DISCUSSION DRAFT March 22, 2011

<u>Equity Office Concept and Creation</u>

Who:
(recent history of how we got to this point)

- The idea to create an Equity office represents a convergence of many voices – community members, elected officials and city staff – that all came to the conclusion that governments working in the City of Portland, and the city as a whole needs to take steps to ensure we are a more equitable place.
- A few of the voices that worked to initiate the creation of an office include:
    - Portland Plan Equity Initiative – drafted by the Portland Plan Equity Technical Advisory Group, currently out for public review
    - Coalition of Communities of Color
    - Urban League of Portland
    - Center for Intercultural Organizing
    - Oregon Public Health Institute
    - Upstream Public Health
    - Mayor Adams and Commissioner Fritz
    - Many more have contacted us since the announcement to express their support and excitement for this effort.
- Data sources that support the request for an equity initiative include:
    - Vision PDX Report
    - Immigrant and Refugee Task Force Report
    - The State of Black Oregon 2009
    - Coalition of Communities of Color Disparities Study
    - Making the Invisible Visible
    - IRCO Community Needs Assessment
    - Coalition for a Livable Future's Equity Atlas

Mayor Adams and Commissioner Fritz will include the stakeholders listed above, and others, including the Portland Commission on Disability, the Human Rights Commission, Diversity and Civic Leadership partners, neighborhood/business/higher education/nonprofit leaders and City staff in conversations over the next three months to help shape the creation of this Equity office.

The Mayor and Commissioner soon will convene a creation committee, focus groups, and community meetings to provide advice on the function and structure of this office.

A Community Forum will be held May 18, 2011, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., to share information and discuss the proposal. Contact sara.hussein@portlandoregon.gov for details and location.

Initial thinking on concepts of function and structure:

Some City positions will move from their current bureaus to the new Office. For instance, it is envisioned that the staff positions in the Office of Human Relations will be incorporated into the Office of Equity. Other positions in the City might be formally tied to the Office of Equity but stay located in another bureau. New positions will also be created in the Office of Equity. Likely, there will be an initial start-up in FY 2011-12 followed by expansion in 2012-13.

The relationship between the Office of Equity and existing Commissions, committees, boards and community partners, and any new advisory groups, is to be determined.

What:

- Equity is when everyone has full and equal access to opportunities necessary to meet their essential needs, advance their well-being, and achieve their full potential.
- Neither the City of Portland government nor the city of Portland's community structure and functions currently lead to equitable outcomes
- Equity includes the broadest possible factors for consideration, including but not limited to age, gender, race, religion, national origin, socioeconomic status, geography in the city, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.
- Initial scoping will include reviewing the proposal from the Portland Plan's Equity Initiative, the letter from the Urban League and other cosigners, and the letter from the Coalition of Communities of Color and cosigners. We will assess how and whether the Office can meet each of their recommendations in the short and long term.
- The Portland Plan Equity Initiative proposes to:
    - Establish an ongoing Office of Equity to accomplish approved goals. The Office would be tasked with:
        - Evaluating government processes and programs, and holding bureaus accountable to set equitable goals.
        - Assisting bureaus in setting metrics, designing data collection and developing accountability reports.
        - Publishing regular progress reports.
        - Working with private sector and community partners in a way that supplements, complements and supports the good work already under way.
- The Urban League proposes that the Office of Equity serve these functions:
    - Set up accountability mechanisms
    - Track and collect data related to equity/disparities in city processes, decisions, outcomes
    - Equitable hiring and contracting
    - Lead a city-wide Race and Social Justice effort
    - Equitable budgeting
    - Title VI Civil Rights compliance

    - Title II ADA compliance
    - Guide other bureaus to build their capacity to achieve equity
    - Establish an ongoing City Equity and Accountability Advisory Council tasked to establish the mission, structure & staffing of the office and to oversee the Office once established
- The Coalition of Communities of Color proposes that the following: "infrastructure" is needed by the City to reduce disparities:
    - Enter into partnerships with community organizations
    - Make public commitments to eliminate disparities, in writing
    - Implement research practices that uniformly make disparities visible
    - Create accountability structures that ensure disparity reduction efforts are successful
    - Implement equity based funding

  In order to advance this infrastructure, CCC proposes the following steps:
    - Begin a partnership with entities representing communities of color
    - Consolidate the infrastructure recommendations to ensure they are customized for the City and each bureau
    - Finalize review of accountability practices in operation in other jurisdictions
    - Develop research protocol that will form the basis for more culturally appropriate data collection
    - Develop an equity based funding formula
    - Implementation that includes the Office and the CCC co-constructing policy and procedural documents for identified priority areas

Based on the input received, Mayor Adams and Commissioner Fritz intend to establish a permanent Office of Equity to accomplish approved equity goals.

    - Key initial tasks of the Office, building on and in collaboration with existing City work, will be to:
        - Assess what work is already being done in City bureaus, and how to support all staff in viewing all work through the equity lens
        - Complete research, develop goals, design change strategies, create metrics, design data collection standards, and develop accountability reports, for City of Portland functions
        - Build an effective broad-based coalition of public, private and nongovernmental organizations to speed achievement of defined goals
        - Publish regular progress reports.
        - Support and grow good work already under way.
        - Assess whether and how requested actions in Urban League and CCC proposals, and others including requests from the Portland Commission on Disability and the Human Rights Commission, can be implemented
- In addition to the internal work within the City of Portland government, the Office will have a strong external component, incorporating and expanding on the

community outreach and engagement work of the Office of Human Relations and other programs.

- The Office will include avenues to support Portlanders' needs to address civil rights/social justice issues.
- The Office will be established by the City Council on the recommendation of the Mayor and Commissioner and in consultation with the Human Rights Commission, the Portland Commission on Disability, the Coalition of Communities of Color, the Diversity and Civic Leadership Program Partners, Neighborhood leaders, business leaders, research and education experts, community members, and government staff.
- New efforts will initially focus on reducing racial and ethnic disparities, and on equity for people with disabilities.
- All City of Portland related work will be reviewed for improvement.
- Commissioner Fritz and Mayor Adams start this work placing high value on continuing and strengthening the Human Rights Commission and Portland Commission on Disability.

Where:

The Office will be an independent City bureau, assigned to Commissioner Fritz and with the ongoing strong partnership of Mayor Adams. The Creation Committee, City staff, and diverse community input will assist in thinking through how this Office will best be structured and located within the City of Portland, and how it will partner with Portlanders in the community.

When:

The Creation Committee, an as-yet undetermined group of selected community and City staff members, will begin meeting in April and work through the end of June to help guide the beginning structure of the office beginning July 1, 2011. Individuals and groups are welcome to email Commissioner Fritz with input.

A proposed budget is due mid-April. Establishment of the Office is dependent on approval of the budget request by the City Council.

Selected community leaders will participate in the hiring process for the Director, with the final choice made by Commissioner Fritz and Mayor Adams jointly.

The structure(s) for community members to provide ongoing advice on the Office will be determined through the discussions on setting up the Office.

Larger community meetings and open houses will be held in May and after creation of the Office. A large public forum is scheduled for May 18, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., location to be announced.

The Office will be created and funded by the beginning of July.