



A MORE EQUITABLE CITY FOR EVERYONE

A Final Transition Team Report
for Mayor Lauren McLean

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Boise is deeply committed to being a place that is equitable, safe and thriving for everyone. And in this time of national crisis, the City of Boise deepens this resolve by building meaningful relationships with vulnerable communities facing injustice and inequality. By enacting and embodying practices, policies and procedures that will interrupt the harmful impacts of one's targeted status, we hope to build the future our children and families dream of and hope for now. These communities include black, indigenous, Latinx and people of color, people with disabilities, people who identify as LGBTQIA+ or non-binary, and people who are immigrants, undocumented or resettled through the refugee process. This is an opportunity to create meaningful reforms, and through this, the City of Boise hopes to become a model for the rest of Idaho and the country.

VISION

But the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opposers into friends. It is this type of understanding goodwill that will transform the deep gloom of the old age into the exuberant gladness of the new age. It is this love which will bring about miracles in the hearts of men.

—Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
“Facing the Challenge of a New Age,” 1956

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. believed fervently in the possibility of “The Beloved Community.” Beloved Community for Dr. King was a way of life in its truest expression of liberation from all conditions of human oppression. Beloved Community is a state of being where our default is the recognition of our actual interconnectedness of all people and living things. Our collective thriving, thus, is “Beloved Community.”

In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. In the Beloved Community, international disputes will be resolved by peaceful conflict-resolution and reconciliation of adversaries, instead of military power. Love and trust will triumph over fear and hatred. Peace with justice will prevail over war and military conflict.¹

We are also inspired by the timeless ambition embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stands on permanent display in one of the City of Boise’s civic treasures, the Anne Frank Memorial and which underscores the value of bold ambition in charting the astral limitations of our shared destiny.

In the collective river of our shared culture, the actions we take now will forever change the conditions downstream. These recommendations are centered on what we want for our future generations.

These four central values lay the foundation for our vision of an equitable, safe and thriving Boise:

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP – The City of Boise models active inclusion and transformative leadership at all levels of governance work towards the ideal of “Beloved Community” where everyone is valued, everyone is safe and can thrive, e.g. including but not limited to publicly appointed commissions to model inclusion in both composition and implementation;

CULTURE AND RADICAL ACCESSIBILITY – The City of Boise creates a culture of deliberate inclusion, universal design, accessibility both programmatic and physically for people with disabilities, and celebration of our rich diversity, e.g. all policy is vetted through a process which includes focused consideration of how the effect of said policy will impact communities subject to historic inequities;

SAFETY AND JUSTICE – The City of Boise embraces equal application of and access to a restorative model of justice, e.g., that all processes which seek to model accountability

¹ The King Center: <https://thekingcenter.org/king-philosophy/>

include not only the determination of harm or wrongdoing, but reparative and sustainable redress while honoring the indigenous traditions from which these processes arise; and

THRIVING – The City of Boise implements **health care** as a basic human right, **education** as a tool for universal self-actualization and the need for an **economy** that is universally accessible and supportive, e.g. that we begin to collect and analyze demographic data about health care, educational and economic outcomes and seek to create and implement policy which directly addresses discrepancies associated with aspects of identity which should not determine these inequities.

These core areas guide the policy, practices and procedures that will interrupt the disproportionate and harmful impacts on the most vulnerable people who live and reside in Boise.

Each of these main values are the foundation for our proposed recommendations for the immediate response to COVID-19, the first 100 days, the first year and the first term. How we are is as important as what we do.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO COVID-19

In response to the COVID-19 crisis and the mayor and governor’s Stay-Home orders, the following are steps that need to be taken to protect our citizens, especially those for communities that are marginalized:

- Ensure that all out-facing public education materials, including the city website is accessible to non-English speaking communities and the deaf and hard-of-hearing community.
- Prohibit any evictions during the Stay-Home Order time period.
- Prohibit any utilities from suspension and any suspended utilities to be reinstated.
- Provide immediate housing and access to basic necessities for our most vulnerable communities that ensures their continued safety and stability during this unprecedented global pandemic. This includes the houseless, undocumented people and those experiencing domestic or sexual violence.
- Deepen and expand local social service programs and assess the current and long-term needs of community members and their families while also providing them with resources.

