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# Clackamas County 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment (Phase I)

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## Clackamas County 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment (Phase I)

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# Summary

## *Introduction*

Clackamas County conducted its first diversity assessment in 2001. Since then, the County has taken significant steps to promote diversity within the organization, including the creation of a Diversity and Inclusion Manager position. This 2011-2012 assessment is the first phase of the County's attempt to evaluate its current diversity climate and the effectiveness of its diversity efforts.

Results in this report are based on data collected from February to April 2012. In July 2012, after the data collection of this phase I assessment process, the Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution titled "Valuing Diversity in Clackamas County." The resolution affirmed the County's commitment to value and promote diversity, and identified some concrete future actions. The adoption of the resolution influenced the County's overall diversity climate after July 2012. It should be noted that although efforts have been made to incorporate the County's resolution and its potential implications into this report, the diversity climate mainly represents the period prior to the adoption of the resolution.

The current assessment focused on assessing the County's accomplishments in the following four diversity goal areas:

- 1) The ability of Clackamas County to attract diverse talent to the organization (recruiting and hiring diverse staff);
- 2) The extent to which the current work culture is welcoming and respectful of people who may be "different" than the norm (welcoming and respectful work culture);
- 3) The ability of Clackamas County to retain and grow diverse talent in the organization (retention and development of diverse staff); and
- 4) The extent to which staff members need to expand their skills or use different tools to interact more effectively with diverse team members and customers.

The County's diversity efforts were also evaluated according to a model of organization change developed by Taylor Cox, Jr., a leading scholar and consultant in diversity management, with five components:

- 1) Leadership
- 2) Research and Measurement
- 3) Education
- 4) Alignment of Management Systems
- 5) Follow-up

Finally, the three-stage model of organizational change introduced in the 2001 Diversity Assessment was used to examine the County's progress in achieving a diverse and inclusive workplace. The model suggests three types of organization along the diversity continuum: Phase one-Compliant, Phase-two-Responsive and Phase-three-Inclusive.

This assessment included the following data sources:

- 1) Employee profile data
- 2) Clackamas County's vision, policy, and plan documents
- 3) Employee focus group sessions and interviews
- 4) Leadership focus group sessions

The employee profile data was used to examine the change in the demographic backgrounds of the County employees. Clackamas County's vision, policy and plan documents relevant to the diversity efforts were content analyzed, identifying reference pertaining to the Four Diversity Goals and Cox's Change Model. Focus group sessions and interviews for the employees and the leadership members were transcribed and analyzed identifying key concepts and themes relevant to the Four Diversity Goals and Cox's Change Model. The key findings of this assessment are based on qualitative analyses of the documents and transcripts focusing on identifying recurring themes.

## *Key Findings*

### ***Diversity Goals***

***Recruiting and Hiring Diverse Staff.*** Clackamas County has made an effort to recruit and hire diverse staff. For example, the County connects with diverse communities and has systems to avoid bias and discrimination in hiring. The number of diverse employees working for the County since 2001 has increased. A perception of continuing bias and discrimination in the recruiting and hiring process was identified as a theme in the employee focus group sessions, suggesting there may be opportunities for improvement.

***Welcoming and Respectful Work Culture.*** The County policy documents indicate the County's effort to create a welcoming and respectful work culture. The County's employee and community-based diversity groups also undertook initiatives to create an inclusive workplace. Employees expressed both positive and negative perceptions of the work culture, indicating that the policy and programmatic efforts of the County may have yet to achieve their desired effects.

***Retention and Development of Diverse Staff.*** Clackamas County offers several employee development programs to support retention and development of diverse staff. The policy emphasizes equal access to professional development and training opportunities to employees with all kinds of backgrounds. Despite the existence of such programs, managers indicated that they feel constrained in terms of what they can recommend to employees. They further indicated that these feelings are at least partially due to their interpretation of union requirements for additional training.

**Cultural Competence.** The County encourages cultural competence development among employees by providing various diversity education opportunities. Interviews with employees and managers revealed mixed reactions to these educational programs. Managers expressed the need for support and trainings specific for managers to become more effective leaders of a diverse workforce. Employees noted the challenge of measuring workforce cultural competence.

### ***Cox's Five Components of Organizational Change***

**Leadership.** The Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) demonstrated support for promoting diversity in the workplace. In addition, community and employee-based diversity groups, the Diversity and Inclusion Manager, and other Department of Employee Services staff have provided strong leadership for diversity efforts. In focus group sessions, employees expressed some concerns with the commitment to diversity among the top leadership. Some employees believed that Clackamas County lacks clarity in its philosophy and vision for diversity. (Note that these comments were made prior to the BCC's adoption of the "Resolution Valuing Diversity in Clackamas County" in July 2012.)

**Research and Measurement.** Clackamas County has made clear progress in improving its research and measurement of diversity. The 2001 diversity assessment established a baseline to chart progress. The current assessment provides a foundation to develop a comprehensive employee survey that will allow the County to track future progress.

**Education.** Clackamas County offers a variety of educational opportunities on diversity. The limited content and duration of these training programs pose a challenge to the County's diversity efforts.

**Alignment of Management Systems.** Some specific management systems, related to time, space and people process factors affects diversity management. Time factors such as the County's four-day work week schedule can be a barrier as well as advantage in attracting diverse talented applicants. Space factors such as physical locations of offices can hinder communication among employees. People process factor, such as effective employee development and bilingual pay, is an important part of the County's diversity efforts.

**Follow-up.** The County lacks a systematic plan to review diversity in the organization, and has gaps in what is measured to keep track of its diversity efforts. No explicit tools and mechanisms for recognizing diversity efforts are in place. Insufficient opportunities exist for information sharing among employees and managers.

### ***Three-Stage Model Analysis***

The current assessment suggests that the County is in Phase Two- Responsive organization in the three stage model of organizational diversity development. This is a shift from the result from 2001 assessment which concluded that the County was a Phase One-Compliant



organization . Signs of this shift include a strong focus on matching employee demographics to those of clients, and a concern to develop leaders for a diverse workforce. While the County still reflects certain characteristics of a Phase One-Compliant organization, organizational components are in place that could help move the County further toward the third stage — inclusive organization.

## *Recommendations*

Based on the data collected for the 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment (Phase I) the following recommendations were identified to assist the County in moving forward in its diversity efforts. Those recommendations are summarized in the following for each of the diversity goal and organizational change component.

### Recruiting and Hiring

1. Continue efforts to improve the public image of Clackamas County: Employees noted that unfavorable public perceptions of the County pose a challenge to attracting diverse applicants. The County can consider implementing a public image campaign to promote itself as a good place for everyone to work and live.
2. Develop easy and accessible application process: Employees expressed concerns regarding the ease of use of the current online application system. The County should continue to look into ways to make the application process more accessible to all job seekers.

### Welcoming and Respectful Workplace

1. Continue efforts to develop diversity-friendly organizational culture: Employee responses suggested that there are still opportunities for creating a more welcoming work environment. While changing an organization's culture takes time, it is critical to engage all employees in fostering organizational norms and a culture that values diversity.

### Retention and Development

1. Implement formal mentoring program: Employee focus group sessions indicated that there is currently no formal mentoring program in place. Employees indicated the desire for the formal mentoring program. The County may benefit from a mentoring program in a variety of ways, including employee skill development, knowledge transfer, staff retention, among others.
2. Implement succession planning that incorporates diversity: The County does not appear to have an official succession plan that incorporates diversity considerations. A large number of public sector employees are expected to retire within the next five years. This presents an opportunity for the County to develop a succession plan that aims to meet the future needs of the County, while also diversifying the workforce.

3. Review the layoff policy to improve retention of diverse staff: Analysis of employee data suggested that employees of color may be disproportionately affected by layoffs. A review of the County's layoff policy may reveal reasons for this potential challenge.
4. Develop department level programs that promote diversity: Clackamas County has implemented numerous countywide diversity programs. Still, departments may benefit from diversity programs tailored to meet their unique needs.

#### Cultural Competence

1. Develop support mechanisms for managers: Managers expressed their desire for more support to help them effectively promote diversity within the organization. Support mechanisms may include advanced diversity and leadership training, formal networking opportunities, and mentoring.
2. Develop a meaningful way to include cultural competence in performance evaluation process: Clackamas County can use its performance management system to promote diversity by incorporating diversity-related measures into individual employee appraisals. In this way, employees can receive feedback on how well they are supporting the County's diversity efforts.

