



**Boards and Commissions  
Introduction to Diversity, Equity &  
Inclusion  
Planning Commission**

**June 14, 2022**

**Vancouver Planning Commission  
Workshop**

**Alicia Sojourner, Director of diversity, Equity &  
Inclusion**

**CITY OF  
Vancouver  
WASHINGTON**

# Expectations for our time



Shared understanding



Why Equity in planning



Intentional reflection



Understand possible next steps for Commissioners

# Overview and Assumptions



DIVERSITY MATTERS



WE AREN'T JUST TALKING ABOUT INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF BIGOTRY.



INSTITUTIONS RELY UPON PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES THAT CAN PERPETUATE INEQUITY. WE ARE ALL A PART OF INSTITUTIONS AND SYSTEMS.

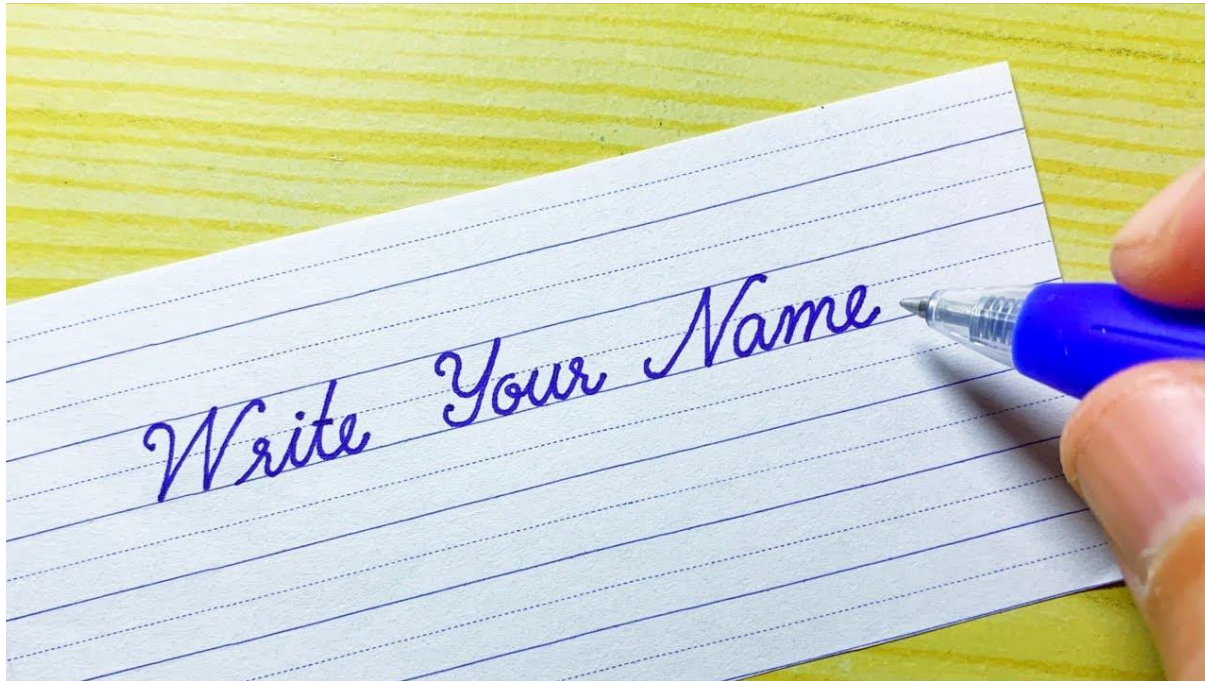


INTERSECTIONALITY HAS A PLACE.



WE ALL HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADVANCING EQUITY WITHIN GOVERNMENT.

