



P&TC JEDI Action Plan

Plan Background

Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota (P&TC) is a member-supported nonprofit that was founded in 1954 to acquire, protect, and enhance critical land for the public's use and benefit. We envision an interconnected system of parks, trails, waterways, natural areas and open spaces that provide all Minnesotans with outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities and that preserve the natural diversity of our state. We accomplish our mission through land acquisition, data-driven legislative advocacy, and by working with volunteer friends groups as well as local, regional and state park agencies. As a statewide organization with a small staff, P&TC's success depends on our ability to channel the energy and passion of the many people who love parks and trails.

P&TC's work is founded on the belief that parks and trails exist for the benefit and enjoyment of everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, age, income or education. But that has always been an aspirational goal, one that remains imperfectly realized. Minnesota's population is becoming more diverse: 21% of Minnesotans identify as a person of color, yet only 5% of state park visitors are people of color. Other groups, such as those with low incomes or without a college degree are similarly underrepresented (see the Appendix for more details). The reasons for these discrepancies are many and complex. Among them, researchers have identified that socioeconomic and cultural factors, disparate access, and discrimination all play a significant role.¹ This underrepresentation is also reflected in P&TC membership, where for example, only 1% are people of color.

As Minnesotans' collective voice for parks and trails, P&TC can and should use its influence to address those disparities. This work began as part of a strategic planning process in late 2019 and then took on new urgency following the horrific killing of George Floyd in May 2020. Working with CultureBrokers LLC, we completed the Diamond Inclusiveness Assessment, held

¹ Research on disparities in park and trail visitation is rich and diverse. For a review, see [Race, ethnicity and immigrant in leisure research: prospects and challenges](#) or [Constraints to Park Visitation: A Meta-Analysis of North American Studies](#).

focus groups with key stakeholders, and formed a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) committee to discuss, reflect upon, and guide the planning process. This JEDI Action Plan is the outgrowth of that work and focuses on two priorities:

1. Having an annual budget for JEDI work that allows us to meet clear and measurable goals; and,
2. Routinely engaging with, and learning from, culturally diverse networks of institutions, groups and individuals to better meet our mission and shared goals.

These priorities feel both critical and long overdue. P&TC knows that systemic injustice, discrimination and racism are not new problems. But we feel challenged and humbled to try to be a part of the solutions. This JEDI plan marks only our first formal step of what we know will be a long process that will require humility, patience, listening, new relationships and new practices. We are committed to this process and will review and update this plan annually to refocus our work of making parks and trails places that truly benefit everyone.

Definitions

The acronym JEDI refers to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The definitions below were adapted from multiple sources, including Culture Brokers, The Avarna Group, the YWCA, and The Annie E. Casey Foundation. When referring to JEDI, P&TC uses these definitions:

Diversity

Diversity is the presence of variety in one place. Diversity within people is often categorized by their backgrounds and identities, which can include race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, class, ability, geography or other meaningful differences. These differences affect how people experience systemic advantages or encounter systemic barriers to opportunities.

Equity and Equality

Equity involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full, healthy lives. Equality, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things. ([The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#))

Inclusion

Inclusion is to foster a sense of belonging among diverse people. Inclusion often involves centering, valuing, and uplifting the voices, perspectives, and styles of those who experience more barriers based on their identities.

Justice

Justice is removing barriers by reimagining, initiating, and reinforcing systems where everyone equitably shares society's rights, benefits, responsibilities, and burdens.

JEDI Statement

Parks & Trails Council's work is rooted in a belief that sustainable land conservation provides invaluable benefits—recreational, health, social, economic, and ecological—for individuals and communities.

We are committed to fostering a culture of inclusion that uplifts diverse voices, perspectives, and styles, especially of those who experience more barriers based on their identities and backgrounds. We will continually examine our own biases and welcome difficult truths as we strive to ensure our programs and policies contribute toward a more just society, where the benefits of parks and trails are equitably felt by everyone.

JEDI Implementation

Goals

This JEDI Plan outlines a set of milestones to achieve during 2021. But we know that JEDI work is not a one-year process. In subsequent years, we will update our milestones, clarify desired outcomes and results, and refine metrics to track progress. Ultimately, the long-term goals of this plan are:

1. JEDI values are seamlessly integrated into P&TC governance, operations, policies, planning and programs.
2. The P&TC is a respected nonprofit that works to ensure the benefits of parks and trails are equitably available to and enjoyed by all.

Audience

This plan is fundamentally an operational plan written to guide staff and board in our equity work. For general transparency, this plan will be easily accessible to all staff, board, volunteers, members, vendors, partners, and other key stakeholders so they are knowledgeable about our intentions and path forward.

Plan Coordination

The president is responsible for overseeing this JEDI Action Plan. Additionally, the president will model desirable behaviors, assure consistent application of this plan and its principles, and manage for equity results.

Staff will regularly reflect, discuss, and document learning from this process. They will also provide quarterly reports to the board of directors on the schedule detailed below.

	Board Report	JEDI Action Plan Staff Check-in Meetings
1 st Quarter (Q1)	5/11/2021	4/7/2021
2 nd Quarter (Q2)	7/13/2021	6/9/2021
3 rd Quarter (Q3)	11/9/2021	10/6/2021
4 th Quarter (Q4)	2/8/2022	1/5/2022

2021 Action Plan

Financial Investment Dimension

Priority: Parks & Trails Council of MN has an annual budget for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) work that allows it to meet its clear and measurable goals.