#### Leadership

1. Develop a clear vision for diversity and communicate it widely: Employees indicated that they are still confused about the intent of the County's diversity efforts. It will be important for the County to establish a clear vision for diversity, as well as a communication strategy for increasing the awareness of the vision among employees and community stakeholders.
2. Further incorporate diversity into the County's strategic plans: The County's Strategic Plan and the Action Plan for a Sustainable Clackamas County discuss strategies for enhancing services to a diverse clientele, but do not address workforce diversity issues. In order to establish a link between the County's organizational goals and its diversity efforts, initiatives that promote workforce diversity should also be included in these documents.
3. Consider establishing office of diversity and/or chief diversity officer position: The literature on diversity suggests that diversity initiatives are more effective when led by individuals with significant decision-making authority (Cox, 2001). Clackamas County may benefit from creating an Office of Diversity with a Chief Diversity Officer who reports directly to the County Administrator.

#### Research and Measurement

1. Use the diversity survey to enhance diversity education: Employee opinions indicate that the County's diversity education program may not be meeting employee needs. The County may consider using the all-employee diversity survey to make training more relevant to employees.
2. Improve systematic planning of diversity efforts: While the County currently engages in a variety of diversity efforts, it may benefit from taking a more systematic approach. For example, diversity-related programs and activities can be linked to specific goals. By

increasing the intentionality behind its efforts, the County is likely to be more successful in achieving organizational change.

#### Education

1. Institute longer and more in-depth diversity education programs: The County can consider extending its diversity education programs to meet Cox's recommended minimum of three 8-hour day sessions (Cox, 2001). The County may also consider developing department-specific and management-specific training programs.
2. Evaluate management/supervisory training for diversity: Managers are in a unique position of influence among the employees they lead. Consequently, it is recommended that the County review management and supervisory training for diversity considerations and incorporate diversity principles as appropriate.

#### Alignment with Management Systems

1. Consider ways to overcome physical divide: Focus group participants noted limited interaction between employees and County Commissioners, as well as challenges to communication across departments. Based on these comments, it may benefit the Clackamas County to examine how the physical layout and location of its County buildings promote or inhibit interactions between staff and leadership, and interactions across different departments.

#### Follow-up

1. Provide formal opportunities for information-sharing: Participants in the leadership focus group sessions expressed a desire for formal opportunities to share information with each other. The County may consider establishing monthly roundtable discussions where managers and supervisors would be able to share ideas and concerns, and get feedback on difficult issues.
2. Recognize employee and community efforts with diversity awards: The County should consider recognizing exceptional contributions to its diversity vision by instituting diversity awards at the employee and community levels. Awards can communicate a strong message that diversity is a priority of the County, both guiding behavior and improving the County's public image.
3. Conduct systematic reviews of diversity efforts: While the County is consistent in looking at the number of minority employees employed each year, more can be done in terms of a substantive review of diversity efforts. For example, the County can institute a systematic review of departmental plans for supporting the recently adopted Resolution entitled Valuing Diversity.

## I. Background

Clackamas County is located southeast of Multnomah and Washington County and is made up of a mix of rural and urban communities. The overall population of the County in 2010 was 375,992, which showed a 5.7 percent increase from the year 2000. The racial and ethnic background of the County's population remains predominantly white; however, over the course of the last decade, it has seen some changes. Percentage of the white population decreased 3.1% from 91% in 2000 to 88.2% in 2010, and the non-white population increased from 8.73% to 11.81% (See Table 1 below).

As our communities become increasingly diverse, it is important for public organizations to create inclusive work climates for diverse employees. It is not only as a moral imperative, but as a way to enhance organizational performance. Research has demonstrated multiple benefits of a diverse workforce, including increased diversity of thought, more creative problem-solving, innovative solutions, and a heightened ability to respond to the needs of a diverse clientele. Clackamas County, like many public organizations is working towards creative solutions for promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace to turn such potential benefits into a reality.

In 2001, Clackamas County conducted its first diversity assessment. Since then, efforts were made to improve the County's diversity climate, including the creation of the Diversity and Inclusion Manager position within the Department of Employee Services.

It has been 10 years since the first diversity assessment. The 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment aims to reassess the County's diversity climate and evaluate the effectiveness of its programs and policies for diversity. This assessment focuses on identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities of the County in regard to diversity management in creating overall organizational climate that is inclusive and diversity-friendly. The result of the assessment is intended to be used by the County to promote inclusion and diversity among its workforce to better serve its employees and the community.

Table 1: Change in racial backgrounds of the population of Clackamas County

	2000 U.S. Census	2010 U.S. Census	Percentage Change
Population	338,391	375,992	Increased by 11.1%
White	91.27%	88.19%	Decreased by 3.10%
Black	0.66%	0.82%	Increased by 0.16%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.71%	0.83%	Increased by 0.12%
Asian	2.45%	3.65%	Increased by 1.20%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders	0.17%	0.23%	Increased by 0.06%
Two or More Races	2.46%	3.16%	Increased by 0.70%
Some Other Race	2.28%	3.13%	Increased by 0.85%
Hispanic or Latino	4.95%	7.75%	Increased by 0.85%
White not Hispanic	95.05%	92.25%	Decreased by 2.80%

Figure 1: Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds of the Population in Clackamas County 2000 and 2010

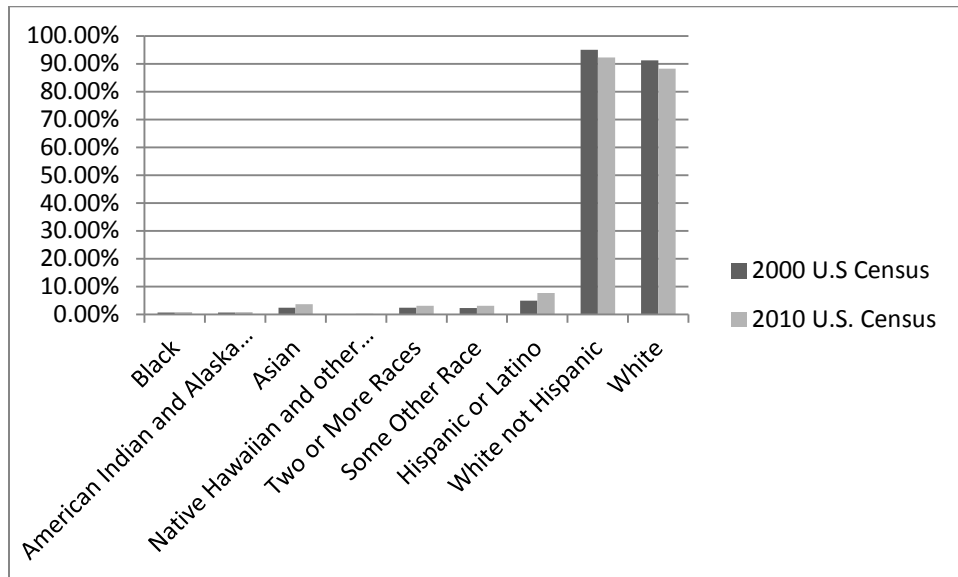
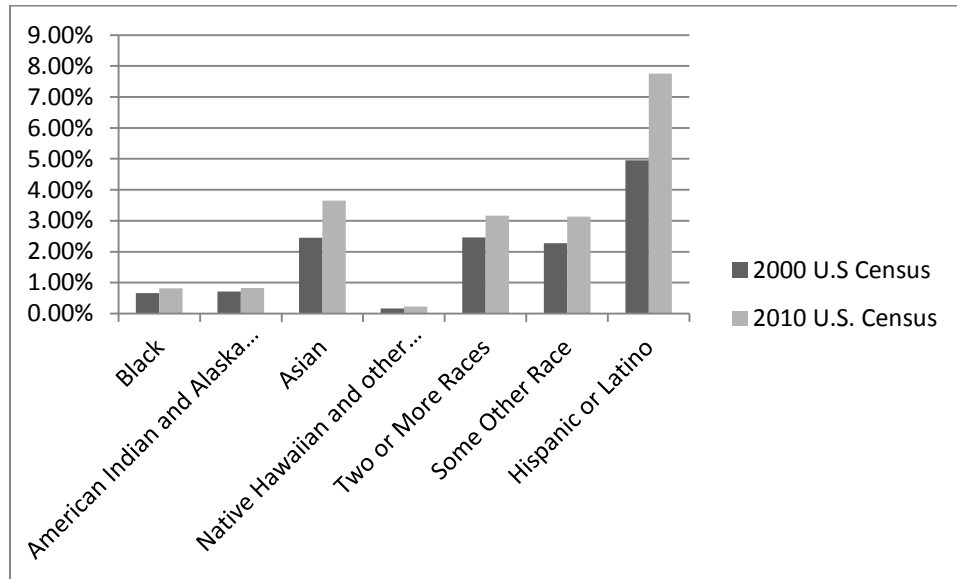


Figure 2: Composition of the Minority Population in Clackamas County 2000 and 2010



## II. Analytical Framework

The following three analytic frameworks are used to conduct the 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment.

