




THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

TODD GLORIA
MAYOR

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: May 19, 2025

TO: Councilmember Henry Foster III
Councilmember Sean Elo-Rivera

FROM: Mayor Todd Gloria 

SUBJECT: Ensuring the Sustainability and Effectiveness of San Diego's Race and Equity Efforts

I received your May 7, 2025, memorandum requesting that my Administration ensures the sustainability and effectiveness of the City of San Diego's Race and Equity (R&E) efforts as that team merges with the Human Resources Department (HR). Given the ripple effects of rhetoric at the Federal level, I deeply appreciate both of your offices' advocacy in our collective mission to further equity.

I agree with your statement that "... The Office of Race and Equity laid the initial groundwork for long-term systemic change, but this work requires time, continuity, and institutional support to yield measurable outcomes." However, I disagree with the notion that transitioning this division into HR erodes those efforts. Rather, it amplifies and institutionalizes them. I have provided responses below to your list of requests further outlining this point:

1. *A clear organizational structure detailing ORE's placement within the Human Resources Department, including staffing levels, reporting structures, and decision-making authority.*

The R&E team now sits in HR's Employee Experience Division alongside the People and Organization Development Program (POD), reporting directly to the POD Manager. The R&E team retains the same decision-making authority as before the February 2025 Citywide reorganization; however, their work is now being championed through a different leadership chain of command via the HR Director and respective Deputy Chief Operating Officer.

2. *An explanation of how ORE will retain the independence and authority necessary to provide oversight and leadership on racial and social equity initiatives across all City departments.*

As a Mayoral department, HR's R&E team continues to retain the authority necessary to provide oversight and leadership on racial and social equity initiatives across all City departments. As unclassified employees, the entire R&E team retains significant responsibilities for formulating or administering departmental policies and programs per the [Personnel Regulations](#). This means both before and after the February 2025 Citywide organization restructure, R&E's business function retains full Mayoral authority level. These authorities and responsibilities are now designated by the Mayor to the HR Director and respective Deputy Chief Operating Officer.

R&E Authority, Oversight and Leadership on Racial and Social Equity Initiatives across City Departments	
Before Feb. 2025:	After Feb. 2025:
Mayoral authority level. Chief of Race & Equity reporting to Mayor with all rights associated with mayoral authority, oversight and leadership.	Mayoral authority level. Human Resources Director reporting to Mayor with all rights associated with mayoral authority, oversight and leadership.

3. *A description of how ORE's core functions previously led by an Executive Director will be maintained, including who will be specifically accountable for ensuring the ORE's mission is fully realized.*

The core functions of the R&E team are not only being maintained but will continue to be advanced, amplified, and fully operationalized across the City under the leadership of the HR Director and Deputy Chief Operating Officer. Ultimately, as was true when the Office of Race and Equity existed as a standalone department, the Mayor is the final level of accountability. Accountability for racial and social equity initiatives will continue to function through Equity-Centered Coaching – this has not changed with the FY25 consolidation. The recent restructure has streamlined support and improved the ratio of R&E coaches per department. This increased capacity allows for more focused collaboration with departments on operational, policy, procedural, and budgetary decision-making with an equity lens.

4. *A comprehensive breakdown of the resources allocated to ORE to ensure it can effectively fulfill all its responsibilities.*

In addition to the financial consolidation of R&E into HR, additional efficiencies and resource-sharing benefits accelerate the mission and deliverables of R&E's operational portfolio areas. Several of the benefits are listed below and will further R&E's focus areas

of Equity-Centered Coaching, Learning and Development, Policy and Systems Change, and Evaluation and Engagement.

Through the FY25 consolidation, R&E's Equity-Centered Coaching (e.g., *Budget Equity Coaching & Training*; *Tactical Equity Planning & Training*; *Equity Teams*) will leverage existing Citywide training calendars and systems to integrate R&E coaching and training, ensuring customers (departments/employees) have user-friendly, easy to navigate Budget and Tactical Equity training experience. Additionally, R&E will be able to amplify communication of equity outcomes and successes in internal communications (i.e., *The Insider*; the *PODcast* newsletter; Citywide internal communications; Citynet feature cards; all-unclassified email communications; and SuccessFactors Learning Feature tiles).

R&E's Learning and Development portfolio (e.g., *Race & Equity Academy Foundations*; *Innovation Lab*; and *Lead-to-Transform*) will see the creation of new online learning content that can be assigned Citywide. Integrating with HR's People and Organization Development team provides for more efficient teamwork with e-learning design experts, such as the Digital Learning Program Coordinator. The consolidation allows for seamless integration of R&E's content recommendations and equity-lens into *all* Citywide training programs (e.g., Supervisor's Academy, Public Service Management Certificate, City Management Fellowship, and all required HR training content).

The integration of R&E's Policy and Systems Change portfolio (e.g., *SLBE program collaboration between Purchasing & Contracting Department and HR*; *Climate Equity Fund project selection*) with specialized HR policy, operations, labor knowledge and expertise will amplify their ability to effect change within the City organization. These direct, in-house connections will better guide and drive large-scale change initiatives in the organization. R&E will also have direct access to HR's People Analytics team to utilize City data system information to inform recommendations on equity as well as connections with HR's recruiting team to advance equity in hiring and promotion policies.

R&E's Evaluation and Engagement portfolio will continue to enhance the Parks Master Plan through collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Department to support equity goals in all communities. In addition, the development and establishment of the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide, in collaboration with the Planning Department, continues with upcoming training for all employees slated for development this summer.

5. *A detailed accounting in the Mayor's proposed budget of how each department's budget incorporates its respective Tactical Equity Plan and metrics for measuring progress.*

While department budgets generally reflect and align to their Tactical Equity Plans (TEPs), the Administration continues to explore ways to make that alignment more

explicit. It should be noted that TEPs reflect current, near-term operating priorities within departments, and may not reflect *all* of a department's operating activities. Budget Equity Impact Statements (BEISs) currently reflect how budget adjustments impact both disparities at large as well as goals identified in each department's TEP. Looking ahead, the Human Resources, Performance & Analytics, and Finance Department teams have planned for **phased, future updates to the public budget formulation (PBF) software over the course of the upcoming fiscal year to more closely track how funding decision packages align to specific TEP goals.**

Metrics for success are reflected as a component of TEPs. As currently displayed on the TEP Dashboard, measures of success qualitatively state what progress looks like at the TEP-outcome level. Additional work is planned **over the course of the upcoming fiscal year to add quantitative measures alongside these qualitative descriptions**, along with additional department support for closer action-tracking of TEP-related activities. Additionally, R&E will partner with the Performance & Analytics department to develop and assess broader, more comprehensive equity-related metrics. This effort will identify metrics along with the systems needed to track how these metrics change overtime, as tied to specific department and City actions, as well as funding or other resource investments.

As you stated in your memo, I also believe that we are aligned in our shared goal to advance equity within our City and for our constituents, as highlighted in my May 5, 2025 Inside San Diego article: www.insidesandiego.org/equity-remains-central-focus-citys-draft-budget. I look forward to continued dialogue as we approach the new fiscal year and working collaboratively to ensure the long-term success and operationalization of work that furthers racial and social equity initiatives.

cc: Paola Avila, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Matt Vespi, Chief Financial Officer
Alia Khouri, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Julie Rasco, Director, Human Resources
Charles Modica, Independent Budget Analyst
Daniel Horton, Chief of Staff, Office of Councilmember Henry L. Foster III
Molly Weber, Chief of Staff, Office of Councilmember Sean Elo-Rivera