Summary Title: Update on City of Palo Alto's Race and Equity Work

Title: Update on City of Palo Alto's Race and Equity Work and Discussion of Next Steps

From: City Manager

Lead Department: City Manager

Recommendation
Staff recommends that City Council receive an update on the City’s Race and Equity efforts and discuss next steps.

Background
The City Council has been discussing race and equity efforts since June 2020 and moving forward on a race and equity initiative for the City. Previous City Council reports, CMR #11414 (June 8, 2020; https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77100) and CMR #11441 (June 15, 2020; https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77273), describe efforts the City has underway.

On June 23, 2020, at the final City Council meeting before its July recess, Mayor Adrian Fine announced councilmember assignments to four ad hoc committees. The committees were tasked with convening individually and discussing the respective domains to return to the full City Council for potential direction, reform, and improvements.

The ad hoc committees and their members are detailed below:

- Police Policy Manual, Data, and Hiring – Vice Mayor Tom DuBois and Councilmembers Alison Cormack and Lydia Kou
- Public Safety Alternative Models – Councilmembers Liz Kniss and Greg Tanaka
- Police Accountability and Transparency – Vice Mayor Tom DuBois and Councilmember Eric Filseth
- Citywide Diversity and Inclusion – Mayor Adrian Fine and Councilmembers Alison Cormack and Liz Kniss

Each ad hoc committee convened over the summer and on August 24, 2020, the committees updated the full City Council and provided direction on next steps. The Human Relations
Commission (HRC) also gave their 8cantwait report to the City Council. The reports from August 24, 2020 meeting are listed below:
- CMR #11551
  https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?t=59847.7&BlobID=78078;
- An additional memorandum released on August 24, 2020 with more information: https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?t=70773.14&BlobID=78135; and
- HRC Report CMR #11516

Discussion
The City continues to progress with the race and equity efforts as directed in June 2020 by the City Council.

The City’s Independent Police Auditors (IPA), Michael Gennaco and Stephen Connolly will attend the City Council meeting on September 28, 2020. Messers Gennaco and Connolly met with the Accountability and Transparency Ad Hoc Committee and will now meet with the full City Council at this study session to discuss their role as the City’s IPA and answer any questions from the City Council. The biography for the Independent Police Auditors are available on their website at: https://www.oirgroup.com/people. The City offers a dedicated webpage that hosts information about the Independent Police Auditor work. Go here for more: https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pol/auditor.asp

Update on Ad Hoc Work
Throughout August and September, the ad hoc committees met again to further the next steps identified in the August 24 report. Below is a recap summary of those next steps.

Police Policy Manual, Data, and Hiring Ad Hoc
- Review best practices and gather thought leader input
  - Explore opportunities for external partnerships for peer review and data analysis, such as affiliations with Stanford University’s SPARQ
  - Consider data analysis with an outside entity
  - Incorporate suggestions from the Human Relations Commission
- Convene, analyze and recommend changes

Public Safety Alternative Models Ad Hoc
- Conclude preliminary evaluation of Public Safety Alternative Models
- Pursue opportunities for “apples to apples” comparisons to other jurisdictions including collaboration with Stanford University

Accountability and Transparency Ad Hoc
- Reviewing the Public Records Request process and information releases from the Police
Department as well as examining the potential to remove redactions from the Police policy Manual
• Reviewing Independent Police Auditor policies and turnaround time
• Reviewing the Disciplinary record policy, specifically retention, use for hiring, and transfers
• Examine options for publicly reporting statistical summaries and review the policies for releasing information about individual cases
*As part of this ad hoc, a request for a legislative update on police reform was made and is discussed below.

Citywide Diversity and Inclusion Ad Hoc
• Further City Council discussion and possible adoption of Mission Statement
• Establish ongoing City Council updates, including work with professional organizations and other jurisdictions
• Continue engagement with the community and workforce on race and equity efforts

Communication between staff and the ad hoc committees is ongoing. The most recent information transmitted from staff to the City Council provided information about police and fire calls for service as well as a five-year history of police uses of force in Palo Alto. The report was shared as an informational report on September 14, 2020 (CMR #11586; https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?t=60853.37&BlobID=78272).

As more information is sent to the ad hoc committees, it will be posted online here: https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/raceandequity/council_ad_hoc_committees.asp.

Additional Race & Equity Work
In addition to the ongoing work with each of the ad hoc committees, the City also engaged with this work through other avenues and approaches.

Per City Council direction, the Human Relations Commission (HRC) has solicited feedback and input from the community with stories about their families in Palo Alto as well as about experiences with racism in Palo Alto as part of the #PaloAltoSpeaks campaign. The HRC held a listening forum on Thursday, August 13, 2020. A few members of the community shared their experience before the HRC and the public. The campaign is ongoing, and people can share their experiences through different mediums. More information on the campaign can be found online at https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/raceandequity/share_your_story.asp. Though ongoing, the HRC asked for all submissions to be shared by September 18, 2020, so the HRC can share the submissions with the City Council as follow up to the task assigned by the City Council in June.

The Library Department, in partnership with the Stanford University Bill Lane Center for the American West and the Friends of the Palo Alto Library, hosted a virtual conversation with Richard Rothstein, the author of “Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government
Segregated America.” The book “Color of Law” was selected as the “Palo Alto Reads” book for 2020. More information can be found on this program can be found at: https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=4961. The program had over 400 registrants and more than 200 additional viewers on YouTube since the event.

The Public Art Commission hosted a discussion with eight of the artists who painted the temporary Black Lives Matter mural on September 10, 2020. The artists shared what led them to getting involved in the mural project and their experiences. The artists discussed the importance of public art in bringing community together in a shared experience and discussion, and how public art has a power quite different from studio or gallery art. The artists also shared their calls for action and next steps, asking for greater corporate engagement, the need for everyone to look at their own implicit biases, and a call for increased paid opportunities for artists, who will be able to have a larger overall positive impact in connecting and unifying our communities.

The Public Art Commission held their annual retreat September 15, 2020 to set the priorities for the coming two years. One of the priorities identified by the PAC and scheduled to be discussed at their September 17, 2020 regular meeting includes the commission of public art projects with the emphasis on cultural inclusion and social and racial equity. At the retreat, the PAC also met their racial and cultural equity communications consultant, Elizabeth D. Foggie, who is just starting her evaluation work with the City’s Public Art Program and the PAC. Her scope of work includes evaluating the language and processes for better inclusion of Black artists and artists of color and assisting staff in making connections and finding ways to increase artist opportunities for more diverse artists.

Other activities continue to occur according to the calendar shared in the most recent update to the City Council. Updates can be found online on the City of Palo Alto’s web page for Race and Equity (www.cityofpaloalto.org/raceandequity). It will be updated to reflect the most recent times and event dates.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

Engaging the community at-large to provide direction for the City’s Race and Equity strategy has been a priority throughout this process. The City continues to engage the community through a series of Race and Equity conversations. Updates on the City’s efforts can be found on the Race and Equity webpage on the City website (www.cityofpaloalto.org/raceandequity).

**Resource Impact**

There is no fiscal impact to report at this time. Significant staffing resources have been dedicated to this work and future resource impacts are dependent on the actions and direction approved by the City Council.

**Environmental Impact**

This is not a project under Section 21065 for purposes of the California Environmental Quality
Act (CEQA).