1. Four areas of diversity goals from the 2001 Diversity Assessment
2. Taylor Cox Jr's "change model for work on diversity" adopted from *Creating the Multicultural Organization: A strategy for capturing the power of diversity* (2001).
3. Three stage model of organizational development in diversity and inclusion introduced in the 2001 Diversity Assessment.

### 1. Diversity Goals

The 2001 Assessment applied four diversity goal areas in assessing the County's efforts. It assessed:

- 1) The ability of Clackamas County to attract diverse talent to the organization (**Recruiting and hiring diverse staff**);
- 2) The extent to which the current work culture is welcoming and respectful of people who may be "different" than the norm (**Welcoming and respectful work culture**);
- 3) The ability of Clackamas County to retain and grow diverse talent in the organization (**Retention and development of diverse staff**); and
- 4) The extent to which staff members need to expand their skills and/or use different tools to interact more effectively with diverse team members and customer (**Cultural competence**)(Achievement Architects North, 2001, p. i).

The 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment also focused on the same four areas of diversity effort. Data were analyzed to examine the degree to which the County attained the above four goals. By examining the County's diversity effort based on the same four goals applied in 2001 assessment, 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment report will allow the County to assess the change over time by comparing its results with that from 2001.

## *2. Cox's (2001) "Change model for work on diversity"*

Taylor Cox Jr., a leading scholar and consultant in the field of diversity provides a model for organizational change as a response to the challenge of diversity in his 2001 book "Creating the multicultural organization: A strategy for capturing the power of diversity." He states that an effective organizational change should include five elements in the organizational change process: 1) leadership, 2) research and measurement, 3) education, 4) alignment of management systems, 5) follow-up.

- 1) **Leadership:** Successful diversity management requires leaders to create a vision for diversity and facilitate change to integrate diversity work with the organization's strategic direction. Leadership for diversity must start at the top but cannot be limited to those who have positional leadership. Successful diversity management requires many leaders who are personally committed to maximize the benefit of diversity.
- 2) **Research and measurement:** Change must be data driven. Organizations that are serious about incorporating diversity should purposefully collect data related to the diversity effort. This data can be used to diagnose the state of the organization, build a commitment to change, enhance education, and monitor progress.
- 3) **Education:** Effective implementation of diversity management requires intensive ongoing effort to help people learn new information and skills. Effective diversity effort requires a high quality education and training tailored to the organization's need in terms of content, format, preparation of participants and delivery methods.
- 4) **Alignment of management systems:** Organizational change to welcome and leverage diversity requires understanding that organization is a social system with interdependent components. Management systems, such as policies, practices, rules and procedures need to be aligned with the goal of leveraging diversity.
- 5) **Follow-up:** Change efforts on diversity cannot be seen as another "flavor of the month." In order to attain sustainable results in the diversity efforts, follow-up plan needs to be in place. The follow-up plan involves implementing actions, establishing accountability for results, and capturing the learning for continuous improvement.

Cox notes that effective assessment should involve examining the organization's diversity effort in the above five elements. The 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment, therefore, includes the examination of the extent to which these five components are addressed in Clackamas County's diversity efforts.

### *3. The "three-stage model of organizational development along the diversity continuum"*

The 2001 Diversity Assessment used the three-stage model of organizational development along the continuum toward reaching a diverse and inclusive workplace. This model suggests that the organization can be categorized in three groups. Organizations that are least diverse and inclusive are categorized as "Phase one – Compliant" organization. As the organization becomes more diverse and inclusive, it moves into "Phase two – Responsive". The ideal is to be at "Phase three – Inclusive" organization (Achievement Architects North, 2001, p. 3). The following Table 2 provides explanations on the typical behaviors associated with each one of the organizational phase.

In the 2001 Diversity Assessment Clackamas County was categorized as being in "Phase one – Compliant" organization. For the purpose of assessing the change over time in Clackamas County's level of diversity and inclusiveness, the same three stage model of organizational development is applied in the 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment.



Table 2: Typical Behaviors along the Diversity Continuum

Phase One- Complaint	Phase Two- Responsive	Phase Three- Inclusive
	Diversity Focus and Concerns	
Focus on compliance with laws, labor agreements and personnel policies. Concerned we cannot find qualified women, People of Color, etc. so we may need to lower our standards	Focus on matching staff demographics to those of our customers/clients. Concerned that diverse employees “fit in”, and the need for different people management skills.	Focus on leveraging “differences” for the team and diverse customers. Concerned about lack of diversity in the executive suite and finding “value added” candidates.
	Behavior of Employees	
Prejudice Exclusion Political correctness Pressure to assimilate Denial that differences make a difference Backlash Conflict suppressed Exposure to cultural artifacts of others (food, art, celebrations, etc.) Diversity awareness and harassment training	Tolerate differences Challenge the need to change traditions Conflict surfaced and dealt with Training adapted to diverse applications Learn aspects of other cultures to direct diverse clients to designated staff members (phrases of other languages, customs, etc.)	Differences are seen as an advantage Willingness to mutually build new traditions Willing to talk through the “unspoken” issues and to understand Everyone builds skill to interact successfully with diverse customers and team members (define cultural competencies)
	Behavior of Leaders	
Assign responsibility to Human Resources Increase diversity to comply with AAP, etc. Stay removed and let the process work to handle any concerns/issues Edict that everyone “value diversity”	Form diversity councils, planning teams, and employee support groups Increase diversity in higher paying positions Inconsistency in “walking the talk” Adapt people policies performance and development processes Begin to hold managers accountable	Diversity belongs to everyone, and everyone is held accountable Increase diversity throughout most of the organization Leaders learn, lead and coach/mentor others Mission and values are clarified and reinforced as guiding principles

### III. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment collected and analyzed the following 4 types of data:

1. Employee profile data analysis
2. Review of vision, policy and plan documents
3. Employee focus groups
4. Leadership member focus groups/individual interviews

Table 3 in the following provides a summary matrix of the data collection methods and how the data collected relates to the analytical components (i.e. four diversity goals and five change model components).

**Table 3: Summary of data collection methods and analytical components.**

Diversity Goals and Cox's Change Model Components	Data Collection Methods			
	Employee Profile Data Analysis	Review of Vision, Policy and Plan Documents	Employee Focus Group	Leadership Team Focus Group
Recruiting and Hiring	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Welcoming and Respectful Work Culture		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Retention and Development	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Cultural Competence		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Leadership		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Research and Measurement		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Education		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Alignment of Management Systems		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Follow-up		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

## *1. Employee profile data analysis*

Existing employee profile data was analyzed. Analysis of employee profile data included the following:

- Percentage of people of color by Department
- Percentage of women by Department
- Utilization of people of color and women by EEO job group

The following data was obtained from Clackamas County and analyzed:

- Employee demographic data snapshot of 2012, including age, gender, race/ethnicity, department and Equal Employment Opportunity job type
- Demographic data for applicants and new hires for years 2008-2011
- Demographic data for employees who received promotions for years 2006- 2011
- Demographic data for those employees who were terminated, and reason for termination for years 2000-2012

## *2. Review of vision, policy and plan documents*

Documents that state the vision, policies and plans were identified and analyzed. Those documents are as follows:

- Affirmative Action Plan
- Clackamas County Strategic Plan
- Action Plan for a Sustainable Clackamas County
- Employment Policies and Practices
- Personnel Ordinance 2.05
- Employee Handbook
- DAC/DLC documents and minutes

Clackamas County's vision, policy and plan documents, were analyzed using textual analysis approach. First, key concepts from the Four Diversity Goals and Cox's Change Model were identified. Then the documents were coded using these key concepts (See appendix A for the list of concepts used for coding). Key themes were assessed qualitatively by reviewing the frequency of these concepts identified in different documents.

## *3. Employee focus group sessions and interviews*

Focus group sessions and one-on-one interviews were conducted with Clackamas County employees, representing different departments and Diversity Advisory Council. These focus group sessions and interviews were facilitated by graduate students of Portland State University as part of a course assignment. A total of five focus group sessions and twelve one-

on-one interviews were conducted. Recruitment of the participants was done by Mr. Emmett Wheatfall, Diversity and Inclusion Manager of Clackamas County.

Table 4 summarizes the departments and employee groups represented by interview and focus group session participants. The dates that the interviews and focus group sessions took place are also noted, along with the number of interviews and focus group sessions, and the total number of participants.

Participants were asked a series of questions and follow-up questions related to the Four Diversity Goals. (See Appendix B for the list of questions.) Responses to these questions were recorded using a portable tape-recording device, or were documented as hand-written notes as the interviews or focus group sessions took place. The sessions that were recorded using a portable tape-recording device were later transcribed for analysis.

The list of key concepts from the Four Diversity Goals and Cox's Change Model were used to code and analyze the interviews and focus group transcripts. The prevalence of each of the key concepts was then used to identify organizational strengths and challenges of Clackamas County. It should be noted that the number of people who participated in the focus group discussions and interviews represent a very small fraction of Clackamas County employees. Therefore, findings are based on common themes identified based on ideas and responses that were expressed repeatedly across the focus group and interview sessions. The analysis is not based on the numbers of people who expressed a particular idea.

