

## **Race and Equity Pocket Questions**

**Title and purpose of this initiative:** *sladesign Fashion Show 2024*

**Department:** Public Works

### **What are the racial and equity impacts?**

*sladesign Fashion Show 2024* is a free event, open to the public. The event will consist of “handmade one-of-a-kind” clothing including recycled and many upcycled pieces. The event is intended to provide entertainment and debut the new *sladesign* collection.

Due to a lack of engagement, access to opportunities and leadership in the event industry, people of color often feel dismissed or unwelcome. Racial diversity is crucial to events as they support multiple layers of small businesses, provides perspectives from different racial backgrounds; and provides an opportunity to foster relationships within a community.

Additionally, the fashion industry has been criticized for its lack of diversity across campaigns and behind the lens. The lack of diversity has led individuals to believe their bodies, how they dress, and subsequently their identities as not worthy. The racial impacts can affect many aspects of a person’s life, including their mental health or ability to concentrate on school or work.<sup>1</sup> According to event organizer, Marcela Slade, models involved in the fashion show “are diverse in size, age, gender, race, and ethnicity.”

### **Who is or will experience community burden?**

The *sladesign Fashion Show 2024* may burden:

- Community members with language barriers.
- Community members with disabilities that are unable to access the event.
- Community members not aware of the event.
- Shift workers and people who have limited time, transportation choices, and may have difficulty finding time to participate in the event.
- Community members who may be burdened financially may not have the means to fully participate in the event.
- Community members and businesses located on or near the event may be burdened due to traffic delays or accessibility to E. Weaver Street.
- Event organizers and partners due to time and costs involved in organizing and holding the event.
- Town staff due to time involved planning and holding the event.

### **Who is or will experience community benefit?**

The *sladesign Fashion Show 2024* will benefit community members who do not have any of the burdens listed above and are able to fully participate in event.

*sladesign* may benefit from event publicity and the sale of merchandise.

### **What are the root causes of inequity?**

Structural racism in government decisions, as well as residents' personal experiences, can alienate those that may find it difficult to attend events such as like working individuals and families and contribute to a reticence by historically marginalized people to participate in these events.

Economic disparities from historic racism, including education, job opportunities, lending policies, among others can contribute to disproportionate representation in shift or similar work schedules, which can lead to disparities between white and BIPOC residents and other community members in taking part in or hosting events. Costs associated with street closings such as the permit fee or the need for Town employees to staff the event, may limit BIPOC community members from hosting events.

As previously narrated, due to a lack of engagement, access to opportunities and leadership in the event industry, people of color often feel dismissed or unwelcome. "People in leadership roles for the more prominent special events-governing organizations, you will see less than 1% Blacks in a leadership position or as board members. The Black community is not represented at the table. This disparity has a domino effect on to the regional level of these organizations."<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, the fashion industry has been criticized for its lack of diversity across campaigns and behind the lens. For decades, the fashion industry has been heavily influenced by "European standards of beauty" that prioritize features such as fair skin or straight hair.<sup>1</sup>

### **What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?**

Unintended consequences of the event may include:

- Some community members may have negative perception of the event.
- Due to lived experiences, members of historically marginalized communities may be uncomfortable interacting in some community events.
- Community members and businesses located on or near the event may be burdened due to traffic delays or accessibility to E. Weaver Street.

### **How is your department planning to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences?**

Public Works will mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences by:

- Continued use of the REAL and pocket questions.
- Continue to participate in the Town's Racial Equity training.
- Continue to engage and collaborate with community members.
- Continue to evaluate event policies and procedures.