

South Burlingame Neighborhood Association Racial Equity Policy

1. Vision

We recognize racial equity as a condition in which a person's racial identity is not a predictor of their experiences. Racial equity only becomes possible when policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race are eliminated. As defined in the 2012 Portland Plan, "equity is when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential. Equity is both the means to healthy communities and an end that benefits all."

We identify, address and eliminate racial and ethnic inequities.

Specifically:

- We advocate and work to improve livability within South Burlingame and all SW Portland neighborhoods for people of every race and ethnicity.
- We have people of color as leaders.
- We recognize and end explicit and implicit bias, systemic racism, social exclusion and other oppression, and build tools for social change in order to promote equity both within and outside our organization.
- We ensure that every resident, property owner, and business within our defined geographic area has access to and feels welcome at SBNA events, meetings and within our neighborhood.
- We listen and value everyone's participation and voice in our decision-making processes.
- We develop partnerships with the organizations and relationships with individuals that inform and guide how we work for equity.

2. Need

Our organization's actions and policies influence the experiences of our members and leaders. We recognize that current participation does not proportionately reflect our demographics.

According to the 2010 US Census data, approximately 15% of SW Portland residents identify themselves as non-White, Hispanic, or multi-racial. According to the Coalition of Communities of Color document, *Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile*, people of color face significant disparities in every social arena, including access to stable housing, employment, income, poverty rates, health, birth outcomes and education attainment with results up to one-half that of Whites.

More than a mere change in numbers or data, we value the need for change in the culture, functioning, priorities and outcomes of our organization in order to improve livability for people of color.

3. Leading with Race and Resource Allocation

Portland's long-standing history of systemic racism drives our choice to address equity through

the lens of race first. SW Portland residents inhabit land taken from the Multnomah Chinookan and Atfalati Kalapuyan people. The territorial and state governments of Oregon maintained a series of Black exclusion laws in the Bill of Rights from 1844-1926, some of which were also directed against multi-racial, Native American, Chinese and Hawaiian people. There were three unsuccessful attempts to repeal bans on Black suffrage, prior to Oregon amendment in 1927 – even though the 15th Amendment had been ratified federally without Oregon approval in 1870. South Burlingame held racially restrictive covenants that we recognize as racist and repeal (attached).

We need to hear the experiences of people of color who have been disproportionately impacted by gentrification, incarceration, public health outcomes, income and housing stability. Advancement of equity requires that we identify and name disparities, reassess current projects, reallocate funding, and shift volunteer priorities with firm timelines, policy commitments and resources. Significant and informed change can bring true racial equity to event and meeting participation, volunteer involvement and organizational leadership.

4. Partnerships

Our work is to listen, pay attention, learn and take action in support of our partners to resolve inequities and livability concerns, knowing that our work will never be finished.

5. Action and Accountability

SBNA will identify and eliminate barriers to participation and leadership for people of color and increase understanding of racial inequity throughout our organization. Recognizing the day-to-day and cumulative effects of systemic racism on people of color, SBNA's programs and actions will promote responsibility for learning and competency among people who identify as White, with the goal of developing cultural humility and normalizing meaningful and outcome-oriented conversations about race and racism, rather than placing the additional burden of teaching or correcting misinformation on people of color. Our vision for change will only be accomplished through the participation and leadership of, and accountability to people of color.

6. Action Plan

SBNA supports the SWNI Equity and Inclusion Committee to lead the SWNI organization through the Action Plan at all levels including our unique Neighborhood Associations. SBNA will apply equity to the work and initiatives of our neighborhood.

SBNA Racial Equity Policy Appendix 1: Definitions

- *Geographic area.* SBNA covers the land area incorporated with Portland city limits, for details, see <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/civic/article/58367>
- *Currently preferred terminology.* We recognize and appreciate the changing nature of language and the power of naming ourselves and our identity groups. SBNA will do its best to address people and organizations according to their stated preferred identities. We reference the definitions from Appendix #4 of the 2010 report by Coalition of Communities of Color and Portland State University, [Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile](#). These will be supplemented as needed.