- Cancellation of rent and mortgages for all in Boise during the Stay-Home order.
- Provide internet at no cost to anyone experiencing low-incomes or job loss.
- Address the barriers that limit access to needed care and resources for those in communities marginalized communities, and in particular the significant increase in trauma symptoms for folks who have had to endure/survive scarcity before.
- Support parents and caretakers with appropriate resources to support efficient transition to online education e.g. internet access, supervision instruction in preferred language.
- Take proactive steps to address the inevitable surge in the need for mental health support post COVID-19 e.g. funding for the uninsured/underinsured.
- Release all pre-trial detainees and prisoners serving county jail sentences, with direction that nobody released from custody be further detained for federal immigration authorities.
- Cease arrests and bookings of people into the county jail.
- Lead with a mental and physical health and wellness and healing approach to this global pandemic rather than a criminalized or militarized response.

THE NEXT 100 DAYS

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

- Develop and announce an Equitable, Safer and Thriving City of Boise Statement which commits to a compelling shared vision based on community values, an active response and an ongoing plan and implementation to meaningfully address the needs, values and priorities of communities impacted by marginalization.

CULTURE AND ACCESSIBILITY

- Fund a feasibility study on an Indigenous Cultural Center and center Indigenous leadership and communities to create a plan forward for the city.
- Adopt a citywide policy and protocols for 100 percent language access and culturally responsive and trauma and healing informed care to all Boise City departments.

SAFETY AND JUSTICE

- Announce the creation of the City of Boise Human Rights Commission which integrates restorative justice practices and processes that honor our Indigenous cultural ways of governance and processes for addressing harm.
- Designate a full-time Boise City staff person to staff the City of Boise Human Rights Commission and convene a group of multi-racial, multi-cultural stakeholders to begin the process to establish this commission. The make-up of the commission should be intergenerational, reflecting both youth and adults, as well as commissioners who represent communities most vulnerable to the impacts of systemic discrimination and oppression. Robust and substantive compensation should be provided for such representatives to carry out this work.
- End coordination and collaboration of localities (police, all city government) with ICE and end local practices of inquiring about immigration status, collect immigration data or share immigration data with any person.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a set of new policies by the Boise City Attorney to mandate the Boise City Prosecution Team to consider the immigration consequences of convictions when making charging decisions, engaging in plea bargaining and making sentence recommendations to ensure that non-citizens do not suffer more severe punishment (i.e. deportation and civil detention) than would otherwise be suffered by a U.S. Citizen in recognition of the U.S. Supreme Court case of Padilla v. Kentucky, 559 U.S. 356 (2010), excepting deportation from the collateral consequences rule, and a prosecutor's duty to seek justice, and not merely convictions.

THRIVING - HEALTH, EDUCATION, ECONOMICS

- Review and assess current city emergency health protocols to reflect equitable health practices for all.
- Ensure emergency response protocols reflect public health agencies leadership rather than led primarily by police agencies.

FIRST YEAR

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

- Commit the City of Boise to an ongoing and robust efforts to interrupt white dominant/white supremacist culture with a multi-layered strategy and **designate a full-time City of Boise staff person to serve as Director of Equitable, Safer and Thriving City.**
 1. Create a network of multi-racial, multicultural community liaisons to provide ongoing leadership to the city.
 2. Practice spaciousness and welcome the whole selves of all City of Boise employees to foster creativity and nurture our collective humanity, e.g. consider more flexible working hours when feasible, reduce the number of work hours per week, etc.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Ongoing equity and inclusion efforts, including but not limited to racial equity, white fragility and implicit bias training or book readings, especially for city personnel who do not identify being from communities impacted by marginalization. Engage in an ongoing assessment of impact of these efforts, e.g. were personnel policies reviewed and updated, etc.
 4. Identify a common set of community indicators to track and understand the living conditions in communities impacted by marginalization to predict and prepare for how residents might react to programs or services, identify what can influence or undermine the effectiveness of municipal services and program, and determine where policy changes might be needed, or whether those changes could be having unexpected outcomes.
 5. Conduct an inclusion assessment both internally and externally to determine strengths and opportunities for improvement in inclusion strategies and endeavors.
- Create a **Youth Council** comprised of youth from communities that are marginalized to inform and consult on major city policy decisions impacting their communities.

