

CITY OF PORTLAND |
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Strategic Action Plan for Inclusion

Inclusion

Belonging

Welcome

Portland

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



INTRODUCTION

The City of Portland Office of Economic Opportunity is in the final stages of implementing a Strategic Action Plan for Inclusion in Portland. **Our vision** is to ensure that Portland is the most inclusive city in New England by fostering a strong sense of belonging in all aspects of city life.

In order to assess impact and track progress, we have divided the work into **four Outcome areas**.

Each area contains a definition, a series of diverse indicators to help us understand the overall challenges and opportunities and a set of strategies and correspondent activities to overcome the challenges.

We have only included the outcome areas with corresponding definitions, strategies, and actions for feedback. However, each strategy and action is being carefully measured and tracked for success.

The format below is as follows:

Outcome Area: Main overarching pillar.

Strategies: Overarching goals under each outcome area that are to remain intact over time (the what).

Short term expected result for strategy: 1-2 years

Long-term expected result for strategy: 3 years

Actions: Concrete steps to achieve the strategies above (the how). The date by which measurable progress should be attained is included here.



OUTCOME AREAS

1. ECONOMIC
INCLUSION AND
DEVELOPMENT

2. CIVIC INCLUSION

3. SOCIAL INCLUSION
& CULTURAL
INCLUSION

4. WELCOME-ABILITY



ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND DEVELOPMENT

Economic inclusion involves equitable opportunity for activities such as employment, entrepreneurship, and consumerism. Economic development is reliant on harnessing the full potential of all residents and creating an inclusive economy. Immigrants and other underrepresented communities have the skills and assets to thrive, and economic development systems are prepared to leverage new and existing talent. In order to cultivate this talent further, lifelong learning opportunities, language, and other related barriers are addressed to help these communities reach financial stability.



Strategy I: Enhance access to career pathways and successful professional outcomes so that all Portlanders, particularly racially and ethnically diverse populations, including immigrants and refugees, have opportunities for upward economic mobility.

- **Short term expected result:** By the end of year one after implementation, 50% or more of surveyed participants from referral agencies express improvement in accessing meaningful career opportunities, and My Cities of Migration (My COM) expects Portland's Economic Inclusion Median results improve by 5%.
- **Long term expected result:** Three after implementation, the average of all race minority categories, liquid Assets Poverty Rate in Cumberland County is below 59 %

Strategy II: Improve the rate at which adult ESOL students/learners reach English proficiency in the City of Portland .

- **Short term expected result:** By December 2019, mechanism exists to track and analyze collective English results across ESL service providers.
- **Long-term expected result:** By June 2020, the average CASAS level score (or other common assessment standard) for tracked ESOL students in the ESOL collaborative improves ten or more points.

Strategy III: Improve the participation of racially and ethnically diverse entrepreneurs, including immigrants and refugees, in business development offerings, resources, and networks.

- **Short term expected result:** Increase % of racially diverse entrepreneurs in business development offerings, resources, and networks.
- **Long-term expected result:** Increase % of businesses started by people of color AND COM result for Economic Inclusion increases by 5%.



ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS - STRATEGY I:

Foreign Trained Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop professional to professional initiatives, such as a Professional Connector Program, to support the career advancement of foreign-trained individuals. <i>(June 2019)</i> • Support the evaluation of foreign credentials and associated costs related to licensing and certification of foreign-trained individuals for those ineligible for existing supports in this area. <i>(December 2019)</i> • Advocate with the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation and the individual State boards of professional licensing, among others, to mitigate the challenges to licensing for those with foreign credentials and work experience outside of the United States. <i>(June 2020)</i>
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an Employer Advisory Group, with cross-sector representation, to assess collective needs and efforts in order to increase the hiring and advancement of racially diverse and/or foreign-trained candidates. <i>(June 2019)</i> • Develop ready to use tool-kits and best practices for employers to support their attraction and retention of a diverse workforce. <i>(December 2019)</i> • Support employer needs in various ways, such as hosting an annual employer only forum on How to Attract and Retain Diverse Talent to learn of gaps, best practices, and collective work. <i>(December 2019)</i> • Promote systematic, cross-sector job shadow opportunities, such as Job Shadow Day, to support the labor needs of employers and the attraction and retention of a local motivated workforce, which includes those seeking employment and high school aged youth. <i>(June 2020)</i>
Career-Laddering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the continuation, expansion or creation of customized, informed programming, tailored to the needs of high schools students and others, in order to ensure individuals are trained for, supported in and connected to employment with strong career pathways within Portland's thriving sectors. <i>(December 2019)</i>
Communication Repository	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the connection to and leverage of resources across organizations serving targeted job seekers and sector employers by establishing learning communities and shared systems of communication between workforce development representatives and staff. <i>(June 2020)</i>



ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS - STRATEGY II:

- Continue to enhance collaboration between adult English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) service providers in the City of Portland through the ESOL collaborative to mitigate gaps and duplication of service and maximize collective results. *(June 2020)*
- Expand or establish project based on the job opportunities for high English proficiency learners to improve upon their sector based technical language. *(December 2020)*
- Advocate to establish one or more employer-based English language program for its limited English proficient employees. *(December 2019)*

ACTIONS - STRATEGY III:

- Continue Immigrant Entrepreneurs – Starting a Business in Maine for Immigrant Entrepreneurs in partnership with the City of Portland’s Economic Development Department. *(February 2019, June 2019, November 2019)*
- Advocate to ensure that Portland’s entrepreneurship options serve all residents including entrepreneurs of racial, linguistic, and religious minorities, and address their unique barriers. *(June 2019)*



CIVIC INCLUSION

Civic inclusion draws on a resident's ability to feel a sense of belonging and community. Civic engagement opportunities ensure that residents, including newcomers, fully participate in civic life by increasing access to leadership and democratic spaces. These opportunities, such as volunteering and participation in civic engagement, must be present for all, including racially and ethnically diverse populations.