# Comfort Test



# Questions



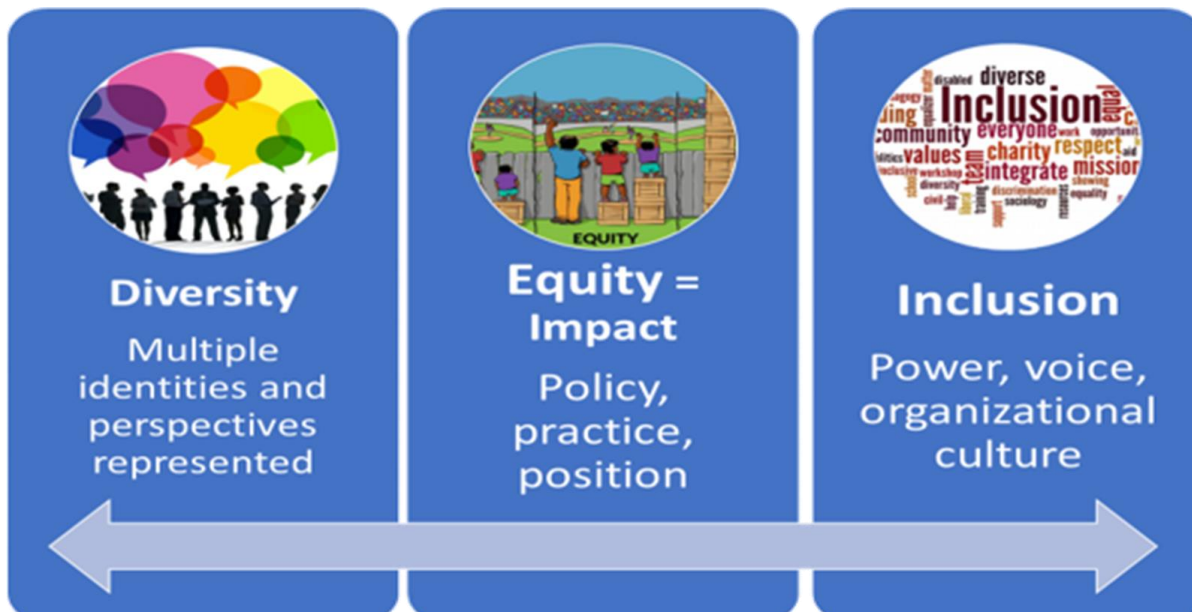
## Pair-off:

Why do you think the City is working to advance DEI?

In what ways does DEI matter to our community?

Why is diversity, equity and inclusion important for the Planning Commissions?

# What is DEI?

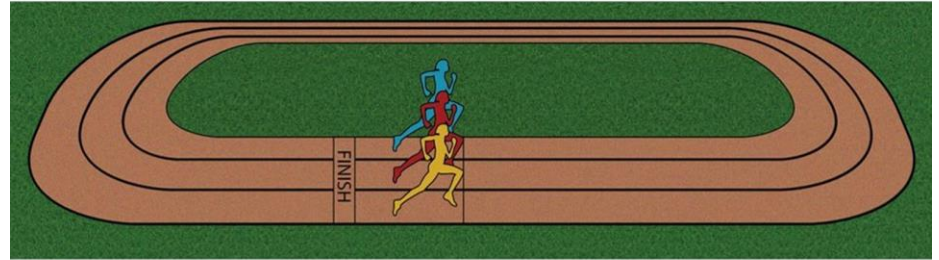


# Diversity

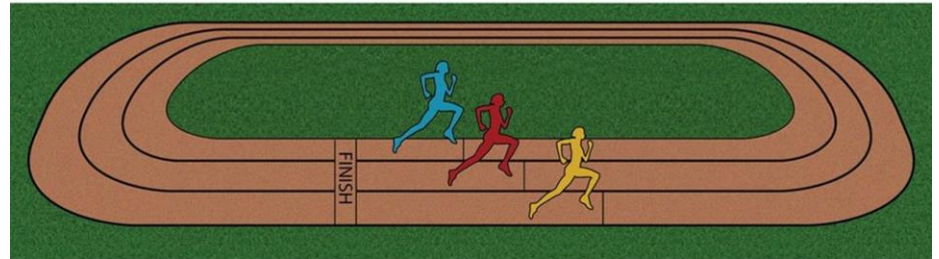


# Equity

“Closing the gaps” so that a single identity does not predict one’s success, while also improving outcomes for all.



