



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 29, 2022
To: Board of County Commissioners
From: Martine Coblentz, Equity Officer
Re: Reimagine Oregon History and Updates

History:

In the summer of 2020, in the midst of the COVID pandemic, there were also conversations about race and racism within our country, state, local jurisdictions, organizations, etc. George Floyd was the catalyst for the large-scale protests that took place throughout and many jurisdictions acknowledged, at that time, the need to address racial disparities. African American leaders in Oregon understood that while there was a desire to acknowledge and address what was happening there was not yet conversation on how to translate the issues raised into concrete policy changes.

The Reimagine Oregon organizers invited the Clackamas County Commissioners to join in a meeting to address the racial disparities and impacts specifically on the African American community in the State of Oregon. The jurisdictions that have attended meetings have been primarily the State Legislators, Metro, Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties and the City of Portland. In the first meeting, Reimagine Oregon shared (with the elected officials) proposals on how to concretely address the impacts and inequities that they were highlighting through their policy demands. There were two main avenues to address the disparities: “divestment” and “investment.” Within those avenues, the proposals brought forward from the organizers encompassed a wide range of areas including; education, housing, health & well-being, transportation, economic development, community safety, legislative processes and police divestment.

Nature of the relationship between Clackamas County and Reimagine:

The county is currently considered a participating jurisdiction. Clackamas County has had at least one elected official attend *most* of the Reimagine meetings. Participation in these

meetings is a process of community engagement, particularly from the communities who are disproportionately impacted. Subsequent meetings with Reimagine have been framed as an opportunity for jurisdictions to come and share what parts of the policies proposed are **already happening** in their jurisdictions, **may happen**, or are **unlikely/not going** to happen. Last year, the Board received a briefing on the policy proposals and staff response. The Board looked at the proposals through the lens of “what is in alignment with Clackamas County’s goals and priorities.” Each jurisdiction of course sets their own policy and elected officials make those decisions based on what they think is best for the jurisdiction they are serving.

Update on Financial Requests from Reimagine Oregon:

Divest:

The Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners has decided not to divest in law enforcement. Any policy demand that incorporates taking funds away from law enforcement is under Clackamas County’s “not going to happen” category within the Reimagine spreadsheet of jurisdictional commitments.

Invest:

The Board met with Lamar Wise (winter 2020) to hear about the Reimagine Safety project which was a project to invest in public safety in other ways. The Board did not fund this project. Funding the Reimagine Safety project is just one piece of the entire Reimagine program.

Instead, the Board is looking at investing through our programs and Board priorities and strategies.

Update on the proposals Clackamas County has already done:

Criminal justice

1. Ensure that all personnel at Sheriff's office are complying with sanctuary with ICE
2. Duty to intervene protocol to stop excessive force

Housing/Homelessness

3. **Stop all sweeps** of camps that shelter houseless people and the expansion of sit-lie regulations, and support a Right to Rest agenda that decriminalizes houselessness.
4. **Evaluate Coordinated Access disparities** among services received and services waiting for receipt among BIPOC communities. Hold contractors accountable to a service standard with strong implementation accountability mechanisms.

5. **Cancel rent for renters affected by COVID**; develop fund that LLs can access to be made whole, not pay for profit

Update on the proposals Clackamas County will be doing:

Health/Wellbeing

6. **Invest in culturally specific mental health care healing centers** like the Avel Gordly Center for Healing with significant funding
7. **Fund culturally appropriate maternal health programs - Black community health workers and doulas programs** that are critical to Black wellness. These programs should include pregnancy health and prenatal care, birthing assistance, and family supports for new parents learning to care for infants.

Housing/Homelessness

8. **Fair Housing:** Affirmatively Further Fair Housing by ending racial segregation from opportunity, providing community development and investment without displacement, end discrimination and fair housing violations through robust testing and enforcement by Oregon BOLI.
9. Actively seek to build **community-based safety and housing/homelessness infrastructure** united to internal county staffing to build deeper trust and expand service networks.

Legislative Process

10. Require **community advisory boards** that participate in **rulemaking processes**.
11. Require **racial impact statements from chief sponsors of all ordinances to analyze potential impacts to BIPOC communities**. Consult with community-based organizations and/or experts for input. Require a re-write and consultation with BIPOC communities of any policy that indicates negative impacts on BIPOC communities that could exacerbate racial disparities.
12. **Establish equity advisors in all offices and departments**, similar to financial advisors.

Purpose of Issues Update:

While the County continues in the conversation with Reimagine and the other jurisdictions, the staff from the Equity and Inclusion Office within County Administration will bring forward updates to the Board to offer a status check on previous Board decisions. This update to the Board was to keep the Board current on the status of the items that the Board had already decided they were committed to do from the policy proposal of Reimagine. Much of those items were things that the County was already doing or committed to doing. Therefore the update was more about promoting the work of the County on the above named categories and the approach to equity that the County has committed to do.