Strategy I: Improve the meaningful civic engagement of racially and ethnically diverse populations, including immigrants and refugees.

- **Short term expected result:** 30% or more of those participants surveyed in OEO led initiatives, report higher civic engagement as a result of the interventions.
- **Long-term expected result:** One year after implementation of OEO programs, COM Civic Engagement results improve by 5%.

ACTIONS - STRATEGY I:

- Support the inclusion of more racially & ethnically diverse individuals in leadership positions (boards, commissions) by adapting & implementing a leadership program such as a Natural Helpers' Program and/or Nashville's My City Academy. *(February 2020)*
- Host Naturalization ceremonies at City Hall to celebrate our sense of community and foster an inclusive environment where we all have a strong sense of belonging. *(January 2019)*
- Promote Naturalization efforts across the city of Portland. *(June 2020)*
- Develop or expand a series of educational workshops and training sessions for immigrants and other populations focused on business permits, tenant rights or other local learning or regulations. *(December 2020)*
- Support implementation of Language Access City Policy to ensure all Portlanders, including Portland's Limited English Proficient population, have access to City services and Council sessions. *(December 2018)*
- Improve the collection and completion rate of race, ethnicity, and language (REL) data within City Services. *(December 2019)*
- Continue to promote diversity and inclusion best practices for all City of Portland staff, including but not limited to: racial bias training and intercultural awareness. *(June 2019)*



CULTURAL & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Cultural inclusion is defined by the ability to foster intercultural dialogue by building connections between newcomers and longer-term residents to strengthen relationships and communicate shared values. Accountability for anti-discrimination and support for differences in religious practice or cultural orientation is a central focus. Cultural inclusion spans over many spheres, including health inclusion. The demand for respect of cultural and religious differences deems it necessary to adapt practices to a diversity of cross-sector cultural expressions.

Social inclusion allows for the participation and empowerment of all city residents to engage in community life and actively promotes a sense of belonging and shared identity. This sense of belonging is accomplished in a variety of ways, including but not limited to: demanding access to high-quality green space, transportation and housing for all Portlanders, and fostering trust between residents, including newcomers, and local safety agencies.

Strategy I: Improve Upon the Intercultural Awareness between Newcomers and Receiving Communities and foster social connection.

- **Short term expected result:** Aggregated results from all supported programs and initiatives indicate a greater sense of belonging and learning by all participants.
- **Long term expected result:** By December 2020, Portland's my COM Social Inclusion and Cultural Inclusion results increase by 3% or more.

ACTIONS - STRATEGY I:

- Continue implementation of U.S. cultural orientation for recent General Assistance (GA) recipients from abroad/foreign-born and continue to expand reach beyond GA. (December 2018)
- Create an online central repository (the PortLand of Opportunity website) to highlight reports and best practices to improve/reach racial equity city-wide. (January 2019)
- Continue to expose all Portlanders to our global neighbors and their traditions through a variety of ways, including the public television show Global Connections. (June 2019)
- Ensure that Culture Grams are made available to City of Portland staff and published on the PortLand of Opportunity website and social media. (December 2019)



WELCOME-ABILITY

Municipal welcome-ability is defining characteristics that display a city's openness, preparedness, and support to integrate newcomers. This feature encourages the inclusion of underrepresented groups in leadership and civic life. Public service providers and city branding reflect values of diversity.

Strategy I: Honor, celebrate and welcome newcomers to Portland and all who call Portland home.

- **Short term expected result:** Aggregated results from all supported programs and initiatives indicate a greater sense of belonging and learning by all participants OR Portland's My COM Welcome-ability results improve.
- **Long-term expected result:** Portland's My COM Welcome-ability results improve.

Strategy II: Actively promote Portland as a culturally and racially diverse, welcoming and vibrant city.

- **Short term expected result:** Social media and other qualitative participatory feedback validates Portland's welcomability.
- **Long term expected result:** Portland's my COM Welcome-ability results improve by 5%

ACTIONS - STRATEGY I:

- Celebrate Welcoming Week with a series of events. *(September 2019)*
- Ensure that newcomers to Portland are aware of the resources available to them by continuing to utilize the PortLand of Opportunity video game. *(December 2018)*
- Create and test journey maps to help newcomers navigate the magnitude of resources available to them in Portland. *(June 2019)*

ACTIONS - STRATEGY II:

- Support city-wide celebrations, such as Restaurant Week and First Friday Art Walk, and ensure that they honor and include the uniqueness of Portland's cultural, linguistic, and/or religious minorities. *(September 2020)*
- Capture a variety of testimonials with the message "I belong in Portland because" and "Portland speaks to me because..." from communities of color and share their stories of success on the website, social media, and other similar platforms. *(June 2019)*
- Identify partners with the goal/mission to promote Portland nationally and globally, and look for opportunities for new collaborative programs and outreach efforts. *(September 2019)*