Table 4: Summary of Employee Focus Group Sessions and Interviews

Department	Date of Interviews and/or Focus Group Sessions	One-on-One Interviews	Focus Group Sessions	Number of Participants
Community Corrections Department	February 15, 2012	3 twenty-minute interviews	0	3
Road Department	February 15, 2012	3 twenty-minute interviews	0	3
Sheriff's Office	February 15, 2012	0	1 one-hour session with 6 employees; 1 extended session with 3 employees from the first session	6
Health, Housing and Human Services	February 23	1 one-hour interview	2 one-hour sessions (one with 2 employees, one with 3 employees)	6
Health, Housing and Human Services	February 24, 2012	1 one-hour interview	0	1
Diversity Advisory Council	February 21, 2012	1 twenty-minute interview	2 forty-minute sessions (one with 5 employees, one with 6 employees)	11
				Total 30

#### 4. Leadership member focus group/individual interview

In addition to the employee interviews and focus group sessions, focus-group discussions with members of the leadership at the Clackamas County government (managers and directors) were conducted. One focus group session was conducted with managers and supervisors. Another focus group session was conducted with Department Directors. Participants for both focus group sessions were randomly selected by the PSU research team from the lists of Department Directors and Managers/Supervisors. These lists were provided by Mr. Emmett Wheatfall, the Diversity and Inclusion Manager of Clackamas County.

The Managers and Supervisors focus group session took place on May 15, 2012 for 1.5 hours. Four managers/supervisors participated in the session. The Directors focus group session was conducted on May 17, 2012 for 2 hours. Eight out of a total of twelve (66.67%) directors participated in the session.

Both focus group sessions were recorded using a portable tape-recording device, and were later transcribed. The transcriptions were then analyzed applying the key concepts from the Four Diversity Goals and Cox's Change Model. was then used to identify organizational strengths and challenges of Clackamas County. The prevalence of each of those concepts was then used to identify organizational strengths and challenges of Clackamas County.

## IV. Findings

The result of the analysis of the (1) employee profile data, (2) vision, policy and plan documents, (3) employee focus group, and (4) Leadership member focus group are summarized below in three sections.

Section 1 provides the assessment based on the four diversity goal areas from the 2001 Diversity Assessment; i.e. (1) Recruiting and hiring diverse staff), (2) Welcoming and respectful work culture), (3) Retention and development of diverse staff); and (4) Cultural competence.

Section 2 provides the assessment based on Cox's (2001) five components of organizational change; i.e. 1) leadership, 2) research and measurement, 3) education, 4) alignment of management systems, 5) follow-up.

Section 3 provides our assessment of the Clackamas County in terms of where it is in the the three-stage model of organizational development along the continuum toward reaching a diverse and inclusive workplace.

### Section 1: Findings related to Diversity Goals

#### *Diversity Goal 1: Recruiting and Hiring Diverse Staff*

Clackamas County seeks to attract, recruit and hire diverse applicants for employment opportunities. The 2001 Diversity Assessment report identified several barriers and opportunities for recruiting and hiring diverse staff (Achievement Architects North, 2001, p. 14).

Data for 2011-2012 diversity assessment suggest that efforts and improvements have been made in accordance with the recommendations made in the 2001 diversity assessment. Clackamas County has implemented systems that avoid biases and discrimination towards certain groups in their recruitment and hiring practices. This is especially evident in the County's policies and organizational documents. Despite County's efforts to address the issue of bias and discrimination, County employees' perceptions as to the County's effectiveness, however, varies. Employees reported that they perceive some bias and discrimination in the recruitment and hiring process.

Clackamas County also demonstrates a high awareness of the need to connect with diverse communities in order to build relationships and attract diverse applicants. The County's hiring practices focus on the skills, abilities and knowledge of applicants. This is a good human resource management practice. However, some people see it as being used as a justification for not hiring diverse staff. For example, if an interviewer is unaware or disconnected from his or her internal bias, he or she may not recognize a diverse applicant as possessing the required skills, abilities and knowledge for the job.

This particular practice can also stigmatize diverse staff as 'special hires' who do not meet the skills, abilities and knowledge requirements. Regardless of whether diverse employees do in fact meet the requirements, their co-workers may perceive them as lacking the skills, abilities and knowledge necessary to perform their responsibilities effectively. This can make it difficult for diverse employees to gain the respect of their co-workers or to be treated as competent members of the workforce. Consequently, the interpretation and application of hiring policies present a challenge to the County in diversity management.

Finally, employees point to the existence of certain negative perceptions of the County as a region is a barrier to the County Government's diversity efforts. County employees note that Clackamas County, as a region, is perceived to be not diversity-friendly. The County's Affirmative Action Plan notes the importance of putting efforts to improve the public image of Clackamas County as a desirable place for everyone to work.

Statistically, there have been improvements in the number of diverse staff members since 2001, suggesting positive outcomes of the diversity efforts since the last diversity assessment. It should also be noted that the demographic makeup of the entire County also changed in the past decade, presenting additional opportunities to the County in terms of diversifying its workforce.

### ***1. Efforts are in place to avoid biases and discrimination in recruitment and hiring; however, county employees' perception varies***

Clackamas County expresses its intent to avoid biases and discrimination towards certain groups throughout the recruiting and hiring process. Adhering to the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement and Objectives for the County Affirmative Action Plan approved by the Board of County Commissioners on March 13, 1978, the County continues to commit to providing equal employment opportunity as a key principle of the County's human resource management. In the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement in the Affirmative Action Plan, the County states the following:

Discrimination in a personnel action on a basis unrelated to the job is prohibited. Employment and promotion decisions in County service shall be made in accordance with the principles of equal opportunity by utilizing only job-related requirements and competencies. State and/or federal law specifically prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual

orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, marital status, political affiliation or family relationship.(Clackamas County AA Plan, 2010, p. 6)

The County's Affirmative Action Plan outlines actions to eliminate biases and discriminations in the recruitment and hiring processes. For example, the plan stipulates that employees who are members of the minority cultural groups be included in the Oral-board interview process, and training will be developed for all Oral-board raters (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 10, 28). Such efforts can be effective in reducing bias and discrimination in the selection of employees. Other actions include assessing test validity, ensuring classification specifications reflect the job functions, de-emphasize standardized written examinations and encouraging other examination methods and reviewing the referral process (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 9, 32). In addition, the Affirmative Action Plan encourages efforts to accommodate individuals with language barriers and disabilities. For instance, the County offers translators for testing and interviewing and alternative formats for applications and testing materials (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 28).

The Affirmative Action Plan also stresses the importance of reviewing and analyzing the overall employee selection procedure to assure that there is no adverse effects on protected classifications in the recruitment and hiring processes (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 9-10).

Other personnel policies also contribute to the fair consideration of all individuals during the recruiting and hiring process. In particular, the County's policy on Pre-Employment Inquiries (EPP 23) provides guidelines for interview and application questions. These guidelines aim to reduce the likelihood of inappropriate questions being asked, such as those that elicit information about someone's protected class status. The County's Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint and Grievance Resolution Procedures policy (EPP 1) also establishes a formal procedure for addressing complaints of discrimination, including complaints from applicants, through a process of investigation.

Despite such concerted and commendable efforts, however, employee perceptions vary with regard to the level of bias and discrimination in the recruiting and hiring process. During focus group sessions, certain employees purported that such variables as race, religion, age, gender or other protected status do not play a part in the selection process. Others, though, suggested that discrimination towards certain groups, namely the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) community, affects hiring decisions. The electronic application also raised concerns among employees with regard to its potential for screening out desirable minority candidates. One participant at the focus group discussion said,

“. . . the County recruits through the electronic application system. There are a lot of people out there that don't know the buzz words or how to and get screened out right off the bat.”

Employee responses suggest that the standardized criteria in the electronic application system may be too rigidly applied. While this is a perception of employees and may not represent



actual practices, strict electronic screening can limit flexibility in assessing the true quality of candidates.

Table 5 provides some examples of employee comments on the recruitment and hiring process.