CULTURE AND ACCESSIBILITY

- Launch a study and review of major city landmarks, streets, monuments and public spaces and historical sites across the City of Boise and provide recommendations for change.
- Introduce inclusive platforms that ensure New Americans are able to actively contribute to community well-being and our collective thriving in ways they can relate to. People are often intimidated by the notion and misconception that “the American way” is the only acceptable way.
- Develop a cultural equity plan for City of Boise’s Arts Department centered with the leadership of people from communities impacted by marginalization.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

SAFETY AND JUSTICE

- Adopt new initiatives and city policies to ensure that the new police chief and their department actively recruit people of color who support a more humane approach to interacting with the public, advocate and commit to demilitarizing the police and have people on hiring committee from communities most impacted by violence.
- Localities (police, all city government) do not affirmatively inquire about immigration status, collect immigration data or share immigration data with any person or entity unless otherwise required by law.
- The Boise City Attorney monitors compliance with its newly established policy to its Prosecution Team to consider the immigration consequences of convictions when making charging decisions, engaging in plea bargaining, and making sentence recommendations, and receives quarterly training on the immigration consequences of criminal convictions.
- Establish language access for all who engage or interact with the government.
- Elimination of cash bail and “fines” for the indigent as punishment or alternatively, ask for a policy change from the City Attorney and have it completely eliminated with the first term. (Partner with Ada County to do the same.)

THRIVING - HEALTH, EDUCATION, ECONOMICS

- Provide free blood sugar and blood pressure screenings to members of our communities impacted by marginalization.
- Provide free summer lunch to children from communities impacted by marginalization, non-English speaking communities and low-income families.
- Adopt new laws providing Boise City employees receive four months paid parental leave.
- Increase minimum wage to a livable wage that aligns with the local housing market.

FIRST TERM

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

- Reconvene the Equitable, Safer and Thriving City for Everyone and the other transition committees and provide a comprehensive report on the completion or progress of the recommendations.
- A 30 percent increase in women in leadership positions and an 30 percent increase in leadership of people from communities impacted by marginalization.
- Increase lower paying positions so there is no more than four times difference in salaries between the highest and lowest positions in City of Boise government.
- Publicly fund municipal campaigns.

CULTURE AND ACCESSIBILITY

- Integrate Universal Design as the standard for all city-owned facilities, including retroactively remodeling current city-owned structures to comply with universal design standards.
- Provide city-wide free Internet
- Opening of an Indigenous Cultural Center.
- Annual public festival that celebrates music and dance of all cultures in Boise and Treasure Valley.
- A cultural center with studios for people from diverse backgrounds and creative practices, performance spaces, rehearsal spaces all supported by city and public/private sources.

SAFETY AND JUSTICE

- Collaborate with Ada County to close down juvenile detention facilities and move youth issues into a public health approach and staying with family approach rather than a punishment confinement approach to young people. Engage in long-term planning to re-imagine all places of confinement.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collaborate with Ada County to reduce the population of people who are incarcerated by 30 percent by the end of the term.
- Establish a police civilian review board with substantive powers like subpoena power and civilian representation along with a youth advisory group.
- Establish an Office of Immigrant Affairs with at least one full time dedicated staff person. Responsibilities should include leading a revolving immigration bond fund and access to free, guaranteed access to counsel in deportation proceedings.
- Begin diverting all drug and mental health related arrests and convictions toward a community of care model and the access to trauma-informed, healing centered approaches and the celebration of resilience rather than incarceration.

THRIVING - HEALTH, EDUCATION, ECONOMICS

- Free contraception as defined by the CDC, abortion and reproductive health care.
- Collaborate with the Boise School District to establish sex education at pre-k level – 12th.
- Promote multilingual schools and communities.
- Create citywide school curriculum teaching the history of Indigenous peoples, colonization and slavery in this region.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

For Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Terms and Definitions please visit:
<https://www.hollins.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/DI-dictionary.pdf>



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