



# MEMO TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**HEARING DATE: May 6, 2021**

April 30, 2021

**FROM:**  RICH HILLIS  
**Staff Contact:** Tameeka Bennett – [628.652.7465]  
[Tameeka.Bennett@sfgov.org](mailto:Tameeka.Bennett@sfgov.org)

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY EQUITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## Introduction

San Francisco Planning would like to introduce the [San Francisco Community Equity Advisory Council](#), a newly-formed advisory body to the Department on race and social equity. The nomination process for this Equity Council was an interdepartmental effort. The Equity Council is a group of community leaders dedicated to addressing racial and social equity. Through thoughtful and collaborative deliberations, they are advising City staff on strategic policies, strategies, and investments; and elevating the voices of our American Indian and Black communities and other communities of color in City decisions. This advisory body will work with staff to ensure that 222 future policies, planning processes and practices will ensure a just San Francisco for all.

## Background

Racial and social inequities have long been part of the intrinsic make up of our country and have deep-seated roots in the laws, policies and ordinances we've passed throughout history. And like many cities across the country, San Francisco has had its share of discriminatory practices constraining the resources and well-being of American Indian and Black communities as well as other low-income communities of color. Inequities have reached an unbearable level in our current health, housing and economic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

San Francisco is at a turning point and has taken the opportunity to shift towards a more just and equitable future for every community member in our City. Mayor London Breed and Supervisor Fewer led the creation of the Office of Racial Equity. This Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commissions both passed Equity Resolutions. The Planning Department is addressing and correcting planning and land use practices that perpetuated social and racial inequities and displaced communities of color by developing a

Racial and Social Equity Action Plan. The Planning Department is collaborating with stakeholders and City agencies on equitable recovery strategies, a housing plan, and community strategies.

Any racial and social equity initiative must start with the people, with a thoughtful dialogue among our American Indian and Black communities, other communities of color, and low-income communities. This acknowledgement led to the formation of the Community Equity Advisory Council (Equity Council). This Equity Council is a group of eleven San Francisco leaders dedicated to providing meaningful input on key racial and social equity policies and strategies in the City as well as to support the multiple ongoing dialogues that our communities and sister agencies are having on equity solutions. The Equity Council will guide the City's racial and social equity work, as directed by the Planning and Historic Preservation Commissions' Equity Resolutions, and the San Francisco Office of Racial Equity. These Resolutions have identified paths for Planning Department staff to place equity at the center of our policies and strategies. Some of their key points include the following:

- Reframe planning to prioritize the needs of American Indian and Black communities as well as other communities of color; and the various disadvantaged communities by revising the **budget and work program**.
- Respond to the health, economic and housing **crisis** resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic; and prioritizing the needs of American Indian, Black, Latinx and Asian communities, as well as other low-income communities of color.
- Expand **investment and access** to open space, housing, transportation, quality amenities and public services; and reduce exposure to environmental pollution in these communities, **without displacement**.
- Fund, develop and expand **participation** for American Indian communities, Black communities and other communities of color.
- Develop an Equity **Plan** with accountability by identifying actions and performance measures, incorporating a racial and social equity lens in budgeting decisions, and reporting to the Commission on its progress at regular intervals.
- Address **representation** of American Indian and Black communities as well as other communities of color within the Department across all staff levels.

### **Purpose of the Equity Council**

The Equity Council's mandate is to create a pathway for a broader representation from vulnerable and impacted communities and bring a deep understanding of those communities to guide the City's equity work. A critical part of the Equity Council's work plan is to develop a platform and a process for deeper community engagement to ensure productive dialogues between city agencies and communities of color, low-income communities, and other vulnerable populations.

The Equity Council will **advise** staff on addressing the current crisis and resolving historic inequities by supporting community engagement and plans and policies that open access to wealth and health for our American Indian, Black and other communities of color and low-income communities.

The Council will focus on five **priority tasks**:

- Planning Department Budget and Priorities
- Recovery Strategies
- Housing Element and other General Plan Elements
- Community Engagement
- Racial and Social Equity Plan

### **EQUITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

*Please see webpage for bios*

**Tiffany Carter** - SF Black Wallstreet, Co-Founder

**Majeid Crawford** - New Community Leadership Foundation, Executive Director

**Norma Garcia** - Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA), Director, Policy & Advocacy

**Oscar Grande** - Mission Housing, Community Workforce Manager

**Mahsa Hakimi** - Castro LGBTQ Cultural District, Advisory Board Member

**Lara Kiswani** - Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC), Executive Director

**Raquel Redondiez** - SOMA Pilipinas Cultural District, Executive Director

**Deleano Seymour** - Code Tenderloin, Founder

**Mary E. Travis-Allen** - American Indian Cultural District, Board President

**Ben Wong** - Wah Mei School, Executive Director

**Malcolm Yeung** - Chinatown Community Development Center, Executive Director