**Equity in Land Use Policies:** Participants also explored how land use strategies can address broader issues of public safety, including the implementation of equitable planning policies that promote safe and vibrant neighborhoods without over-policing.

More than 250 planning staff members participated in the listening session. ORJETP utilized real-time polling to gather feedback during the session and distributed a follow up survey after the meeting. ORJETP staff analyzed the poll question data, breakout groups discussion, and survey responses, then compiled the results into a recommendations report for internal use.

## Public Meeting Safety Toolkit

Using feedback from the 2023 Public Safety Listening Session, the ORJETP developed the Public Meeting Safety Toolkit to promote safety at public meetings. The document serves as a comprehensive resource for Planning staff to prepare for and safely conduct non-Brown Act meetings, including hearings of the Zoning Administrator, Director of Planning, Advisory Agency, and staff-level hearings. It is also intended for use during workshops, information sessions, and any event convened by the Department where staff are seeking public feedback or sharing information. These meetings often involve public input on sensitive or controversial issues which can lead to tense and volatile situations. The toolkit offers a structured framework to anticipate, manage, and mitigate potential safety concerns while fostering respectful and inclusive engagement.

The document is grounded in a situational awareness approach and provides staff with the tools to create safe environments where participants feel heard, respected, and protected. The toolkit outlines four (4) key guidelines and best practices to ensure safety and efficiency at public meetings. These include:

- Establish appropriate safety protocols
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Select appropriate venues
- Coordinate with other City departments

The guide emphasizes non-violent approaches to safety, highlighting the supportive roles of community leaders, mental health professionals, and unarmed officers trained in de-escalation. By consolidating these staff best practices into a cohesive guidance document, the guide reinforces the City's commitment to safe, inclusive, and transparent public engagement across all forums.

### [Public Meeting Safety Toolkit](#)

## Workplace Inclusivity and Disruptions at Public Meetings

The ORJETP developed several staff resources to address growing concerns about hate speech and disruptive behaviors during public meetings. These documents underscore the importance of fostering respectful discourse while safeguarding public participation and first amendment rights. The elements of the work program include:

**Best Practices at Brown Act Meetings to Address Disruptions:** This memorandum provides the legal framework for addressing disruptions at Brown Act meetings, including meetings of the CPC, APCs, HPOZs, and Design Review Boards. Senate Bill No. 1100 ([SB-1100](#)) clarifies the authority of local agencies to regulate behavior that disrupts the orderly conduct of a meeting by veering off topic, exceeding the allocated time for public comment, or creating an unsafe environment. Intended for internal use, the document provides guidelines for how to address disruptions when they occur and grounds for removing a disruptive individual from a meeting.

**Anti-Hate Speech Hearing Officer Script for Quasi-Judicial and Staff Hearings:** A script designed for hearing officers to address incidents of hate-speech and off-topic speech at quasi-judicial and staff level hearings. Intended for internal use, the document provides helpful language for combating these occurrences.

## Workplace Safety Values Statement

The ORJETP incorporated staff feedback from the public safety listening session and a 2020 internal committee on combating hate-speech to develop an workplace safety values statement articulating the Department's safety priorities and commitment to address the safety concerns of its staff. The statement is consistent with Personnel's Office of Workplace Equity and Violence Prevention Policies (see the link in the following section) and reads as follows:

*Los Angeles City Planning is committed to fostering a workplace that supports the safety and dignity of all staff and their right to work in an environment free from bigotry, harassment, and threats. City Planning continues to value workplace efforts that support a diverse workplace where all staff, regardless of their race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, workplace assignment or other defining characteristic, feel safe, productive, and supported. Guided by its core principles to improve the quality of life for all communities, the Department envisions a workplace that provides for staff safety and awareness at all levels and upholds a professional culture that fosters a sense of belonging, where:*

- *Proactive steps are taken to ensure the safety of its staff and uphold security standards, including de-escalation training, harassment-free protocols, and transparent safety guidelines*
- *Staff feel empowered to bring their safety concerns to the Department and confident the Department will respond proactively and take appropriate action to address the concern*
- *The Department supports an organizational culture free of hate and recognizes that physical and psychological security is vital and essential for workplace engagement and productivity*
- *The Department does not minimize verbal harassment and recognizes that hate speech could escalate to be a form of harassment and a precursor to hate crime and violence*
- *Staff uphold high standards of professional conduct and maintain a respectful attitude towards one another and members of the public*
- *Staff in public facing roles are equipped to de-escalate tense situations or can readily ask for help from a supervisor or security personnel when the situation warrants it<sup>1</sup>*

1. This workplace safety values statement may be revisited and re-evaluated to address emerging topics in the workplace and to promote a workplace free of hate and discrimination

## Citywide Safety Initiatives

**Citywide workplace violence prevention plan:** The City maintains a violence prevention plan for addressing and deterring violence in the workplace. The guidelines provide prevention and reporting procedures and state that threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence directed towards employees, visitors, or customers are not tolerated. The document can be accessed on the Personnel Department's website [here](#).

