April 25, 2017

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 329
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: 2017 Marin County Racial Equity Action Plan

Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATION:
Please review and adopt the 2017 Marin County Racial Equity Action Plan

BACKGROUND:
In January 2016, the County of Marin committed to sending a group of 12 County employees to participate in a Bay Area cohort discussing race in government. The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a joint project of the Center for Social Inclusion and Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, brought together Bay Area governments to move forward with a racial equity agenda, which included normalizing conversations about race, operationalizing new policies and practices, and organizing both within government and with the community. During the work with GARE, we were asked to specifically focus on racial inequities within local government. In order to address racial inequities that continue, as a county government, we need to name it specifically so that we can identify ways to advance racial equity in our community and in our workforce.

The twelve employee participants in the GARE program in 2016 included employees from the Board of Supervisors (BOS), Community Development Agency (CDA), Marin County Free Library (MCFL), Human Resources (HR), County Administrator’s Office (CAO), Health and Human Services (HHS) and Marin County Parks (Parks). We were committed to writing this Racial Equity Action Plan for the County of Marin as part of the year of study. After completing an assessment of racial and cultural perceptions in our organization, this plan clearly lays out initiatives, metrics and deadlines across three important race equity goals.

Our first goal in the plan is to ensure that Marin County staff understand and are committed to achieving racial equity. We know that we can only work to achieve racial equity in our community if our employees are educated about and champions of race equity. This goal includes actions such as creating a Racial Equity Work Team, building the infrastructure to advance racial equity, ensuring that racial equity is an important part of training and developing and implementing a racial equity tool to evaluate programs and policies in the County.

The second goal in the plan focuses on our outreach in the community. Specifically, this goal identifies initiatives to ensure that the County of Marin is an effective and inclusive government that engages the community. Equity is a focus for many organizations in the County. Working together we will deliver better outcomes. The actions included within this goal focus on our partnerships with institutions and advocacy groups in Marin. By creating a shared equity calendar, shared equity
resources, and participating in community equity initiatives, we broaden the conversation and learn from our partners about strategies that are working to advance racial equity in Marin.

Finally, goal three focuses on ensuring that the County is an equitable employer where the workforce demographics reflect the demographics of the community we serve across the breadth and depth of County positions. We are committed to refining personnel policies and practices to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to employment in the County. The plan commits to teaching hiring managers about implicit bias and all county employees about structural racism and the importance of cultural intelligence.

The presentation of this plan is not the end of our work; it's the beginning. The County has again committed to attending GARE 2017. Our new cohort of ten employees represent CAO, BOS, Marin County Sheriff, CDA, MCFL, Parks, HHS, Cultural Services, HR and Public Works. The work of the GARE 2016 group also continues. That group has committed to teaching structural racism training to employees in the County over the next year. As we continue to expand the number of equity champions in the County, the conversation deepens, the commitment to racial equity grows and our service to our community strengthens.

We look forward to updating your Board on our progress after the first year of the plan.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

REVIEWED BY:  
[ ] Finance  [X] N/A
[ ] County Counsel  [X] N/A
[ ] Human Resources  [X] N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Submitted by:  
Angela Nicholson  Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed by:  
Matthew H. Hymel  County Administrator

Attachment:  Marin County Racial Equity Action Plan

CC:  
Bonnie White, Marin County Free Library  
Cesar Leglava, Health and Human Services  
Chantel Walker, Human Resources  
Cio Hernandez, Health and Human Services  
Jacalyn Mah, County Administrator's Office  
Kevin Wright, Marin County Parks  
Liz Darby, Community Development Agency  
Matt Willis, Health and Human Services  
Roger Crawford, Human Resources  
David Escobar (retired)  
Steve Kinsey (retired)