**Table 5: Example employee comments on recruitment and hiring process**

Examples of positive assessment of the recruitment and hiring process
<p>“I’ve been involved in a lot of recruitments while I’ve been here... and it seems like we do have people of all different ethnicities and other (demographic characteristics) that are obvious, you know, applying and interviewing.”</p> <p>“One of our interviews is face-to-face. Generally, I can get a sense of what someone’s race is when I interview them. And their age and their gender are sometimes quite apparent. I never ask about religion. Never. I also don’t exclude based on religion. I think that Clackamas County as a whole follows the law and encourages diversity.”</p>
Negative assessment of the recruitment and hiring process
<p>“The (workforce) isn’t so representative of the Clackamas County population. There aren’t many Latinos and only one Russian.”</p> <p>“I think that for a majority of the individuals who have the hiring ability, if they knew that someone was transgender... I don’t think they would hire them.”</p> <p>“...we just assume that we’ve set this process up and it’s quote unquote “color blind” or whatever blind, and we expect everybody to be able to compete when we’ve set it up, really, a certain way that’s going to attract, you know... People are going to get scored a certain way, and we don’t get (interviewers) to go that extra mile.”</p> <p>“Now let’s take it to the last stage (of the interview process) where I’m in the room and I get to pick from two or three who are left, I’m gonna pick someone who fits, right? I’m not being racist; I’m picking the person who fits and sometimes the person who fits is the person like me.”</p> <p>“But, what I’m saying is that the electronic system screens a lot of those people out that I would love to hire.”</p>

## ***2. Demonstrates high awareness of the need to connect with diverse communities***

Clackamas County demonstrates a high awareness of the need to build relationships in diverse communities. This awareness is exemplified in the County's organizational documents, such as the Affirmative Action Plan (Affirmative Action Plan), the Action Plan for a Sustainable Clackamas County and the Clackamas County Strategic Plan. It is also highlighted in County-sponsored diversity events and employee focus group responses.

The Affirmative Action Plan indicates a variety of ways in which the County intends to build relationships with minority organizations and other community groups. For example, it states that the County will attend job fairs and diversity events, make site visits to deliver presentations to organizations with frequent minority contacts, and encourage employees to develop personal relationships with cultural minority groups in the community (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 25, 26, 28). The County also maintains an Affirmative Action Mailing List of approximately 200 organizations, which is used to distribute a weekly job listing to groups prepared to refer minority and female candidates (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 26, 32).

The Action Plan for a Sustainable Clackamas County and the County's Strategic Plan both highlight the importance of engaging diverse communities and groups as collaborative partners. For example, the Action Plan calls for the County to continue working with neighborhoods to reduce crime (Action Plan, p. 15). While the focus of the efforts outlined in these documents is on strategies for improving services to diverse clientele, they still may represent an opportunity for promoting diversity among County employees.

Clackamas County also hosts an annual Cinco de Mayo Festival and recently held a Diversity and Cultural Awareness Fair. Such events aim to engage members of diverse communities and promote Clackamas County as an organization that values diversity.

The County's efforts to build relationships with minority populations were further highlighted in employee focus group sessions. One participant said, "...we've been doing work with the Latino Network to do outreach to those communities on how we can message that we have these services available..." Many employees seemed to emphasize the importance of diversity from the perspective of the County as a service provider.

## ***3. Hiring practice focuses on the skills, abilities and knowledge of applicants***

Clackamas County emphasizes hiring practices based on the skills, abilities and knowledge of applicants. The Affirmative Action Plan calls for job analysis to determine the "technical knowledge, skills, abilities and personal/interpersonal competencies necessary for success in the position (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 10)". The Affirmative Action Plan also indicates that additional experience may be substituted for desired education (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 10). Personnel policies such as EPP 23 and 24 put forth by the County also stress that pre-employment inquiries and tests should be job-related.

This emphasis was further highlighted in the responses from employee focus group participants. One participant said, “If you have a Native American person and a Caucasian person, what difference does it make that they are different colors... To me, you’re looking for people with skills, who are competent, who can do the job and add another level of dimension in terms of interpersonal skill and the way they get along with the team...”.

Focusing on skills, abilities and knowledge of the applicant in the hiring decision making is a good human resource management practice. It can also be an effective approach in promoting diversity, because this approach assures that applicants are not denied employment based on non-job-related characteristics. However, it can also present challenges. For example, we should recognize that implicit bias held by those involved in the hiring process may affect the hiring decisions even when they think they are applying objective selection criteria. Implicit bias occurs when people hold negative associations in their mind unconsciously, although consciously they reject stereotypes and supports anti-discrimination efforts (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Thus, occasionally, diverse applicants may be denied employment on the basis of not meeting the skills, abilities and knowledge criteria; when in fact the assessment of applicants’ capabilities are influenced by the decision makers’ implicit bias. Oral board training may be effective in addressing this challenge.

It is also true that some sub-groups of people may not have a large pool of people who possess certain skill sets, due to the traditional social norms applied to that particular sub-group. (e.g. There may be fewer qualified female engineers than male engineers because, traditionally, girls have not been encouraged to study engineering.) In these instances, it becomes important that the County expands its effort to reach out to a broader candidate pool to further diversify the applicant pool.

Another challenge that the County may need to pay attention to is that, occasionally, diverse staff are stigmatized as special hires who do not meet the standard for the required skills, abilities and knowledge. For example, one employee remarked,

“(People think that) the only reason I was hired was because I’m black and female. I’ve been called (by other colleagues) a ‘quota.’ I was spied on by subordinates (in the hopes of finding a fault or reason to get me reprimanded). After the one year probation period they especially cracked down on me. It got so bad that I had to stand up and confront a superior.”

Effective implementation of the existing hiring policies remains the key for diversity management. It requires a high level of cultural competence on the part of County employees to fully take advantage of the existing policies and practices and, in turn, use them to develop diversity.

#### **4. Public Image of Clackamas County as not being diversity-friendly presents a barrier to diversity efforts**

The Affirmative Action Plan indicates that Clackamas County is taking steps to promote the County as a desirable place for everyone to work. Such efforts include using both minority and non-minority men and women in recruitment materials, facilitating workshops on how to gain County employment, and using media outlets to communicate the County’s Affirmative Action goals and progress to the larger public (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 8, 28, 30).

Nevertheless, employee focus group participants expressed strong concerns with the public image of Clackamas County as a region, not being diversity friendly. They noted that those negative perceptions present challenges in attracting, recruiting and hiring diverse employees. Some employees said that Clackamas County is perceived as too far from Portland, not welcoming as a place to live for “outsiders”, and offering few opportunities for employment. Table 6 is the excerpt of employee comments on public perception of Clackamas County.

**Table 6: Example employee comments on public perception of Clackamas County**

<p>“...until minorities and people of color aren’t token people in their communities, in their workplace, in their schools, wherever it is, (Clackamas County) is not going to be welcoming.”</p>
<p>“These little communities, Molalla, Estacada, can be very, very difficult communities to crack into if you’re even considered to be an outsider. So I think those are all real again, they are challenges to not just actively diversifying Clackamas County as an employer, but Clackamas County as a, you know, as a County.”</p>
<p>“So if you don’t have employment (in Clackamas County), then there’s less of an incentive for people to move out here. And there’s less of an incentive for people to come work out here if their families can’t work out here either.”</p>
<p>“I know a young man, African American... graduated from college, started looking for a job... and we said, “Why don’t you apply for Clackamas County?” And he said, “I don’t know Clackamas County. I grew up in Portland, I know Portland. And why would I drive all the way out there?” That’s the perception, that it’s “all the way out there” and “I don’t know Clackamas County”.”</p>

## ❖ Statistical Snapshot related to Recruiting and Hiring Diverse Staff

### ***Change in the Employee Demographics (1999-2012)<sup>1</sup>***

Between 1999 and 2012, there was a noticeable change in the overall demographics of Clackamas County employees. The total number of racial/ethnic minority employees (Employees of color) increased from 75 (4.35 % of the total workforce) in 1999 to 178 (9.98% of the total workforce) in 2012. This statistic indicates that the County has been successful in recruiting and hiring racial minorities. The percentage of women remained approximately the same (51.16 % in 1999, 50.34% in 2012). (See Table 7 and Figures below).

Table 7: Percentage of Minorities in Race and Gender<sup>2</sup>

Year	Total Number of Employees	Number of Employees of Color	Percent of Employees of Color	Total number of Women	Percent of Women
1999	1724	75	4.35%	882	51.16%
2001	1824	86	4.71%	935	51.26%
2012	1784	178	9.98%	898	50.34%

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<sup>1</sup> Diversity data were available only for gender and race/ethnicity. Statistics for other minority groups (e.g. sexual orientation, socio-economic status) are not analyzed in this report.

<sup>2</sup> . This table is made from the data in 2001 assessment (11p.) and 2012 County workforce data..