## VI. Inclusive Planning Language Guide

The Inclusive Planning Language Guide is a resource designed to help planners, City staff, and professionals working in public-facing sectors use respectful, and inclusive language. It aims to ensure that terminology does not alienate, stigmatize, or marginalize individuals or groups. The document was originally envisioned as a terminology guide specifically for planning terms, but grew in scope to include guidance for using person-and-identity first language as well as current best practices for using demographic, culturally sensitive, and equity-related terms.

The guide aims to foster workplace inclusivity and encourage more productive engagement with culturally diverse members of the public. A collaboration between EWAC, BPLA, the Environmental Justice Policy team, the Office of Historic Resources, and City Planning staff, the document outlines planning terms that may be outdated or harmful and suggests alternatives that reflect current understandings of equity and inclusion. It functions as a living document that will be updated and adapted as language and cultural understandings evolve.

[Inclusive Planning Language Guide](#)

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## VII. Transformative Planning Lab

The Transformative Planning Lab is a lecture series designed for planning staff that will explore innovative and equity-centered approaches to planning. This lab will convene a panel of experts, including equity practitioners and scholars, to assist the Department in defining transformative planning in the context of Los Angeles. The lab will serve as a space for engaging discussions focused on integrating a transformative planning framework across the Department's work, with an emphasis on land use practices and equitable zoning tools that advance justice and inclusivity for all Angelenos.

These curated discussions will address mobility justice, zoning reform, restorative housing approaches, and community activism as tools to inform innovative solutions to complex planning challenges. Insights from this series will inform the Department's long range policy goals, foster strategic partnerships, and guide the Department's efforts to dismantle harmful and inequitable land use practices. The Transformative Planning Lab will define a shared vision for transformative planning within the Department and help promote policies that lead to more just and equitable planning outcomes.

## VIII. Consistency with Department Equity Goals

The work programs described in sections I through VII are consistent with the implementation strategies and goals defined in the BPLA Action Plan, EWAC 2023 All-Staff Survey, and the Personnel Department's Cultural Assessment Plan. The policies below align with the framework presented in this document.

### BPLA Action Plan

#### **Transformative Leadership Goal 1:** Meaningful integration of the Planning Department

- Action: Create an equitable staff retention and reconstitution plan once the pandemic restrictions are lifted.
- Action: Conduct an Internal Equity Audit for advancement opportunities and representation of Black planners.

#### **Transformative Leadership Goal 3:** Implement new workforce initiatives that address acute workforce challenges for Black employees

- Action: Acknowledge the systemic racism existing in the Department. Develop/implement tools to address this issue.
- Action: Require all Planning staff to complete a mandatory annual Cultural Sensitivity and Competency Training Program.
- Action: Implement professional development programs, mentorship programs and an equitable, consistent process for staff promotions in order to retain Black employees.
- Action: Create an environment free of passive acceptance of harassment and hate speech.
- Action: Establish close coordination with the ORJETP, the Civil and Human Rights Department and the City's Chief Equity Officer to ensure the Department's Plans and Policies align and ideally exceed Mayor Garcetti's ED 27.

## EWAC 2023 All-Staff Survey

### Career and Professional Development

- More supervisor training
- Cross training across Departments, jurisdictions, and adjacent disciplines

### Social and Political Events

- Continue commitment to sharing statements regarding social and political events

### Racial Equity

- Revisit and strengthen policies for reporting, tracking, and addressing racist incidents in the workplace, with the support of ORJETP
- Educate staff about current channels to address racist incidents
- Training to prevent racist incidents upstream
- Continue to support and implement the BPLA Action Plan and ED 27 which created the ORJETP

### Cultural Assessment Plan

#### **Intervention #1:** Align Work Processes And Resources To Support Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

- Develop a tracking tool to share progress on racial justice/equity initiatives internally and resources within the city

#### **Intervention #2:** Ensure Equity And Freedom From Discrimination

- Finalize internal resources to support workplace equity including: Best Practices to reduce disruptions and harassing behaviors at public meetings, statement on workplace safety values and harm reduction, workplace safety toolkit, and inclusive language guidelines

### **Intervention #3:** Strengthen Engagement Across Diverse Backgrounds

- Implement regular, mandated staff training on DEIB principles, unconscious bias, and equitable planning practices to support wider reaching engagement, in coordination with Personnel's Office of Workplace Equity and the Civil and Human Rights Office