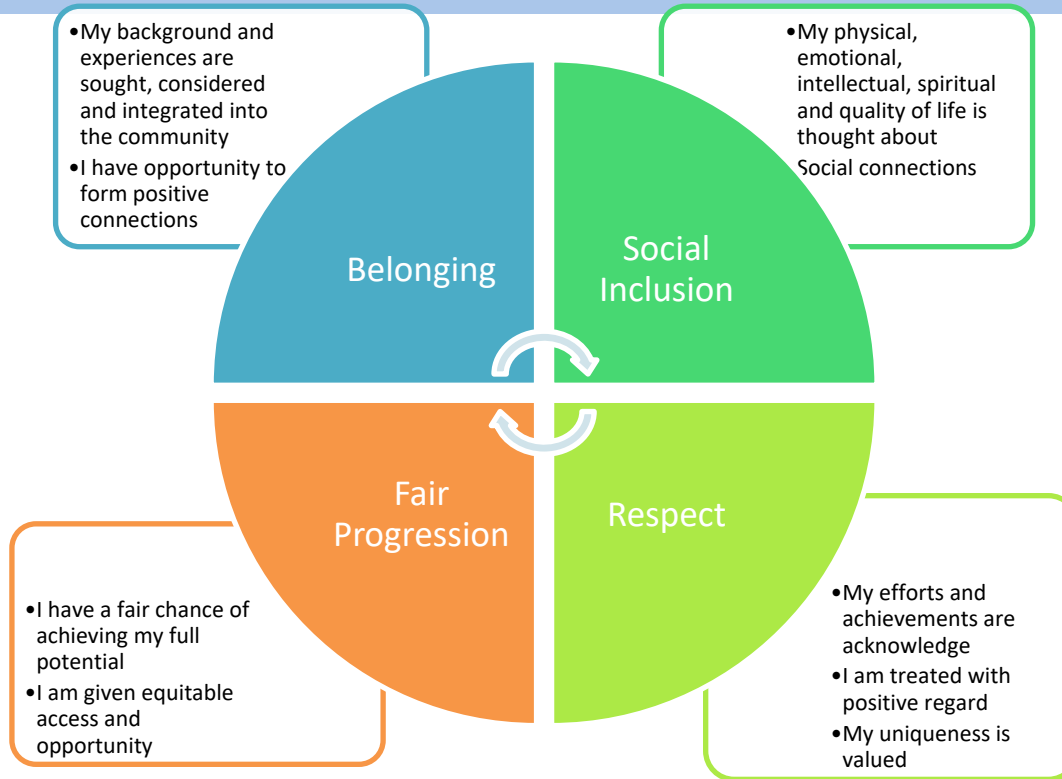
**EQUALITY**



**EQUITY**



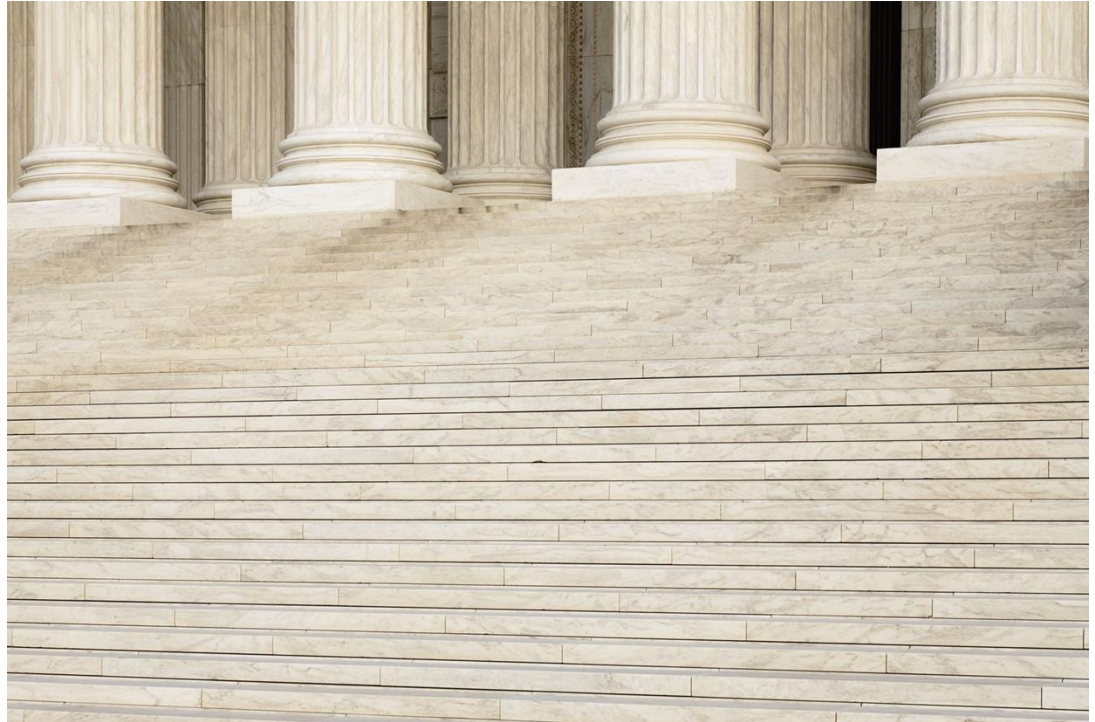
# Inclusion



# Going Deeper...Race & Equity

## The Role of Government

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLMsI92crZw>



# Values and Realities



All men are created equal

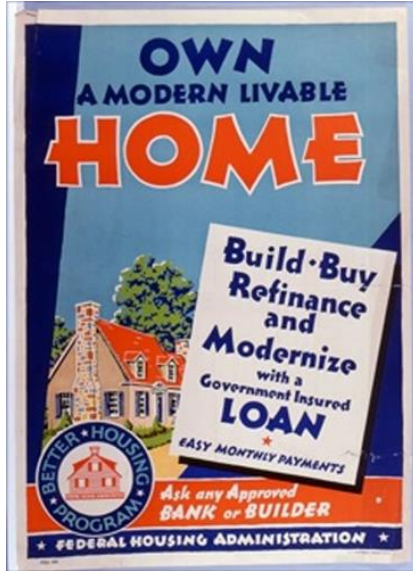