Figure 3: Gender distribution in percentage

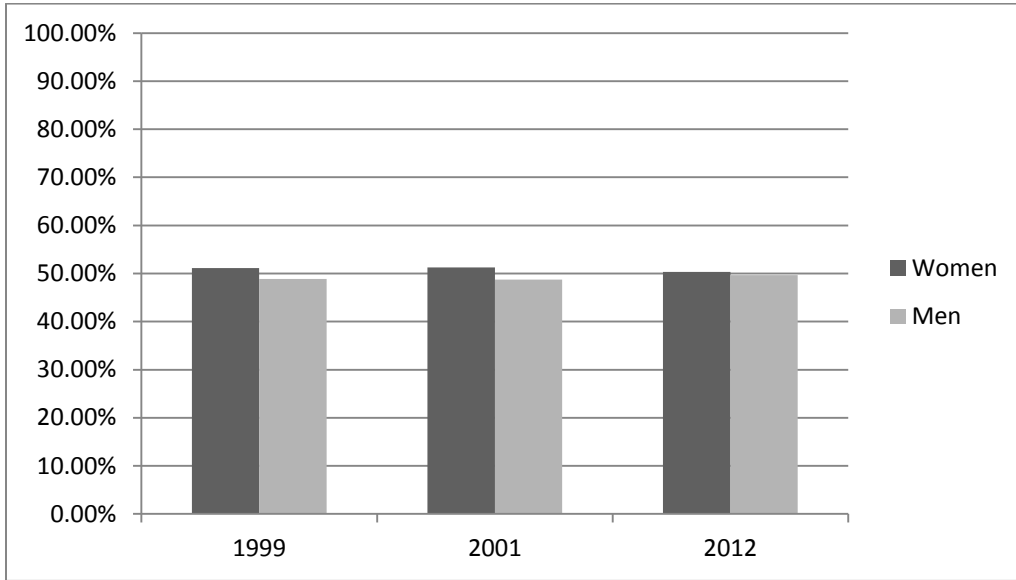
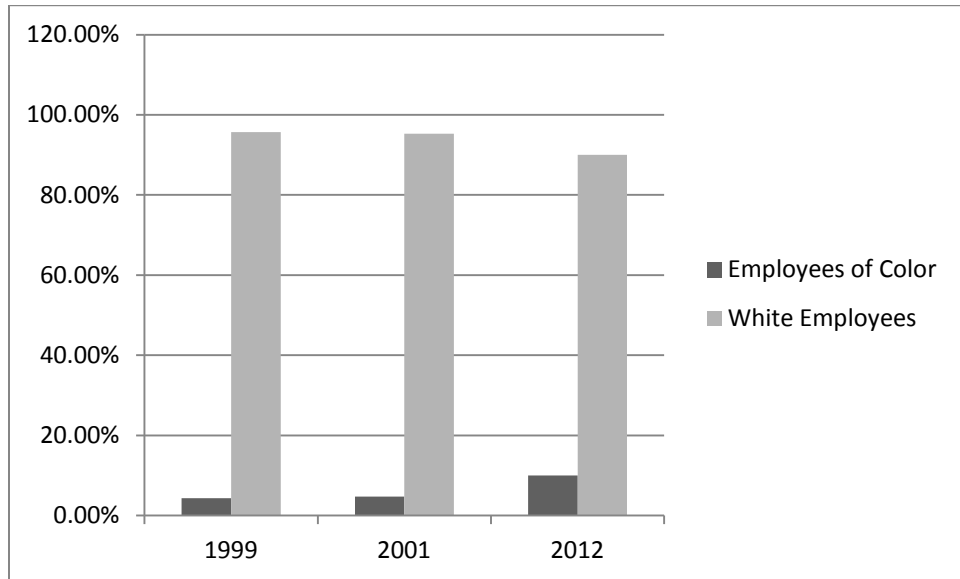


Figure 4: White vs. People of Color distribution in percentage



***Comparison of Demographics between County wide Population and County Employees***

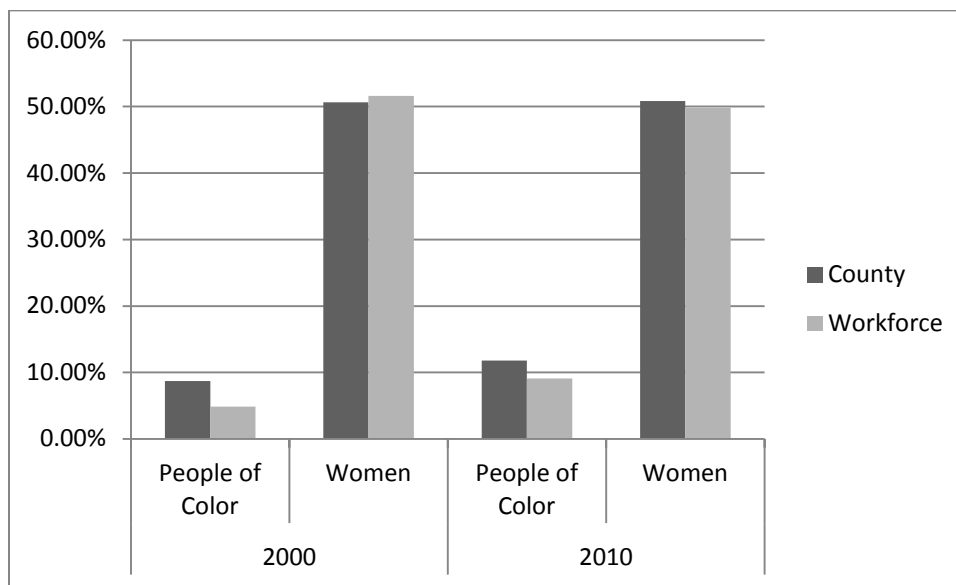
The demographic profile of County employees from 2001 and 2010 were compared to the rest of the county population (See Table 8). In 2000, the percentage of people of color County-wide was 8.73%, much higher than that of the County employees (4.85%). In 2010, the percentage of County minority employees rose to 9.11%. The county-wide minority population in the same

period rose to 11.81%. The percentage of female employees working for the County remained approximately the same as the percentage of women county-wide for both year 2000 and 2010.

**Table 8. Comparison of Demographics between County-wide Population and County Employees<sup>3</sup>**

		Total	White	People of Color		Female	
				Number	%	Number	%
2000	County-wide	338,391	308,852	29,539	8.73%	171,315	50.63%
	Employees	1,836	1,747	89	4.85%	947	51.58%
2010	County-wide	375,992	331,571	44,421	11.81%	191,067	50.82%
	Employees	1,768	1,607	161	9.11%	881	49.83%

**Figure 5: Comparison of Demographics between County-wide Population and County Employees.**



***Comparison of Demographics by Departments Between 2001 and 2012***

The 2001 and 2012 employee demographics data were used to compare the numbers of minorities and women in twelve departments: Health, Housing and Human Services, Transportation and Development, Sheriff’s Office, Juvenile/Family Court, Water Environment Services, District Attorney, County Treasurer, County Assessor, Employee Services, County

<sup>3</sup> . This table is made from the Census data and the county workforce data.

Administration/Board of County Commissioners/County Counsel, County Clerk and County Library.

For nine of the twelve departments, the number and percentage of employees of color increased from 2001 to 2012 (See Table 9 and Figure 6). For the remaining three departments (County Treasurer, Employee Services and County Library) the number and percentage of employees of color either remained the same or decreased from 2001 to 2012. As noted earlier, the total percentage of employees of color for the County was 9.98% in 2012. The percentage of employees of color in two departments, Health, Housing and Human Services and Juvenile/Family Court, were higher than the County average at 16.79% and 11.86% respectively. The percentage of employees of color for all other departments fell below the County average for 2012. The rate of increase in the percentage of employees of color in the Sheriff's Office and County Assessor's Office is substantial. Between 2001 and 2012, these two offices increased the percentage of employees of color by more than four times. This suggests that, in these two departments, efforts are being made to recruit and hire employees of color.

In terms of gender, the number and percentage of female employees increased from 2001 to 2012 for six departments. In particular, the Sheriff's Office increased from 109 (28.31%) female employees in 2001 to 152 (31.8%) female employees in 2012. Additionally, five departments had especially high percentages of female employees in 2012. Those departments were: Health, Housing and Human Services (76.79%), County Treasurer (80%), Employee Services (79.41%), County Clerk (73.33%) and County Library (90.91%). Nine of the twelve departments had percentages of female employees higher than that of the County as a whole (50.34%) for 2012. (See Table 9 and Figure 7)

**Table 9. Comparison of Demographics Across Departments (2001 and 2012)**

Department	Year	Total	People of Color		Women	
			Number	%	Number	%
Human Services (H3S)	2001	452	33	7.3%	352	77.88%
	2012	405	68	16.79%	311	76.79%
Transportation & Development (DTD)	2001	297	10	3.37%	73	24.58%
	2012	236	11	4.66%	74	31.36%
Sheriff's Office	2001	385	7	1.82%	109	28.31%
	2012	478	37	7.74%	152	31.80%
Juvenile / Family Court	2001	55	5	9.09%	35	63.64%
	2012	59	7	11.86%	38	64.41%
Water Environment Services	2001	92	4	4.35%	23	25%
	2012	102	9	8.82%	30	29.41%
District Attorney	2001	81	3	3.7%	60	74.07%
	2012	54	5	9.26%	32	59.26%



