

## CapitolRiver Council (CRC) Strategic Action Plan – Inclusion (Adopted by the CRC Board, January 2022)

### Inclusion With Intention

The focus of CRC's community engagement work is to improve livability in the Downtown neighborhood, and in the Capitol area (District 17). CRC facilitates participation in public decision-making by engaging residents, business owners, building owners, and workers in discussions about local issues, and about development projects that affect livability in District 17. CRC also develops recommendations based on the outcomes of community engagement activities.

CRC has created a Code of Conduct and Rules of Procedure for board meetings to promote a culture of respect and inclusion. CRC staff and board members have mutual responsibilities to periodically review those documents and to critically assess whether someone's behavior is detrimental to that culture. Meeting facilitators should periodically invite people to provide feedback (positive or negative), and to assess whether people are being treated with respect in our discussions.

- Strategic Vision Statement: Inclusion is achieved when someone with any kind of identity feels welcome, safe, and able to access the process of decision-making in our work.
- When topics are being discussed, the following types of questions should be asked as a way to assess whether CRC has effectively created a diverse, inclusive, and respectful environment that is conducive to learning and / or toward the goal of developing a specific recommendation:
  - Who will be impacted by our decisions?
  - Who is here and who is missing?
  - What am I doing to demonstrate that other people are welcome and safe to fully participate in our work?
  - What do we know?
  - What don't we know?
  - What do we need to know?
  - Who do we need to ask?
  - Who will be most impacted by this decision? Have they been consulted?

### Framework for Maintaining an Inclusive Culture: IDEA

- **Inclusion** is the intentional creation of spaces and services with diversity in mind, to enable all individuals to succeed and thrive.
- **Diversity** is the differences inherent in individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, ability (cognitive and physical), age, cultural background and values, ethnicity, gender, language, nation of origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and the intersections therein.
- **Equity** is social justice, and the fair treatment of individuals, based on their individual and diverse needs, viewed through the lens of historical power structures and social norms.
- **Accessibility** is building equitable access to our resources, services, and spaces for all customers and accommodations where accessibility isn't possible.

Diversity, Equity and Accessibility are **strategies we use to achieve Inclusion**.

- Diversity – how do we make sure that we are maintaining good relationships with the full range of potential stakeholders (different age ranges, different racial / ethnic backgrounds, different physical abilities and / or challenges, different levels of income, etc.)?
- Equity – how do we treat people justly and fairly, so that everyone has access to power and is involved in setting social norms?
- Accessibility – it's not just about providing physical access to buildings. It's about access to everything that we do. Where there are barriers to access, accommodations will be made.

CRC board members, staff and volunteers agree to the following shared goals:

- Ensure that the City's planning and public policy decision-making processes include diverse voices and a local perspective.
- Adopt policies and practices that intentionally create space for residents who currently are under-represented.
- Pursue systemic work that reflects the needs and priorities of residents who have been historically under-represented (in government decision-making processes).
- Embrace the concept, "not about us without us." Tell your own story. Provide your own feedback. Avoid making comments about what you think someone else might say who has a different experience than yours.
- Recruit board members and volunteers who reflect the diversity of the neighborhood (demographic data for District 17 is available on the Wilder Foundation website):  
<https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/neighborhoods/minneapolis-saint-paul>
- Comply with City regulations related to Equal Opportunity in hiring / human resources policies, and in supporting women-owned and minority-owned businesses:  
<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/human-rights-equal-economic-opportunity/contract-compliance-business-development/vendor>

### **Recruiting / Engaging Volunteers Who Reflect the Diversity of District 17**

Some people rarely use email or social media, or don't feel comfortable attending in-person meetings to share their opinions in a group of people. Strategies or tactics to recruit board members and volunteers:

- Encourage people to sign up for CRC emails (and send emails that provide information about our work and about opportunities to respond to local plans and projects).
- Start conversations on Facebook and Twitter, and / or invite people to attend events.
- Form partnerships with organizations that are engaging stakeholders in District 17. Seek new partnerships with organizations who are engaging stakeholders whose voices seem to be missing from CRC's work.
- Develop and maintain a professional relationship with at least one resident in each building, and, if applicable, with a staff person who serves as a point of contact (such as a property manager or condo association representative). CRC staff, board members and volunteers agree to work together to develop and maintain these relationships.