With liberty and justice for all



Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth

# History of government and race



## Explicit Law History

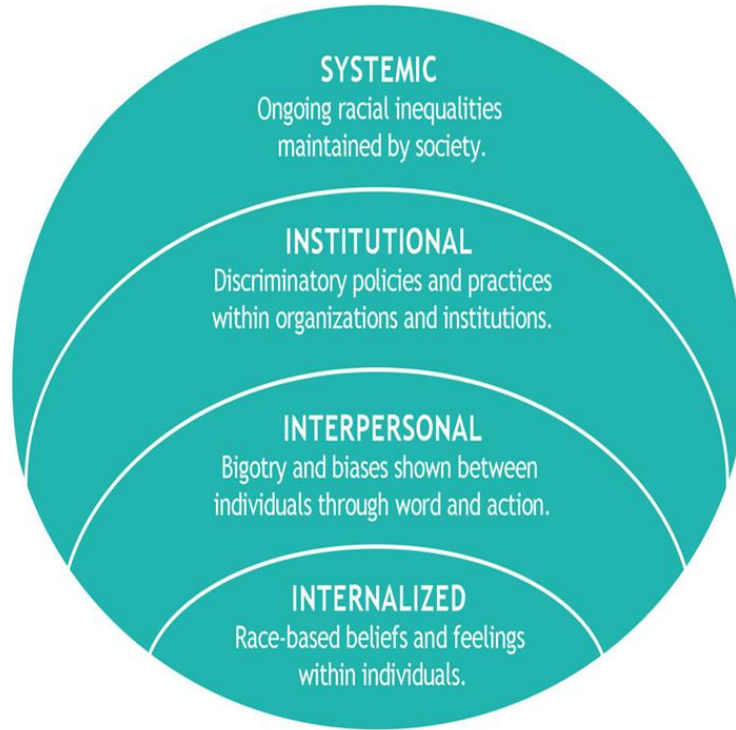
Government explicitly creates and maintains racial inequity.



## Implicit Law History

Discrimination illegal, but “race-neutral” policies and practices perpetuate inequity.