County Treasurer	2001	5	1	20%	5	100%
	2012	5	0	0%	4	80%
County Assessor	2001	55	1	1.82%	33	60%
	2012	54	4	7.41%	34	62.96%
Employee Services (DES)	2001	25	1	4%	21	84%
	2012	34	1	2.94%	27	79.41%
County Admin/BCC /County Counsel	2001	20	0	0%	11	55%
	2012	28	2	7.14%	17	60.71%
County Clerk	2001	28	0	0%	22	78.57%
	2012	15	1	6.67%	11	73.33%
County Library	2001	21	0	0%	20	95.24%
	2012	11	0	0%	10	90.91%

Figure 6: Percentage of People of Color by Department (2001 and 2012)

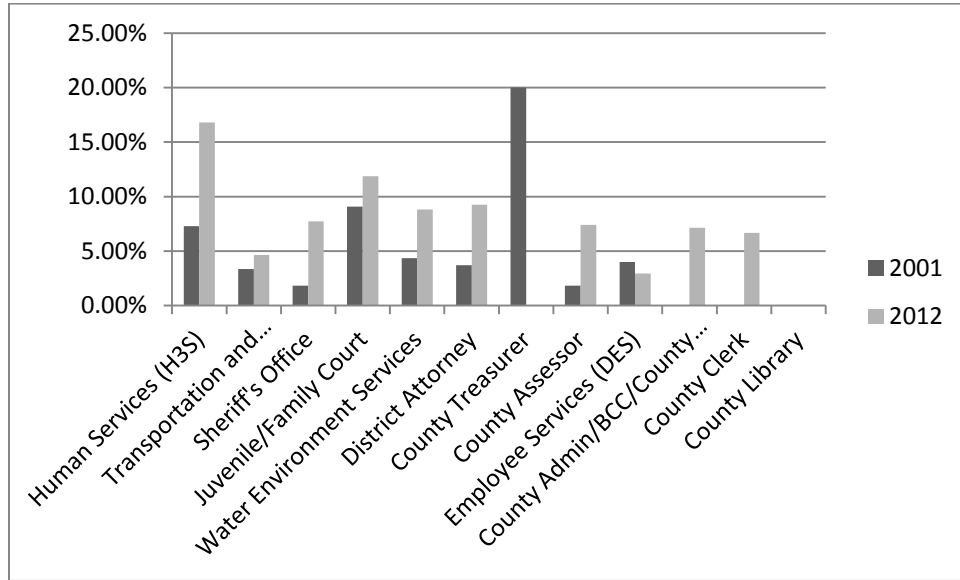
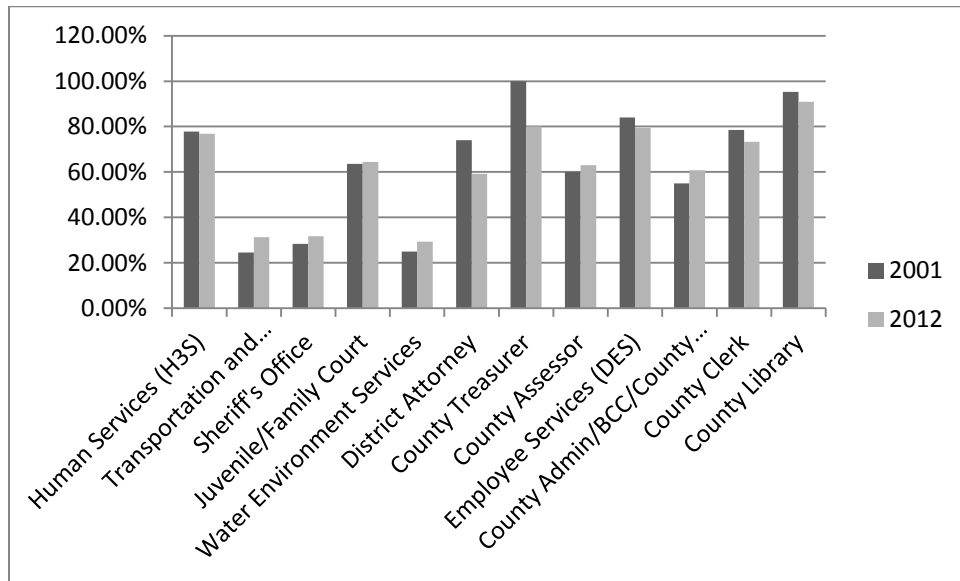


Figure 7: Percentage of Women by Department



**Comparison of Ethnic/Racial Backgrounds of Applicants and New Hires (2008 ~2011)**

Ethnic and racial backgrounds of the applicants and the new hires from 2008 to 2011 were examined to assess the County's effort in recruiting and hiring diverse employees. In examining

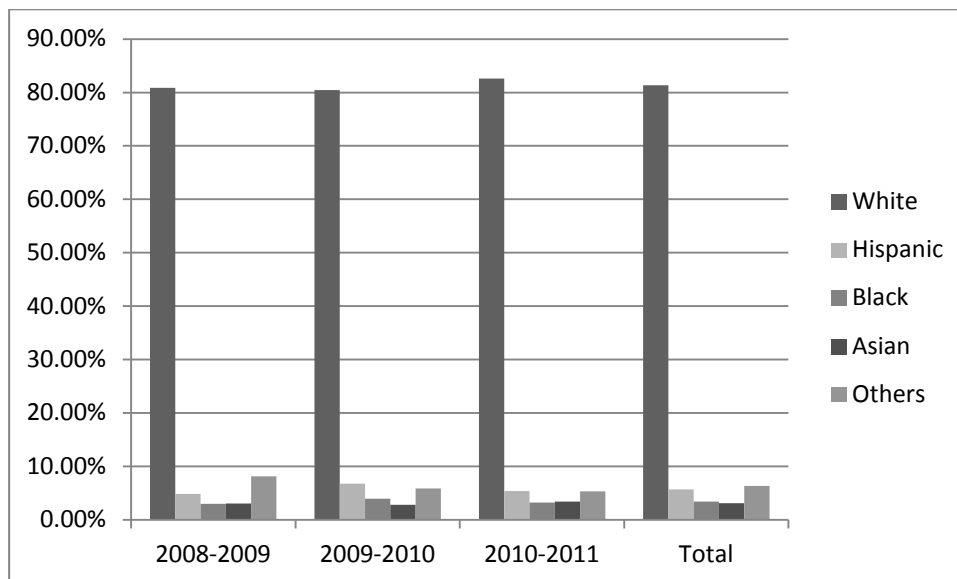
the applicants' background, no substantial changes in the percentage of minority applicants were observed. (See Table 10 and Figure 8).

**Table 10: Ethnic/Racial Backgrounds of Applicants from 2008 to 2011**

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total
White	13221	15181	16055	44457
	80.90%	80.47%	82.58%	81.35%
Hispanic	797	1285	1048	3130
	4.88%	6.81%	5.39%	5.73%
Black	489	751	628	1868
	2.99%	3.98%	3.23%	3.42%
Asian	502	541	668	1711
	3.07%	2.87%	3.44%	3.13%
Others	1334	1107	1042	3483
	8.16%	5.87%	5.36%	6.37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16343</b>	<b>18865</b>	<b>19441</b>	<b>54649</b>

\* "Others" includes Pacific Islanders, Amerindian, and Not-specific.

**Figure 8: Ethnic/Racial Backgrounds of Applicants from 2008 to 2011**



During 2008 to 2011, a total of 564 employees were hired. Among them 53.9% (304) were female and 15.8 % (89) were people of color. The percentage of whites among the new hires decreased from 84.3% in 2008 to 81.9% in 2011, reflecting the increase in people of color

among the new hires. There is a noticeable increase in the Hispanic and Asian new hires. The percentage of females new hires also showed a noticeable increase from 47.6% in 2008 to 61.1% in 2011 (See Table 11 and Figure 9).

**Table 11: Ethnic/Racial and Gender Backgrounds of New Hires from 2008 to 2011**

	2008		2009		2010		2011	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
White	156 84.3%	88 47.6%	81 86.2%	53 56.4%	120 85.1%	75 53.2%	118 81.9%	88 61.1%
Hispanic	13 2.2%		6 6.4%		13 9.2%		9 6.3%	
Black	4 2.2%		4 4.3%		5 3.5%		3 2.1%	
Asian	7 3.8%		2 2.1%		3 2.1%		9 6.3%	
Others	5 2.7%		1 1.1%		0		5 2.8%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>		<b>94</b>		<b>141</b>		<b>144</b>	

\* "Others" includes Pacific, Amerindian, and Not-specific.