2021 Goal: P&TC will institutionalize and update its annual budgeting process in a way that documents our investments in JEDI values, and begin to establish metrics to track progress in subsequent years.

Benefits of achieving this goal:

- Demonstrates our commitment to JEDI values through financial investments.
- Makes staff, board, and other stakeholders aware of connections between financial investment and JEDI outcomes.
- Aligns financial resources with P&TC policies, practices, and opportunities to achieve our JEDI goals.
- Identifies opportunities for P&TC to expand its JEDI work.

Oversight for the Improvement: P&TC President

Oversight includes checking in with Lead Facilitators to ensure progress is being made and reports are prepared as needed. Lead facilitators are responsible for ushering the milestone along, involving other staff, board members, and consultants as needed, and preparing progress reports.

Financial Investment Milestones	Lead Facilitator	Deadline	Resources Required
<u>Measure and Plan</u>			
Identify JEDI spending categories to evaluate past (and future) JEDI activities and establish a baseline of current JEDI investments.	President	Q1	n staff hours; Accounting Consultant time
Identify opportunities to increase investments to achieve desired outcomes, including: a) Review current vendors and compile a list of competitors that align with our JEDI values. b) Develop and maintain a list of job posting resources to ensure P&TC is advertising and promoting job openings to culturally diverse networks.	President b) Friends Group Coordinator	Q1-Q2	n staff hours
Update accounting procedures to budget and track JEDI spending.	Office Manager	Q2	n staff hours
<u>Execute Plan; Measure Results</u>			
Amend 2021 budget to allocate funds for the purpose of implementing our JEDI plan.	President	Q3	n staff hours Board approval
Begin using the updated accounting procedures to track JEDI spending.	Office Manager	Q3	n staff hours
<u>Make it Habit</u>			
Create or update finance policies and procedures as needed. Use lessons learned to incorporate JEDI investments into the 2022 budget.	Office Manager & President	Q4	n staff hours; Finance Committee Approval

Social Capital Dimension

Priority: P&TC routinely engages with culturally diverse networks of institutions, groups, and individuals to better meet its mission as well as shared goals. It routinely learns from these interactions.

2021 Goal: P&TC will understand the landscape of culturally diverse networks with a stake in parks and trails issues, identify opportunities to collaborate within each P&TC program, and humbly reach out to begin or strengthen those interactions.

Benefits of achieving this goal:

- Builds staff and board cultural competence through training, resources, reflection, and practice.
- Lays the groundwork for successful engagements.
- Aligns with and strengthens our organizational value of openness, inclusiveness, collaboration and volunteerism.
- Expands our network of organizations and individuals which can teach, support, and assist P&TC.
- Increases awareness of P&TC.

Oversight for the Improvement: External Relations Director

Oversight includes checking in with Lead Facilitators to ensure progress is being made and reports are prepared as needed. Lead facilitators are responsible for ushering the milestone along, involving other staff, board members, and consultants as needed, and preparing progress reports.

Social Capital Milestones	Lead Facilitator	Deadline	Resources Required
<u>Measure and Plan</u>			
Define what we mean by “engage” and “culturally diverse networks.”	External Relations Director	Q1	3 staff hours
Identify key culturally diverse networks of institutions, groups, and individuals and their engagement in parks and trails.	Friends Group Coordinator	Q1	10 staff hours
Determine possible shared goals and create opportunities for engagement with key culturally diverse networks in each P&TC program.	External Relations Director & Friends Group Coordinator	Q2	10 staff hours
Identify training opportunities and resources for staff and board to help them more effectively engage culturally diverse networks.	Friends Group Coordinator	Q1-Q2	3 staff hours
<u>Execute Plan; Measure Results</u>			
Staff and board engage in trainings, utilize resources, and reflect on their learnings to help them build more effective cross-cultural networks.	President	Q2-Q4	5+ hours per staff member 3 hours per board member \$\$ External Trainings
Humbly begin a conversation with key culturally diverse networks about collaborating on shared goals.	As identified in goals in #3	Q3-Q4	n staff hours
<u>Make it a Habit</u>			
Incorporate formal and informal opportunities for feedback when engaging key culturally diverse networks.	External Relations Director	Q3-Q4	n staff hours Research/survey
Create or update policies and procedures as needed. Use lessons learned to set priorities for 2022.	External Relations Director	Q4	n staff hours

Appendix

Selected demographics of P&TC Members, State Park Visitors, and Minnesota

	P&TC Members (2019)	State Park Visitors (2017)	Minnesota Population (2019)
Race & Ethnicity			
Asian	1%	Data not available	5%
Black or African American	< 1%	Data not available	7%
Native American	1%	Data not available	1%
Hispanic or Latino	0%	< 1%	6%
White	99%	95%	84%
Nonwhite and/or Hispanic/Latino	1%	5%	21%
Household Income			
Below \$50,000	18%	24%	37%
\$50,000 - \$100,000	50%	45%	33%
Above \$100,000	32%	33%	30%
Age			
Age 18 - 45	4%	40%	46%
Age 45 - 64	32%	42%	33%
Age 65+	63%	18%	21%
Education			
Without Bachelor's degree	16%	41%	65%
Bachelor's degree	43%	32%	23%
Graduate degree	39%	26%	12%
Place of Residence			
Northwest	3%	6%	6%
Northeast	6%	7%	6%
South	13%	18%	17%
Central	9%	13%	13%
Metro	70%	56%	59%

Sources: Parks & Trails Council 2019 Member Survey; Minnesota DNR 2017 State Park Visitor Survey; U.S Census Bureau.