## IX. Consistency with General Plan Elements

The work programs align with and advance the elements of the City's General Plan by embedding equity into City services and planning efforts. The work of ORJETP strengthens the City's commitment to addressing disparities and ensuring that all communities, particularly historically underserved groups, benefit from public resources. Each work program is designed to implement one or more General Plan policies, supporting goals related to safety, access, infrastructure, collaboration, and healthy communities. By prioritizing equitable access to these resources, the ORJETP fosters inclusive engagement, enhances community well-being, and ensures that city planning efforts reflect the diverse needs of Los Angeles residents. The work program categories, along with the supporting findings, are listed below.

With respect to the distribution of land, the Framework Element states the following:

**Policy 3.1.9** Assure that fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, incomes and education levels with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, including affirmative efforts to inform and involve environmental groups, especially environmental justice groups, in early planning stages through notification and two-way communication.

With respect to addressing leadership, collaboration, and equitable access, the General Plan Health, Wellness, and Equity Element states the following:

**Policy 1.1** Position Los Angeles as a regional leader by collaborating across departments, agencies, sectors, and jurisdictions to incorporate health, equity, and sustainability considerations into policies, programs, and procedures.

**Policy 1.2** Develop intentional strategic partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit entities to improve health outcomes by leveraging capacity, resources, and programs around mutually beneficial initiatives that promote health, equity, and sustainability.

**Policy 2.1** Acknowledge the mental and physical health benefits of social

connectedness by promoting and valuing public spaces, social interaction, relationship building, and resilience in community and urban design.

**Policy 4.4** Pursue funding, public, private, and nonprofit partnerships, and develop financial, land use and similar incentives and programs to encourage the equitable availability of healthy, affordable food outlets within close proximity of all residences.

With respect to addressing housing, the Housing Element states the following:

**Policy 1.1.10** Amplify and prioritize underrepresented voices and communities of color in the City's planning engagement processes to result in more equitable outcomes.

**Policy 1.3.3** Provide accessible and inclusive outreach and education to community members on the history of racist policies, planning, zoning and real estate practices and how they are reflected in today's land use patterns and socio- economic disparities.

**Policy 2.2.4** Partner with homeowners and community organizations, especially in communities of color, to expand knowledge and dialogue about land use regulations and individual and community equity.

**Policy 4.3** Affirmatively further fair housing in all housing and land use programs by taking proactive measures to promote diverse, inclusive communities that grant all Angelenos access to housing, particularly in Higher Opportunity Areas, increase place-based strategies to encourage community revitalization and protect existing residents from displacement.

**Policy 4.3.3** Examine land use practices that perpetuate racial exclusion and inequities including but not limited to: single-family / low density zoning, minimum lot size requirements, location of noxious uses, and subjective design review standards. Introduce context specific reforms that further Citywide Housing Priorities

**Policy 1.1.1** Coordinate information gathering, program formulation and program implementation between City agencies, other jurisdictions and appropriate public and private entities to achieve the maximum mutual benefit.

With respect to the workforce training program, the Framework Element states the following:

**Policy 7.7.1** Expand job training programs offered in the City to more adequately address the skill requirements of existing and emerging industries.

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## X. Conclusion, Recommendations, and Next Steps

The Transformative Framework summarizes LACP's comprehensive efforts to advance equity as a core principle of the Department's operations and workplace culture. This document memorializes the Department's efforts to build an inclusive and equitable workplace that can resist pressures to reverse progress towards equity and racial justice. These initiatives reflect the Department's broader commitment to embed equity into all aspects of its work and serve as critical first steps toward long-term organizational transformation.

While the GARE framework is centered on institutional equity, its guiding principles also inform how the Department serves and partners with communities. With that application in mind, the Department will use this framework and its related resources as a basis for exploring zoning and land use policy reforms to counteract past inequitable planning practices. Building on the relationships and collaborations the ORJETP has built since its establishment in 2020, the Department will explore grants and other outside sources of funding, as well as partnerships with universities to continue grounding the work of the Department in data-driven research and solutions. The ORJETP and LA City Planning are proud of the internal and external networks it has fostered through these equity initiatives, and will continue to nurture these relationships through sustained partnerships and collaboration.

The completion of the framework marks a major milestone in the Department's equity journey, but maintaining the momentum and infrastructure for these initiatives will require sustained efforts. This Framework calls on all planners to consider how reparative and transformative planning approaches can be used to achieve institutional change within the profession.



# Appendices

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## Appendix A

[Public Meeting Safety Toolkit](#)

## Appendix B

[Inclusive Planning Language Guide](#)