# Levels of Racism



# Why Lead with Race in Planning?



Racial inequities deep and pervasive



Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room



Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization



Specificity matters



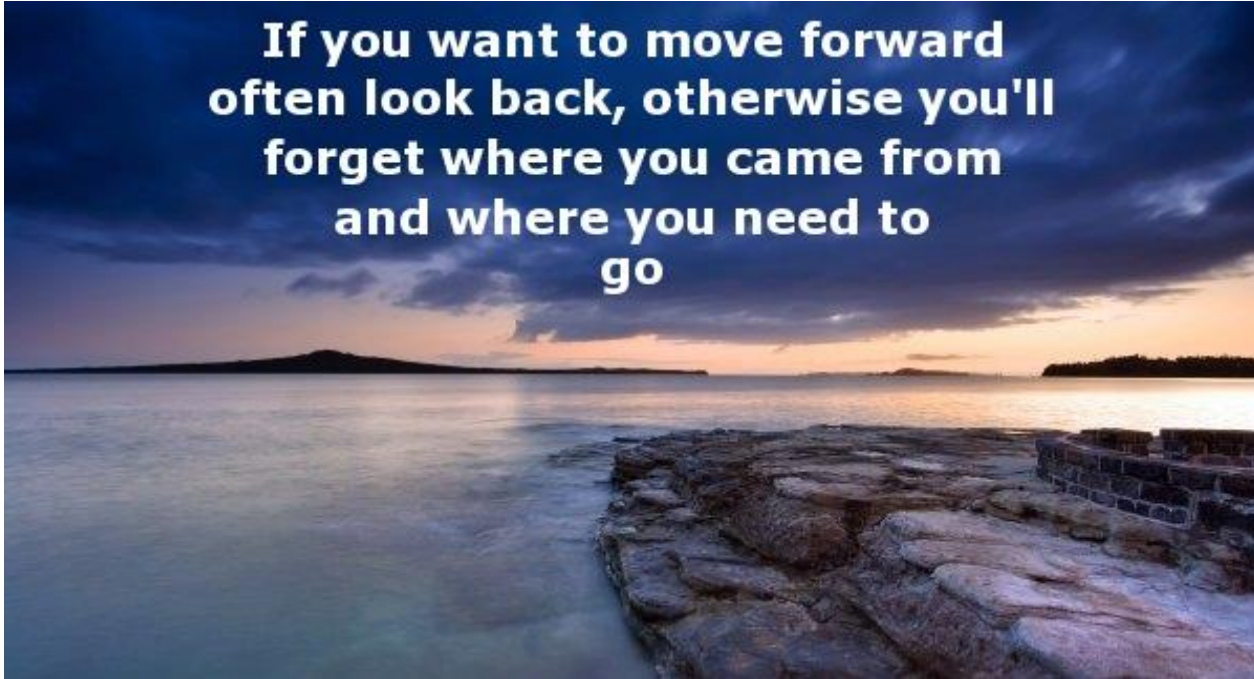
US cast system. We created race and racism



**Race *explicit*, not exclusive** always bring an “intersectional” analysis

# Looking Back to Move Forward

**If you want to move forward  
often look back, otherwise you'll  
forget where you came from  
and where you need to  
go**



# City of Vancouver DEI Journey

**Before  
2019**

**Compliance infrastructure**

- EEO & AA
- GARE
- Diversity
- Staff Liaison Team created

**2020**

**Passively committed to DEI without major changes.**

- GARE
- Development of DEI statement
- Approved FT DEI Director

**2021**

**Actively made commitments to integrate DEI into systems of current dominant norms.**

- DEI Framework
- DEI pedagogy
- Assessment plan
- DEI professional development

**2022**

**Active commitment integrating DEI into current systems.**

- DEI 3-Year Plan
- Boards & Commission DEI development



# Three-year plan

- **Culture:** Ensure that leaders at all levels promote the vision and business case for DEI by taking actions to increase diversity and equity in the workforce and maintain an inclusive workplace.
- **Career:** Recruit, hire, and develop a high-performing workforce that reflects the communities we serve by optimizing experiences throughout an employee's career.
- **Communication:** Develop compelling messages, including opportunities for dialogue, that encourage all employees and community to see the importance of DEI to their personal success and the success of the City.
- **Consistency:** Mature the DEI model to improve the consistency of desired outcomes by strengthening policies and procedures, utilizing technology, and enhancing DEI learning through data.
- **Community:** Encourage DEI within the community. Fostering an equitable and an inclusionary community to live, work, play and learn.
- **Council:** Ensure Councilmembers promote DEI through policymaking, community outreach, and through Boards & commissions.

# Currently, how do WE do our work?



## **Talk: Normalizing the conversation**

Developing and sharing tools to talk about DEI.



## **Build: Capacity building**

Building leadership capacity through coalition building, leadership development and trainings.



## **Shift: Institutional change**

Developing and implementing institutional change strategies to operationalize structural DEI.



## **Bridge: Policy and research**

Working with community groups, other government and national organizations to develop policies that advance DEI.

# What is MY role?



Create opportunities throughout your board and commission meetings have conversations about diversity, equity and/or inclusions



Grow awareness about your board/commission's history and how inequalities have been created



Send/share resources with each other i.e. articles, books, podcast, documentaries



Gain deeper personal awareness



Model inclusiveness



Who is at your table?

# Next Steps & Questions

- Alicia Sojourner, Director DEI
- 360-487-8618