**Figure 9: Ethnic/Racial Backgrounds of New Hires from 2008 to 2011**

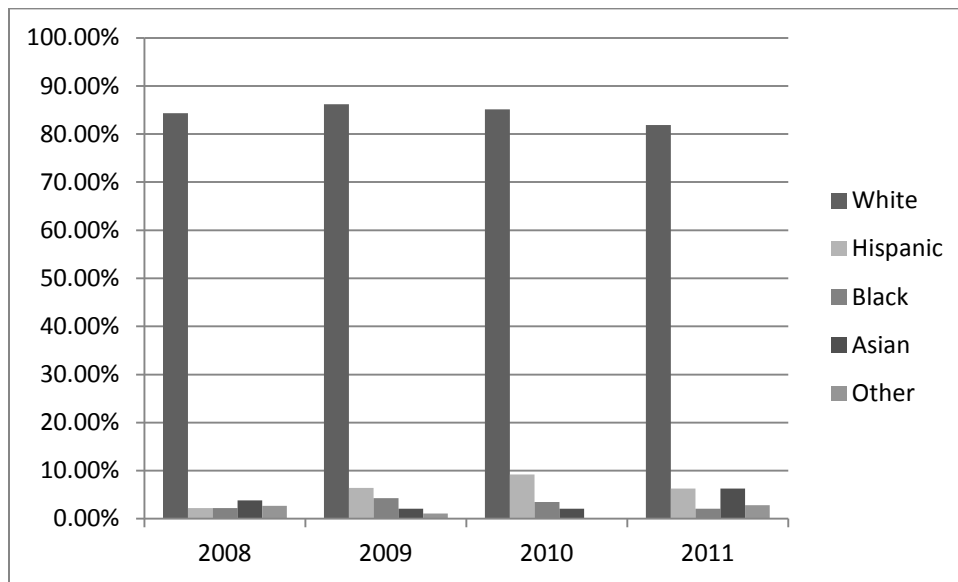
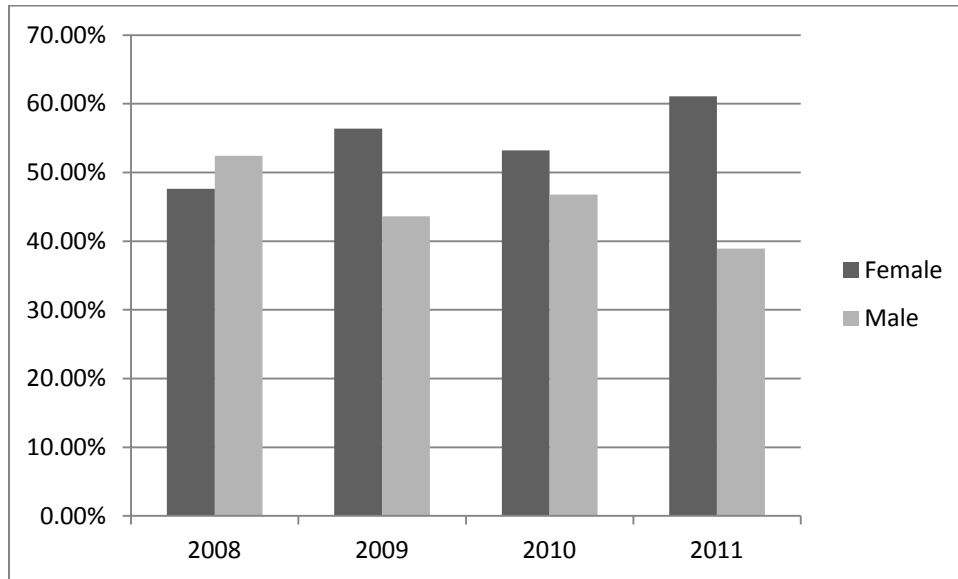


Figure 10: Gender Distribution of New Hires from 2008 to 2011



### *Diversity Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Work Culture*

The second diversity goal identified in the 2001 Diversity Assessment is to promote and maintain a work environment that is welcoming to employees with all kinds of diverse backgrounds. How successful the County is in developing a welcoming and respectful work culture is examined for the 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment. Indicators such as the presence of support groups/affinity groups, respectful treatment of diverse clientele, positive employee-manager relations, and the encouragement of diversity of thoughts, are taken into consideration.

The results suggest that Clackamas County has taken action to create a workplace that is inclusive of all employees. This is evident in policies and other documents put forth by the County, as well as efforts made by the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) and the Diversity Leadership Council (DLC). The subjective evaluation by employees and leaders who participated in the focus group sessions, however, provided a mixed evaluation regarding the work culture and noted that the County is in the transition phase in terms of shifting from the old culture to a new one. The variability in the employees' observations about the County's work culture in relation to diversity highlights that there is some dissonance between the policy and programmatic efforts the County is putting in place and the employee's subjective experience in the workplace. This could mean that there are some implementation issues in the policies and programs that needs to be examined.

## **1. County has taken actions to be inclusive of all employees**

Clackamas County emphasizes the importance of being inclusive of all employees. The Personnel Ordinance states that Clackamas County will commit to assure

“fair treatment of applicants and employees in all aspects of personnel administration without discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, political affiliation, marital status, family relationships or disability and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens”(p. 16).

The Personnel Ordinance also pledges to pay respectful treatment of all employees, stating that

“employees who disagree with a performance evaluation may submit a written response with reasons for disagreement to be reviewed by their immediate supervisor and appointing authority. The employee’s response shall be filed with the employee’s performance evaluation in the employee’s personnel file” (P.43).

The Personnel Ordinance also stipulates zero tolerance of workplace harassment, stating on that

“Clackamas County firmly believes that a comprehensive, systematic and equitable process for resolving complaints of discrimination, harassment, unlawful employment practices, or violations of equal employment opportunity is an essential part of a comprehensive affirmative action plan” (p. 71)

In addition to establishing policies to make the workplace welcoming, respectful and inclusive for all employees, Clackamas County supported the establishment and the activities of Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) and Diversity Leadership Council (DLC). Review of the DAC and DLC minutes indicate that these groups organized number of events that support cultural awareness that are celebrated within Clackamas County, such as Cinco de Mayo, Say Hey, and various Brown Bag lunch events and helped creating a welcoming and respectful work culture.

Furthermore, in 2010, Clackamas County established the Onboarding Task Force, which was responsible for developing an onboarding website. The website was implemented in February 2011, and offers new employees, applicants and current staff convenient access to information that can help them feel welcome and informed. The content available on the website includes information regarding different departments, services and benefits offered by the county.

## **2. Mixed Evaluation by the Employees on the County’s Work Culture; County is in transition phase in terms of work culture**

Despite the efforts that were put in to create a welcoming and respectful work culture at Clackamas County, focus group and interview participants provided a mix of both positive and

negative testimonials regarding the degree to which Clackamas County has succeeded in making its work culture welcoming, respectful and inclusive. Highlighting a positive change at the County, one employee mentioned in the focus group discussion that in the beginning there were only two female employees in the entire department, but now there are “quite a few,” and the work environment has become more female-friendly. Another female employee stated, “I don’t think women are treated differently” and third female employee mentioned that “there is good communication and respect is given based on how well one does his/her job.” These employee comments indicate that, there has been a shift in the County’s work culture that made female employees more welcomed and respected than they used to be.

Other employees, however, commented that there is still a lot of work needs to be done in order to improve Clackamas County’s work culture. Even in relation to the work culture inclusive of females some employees noted that there are areas still in need of improvement. One employee noted, that she occasionally observed that “the room is filled with a bunch of male egos.” In one case, an African-American female noted feeling unwelcomed by her colleagues’ comments describing her as a ‘quota.’

One of the County employees in the focus group described the work culture of the County and noted, “There’s definitely an old tradition, an old culture that we have brought along . . . and that has transitioned and changed over the years.” This comment seems to encapsulate the same sentiments expressed by many other employees indicating that the County is in the transition phase, moving from an old culture that did not value diversity as much, to a new culture that wants to be more welcoming and respectful to diverse employees.

### ***3. Dissonance between Policy/Programmatic Efforts and Employee Perceptions***

Clackamas County has explicit Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies pertaining to the creation of a welcoming and respectful work culture. The Personnel Ordinance and other human resource management policies also address ways to create an inclusive work environment. Furthermore, sub-groups such as DLC and DAC have been making efforts to promote and implement strategies for a diversity-friendly work culture.

Nevertheless, the testimonies given by various employees during the focus group discussions and interviews indicate that these efforts are not satisfactory for everyone and that there is room for improvement. One employee stated, “the DAC council has organized brown bags and cultural fairs, but there seems to be no impact. A more powerful message of zero tolerance is not being enforced.” The sentiments voiced by some employees, seem to indicate that the pillars of change have been put in place to support an arena where a welcoming and respectful culture can take place, but the change is just simply not happening at the rate that some employees would like it to happen.

### ***Diversity Goal 3: Retention and Development of Diverse Staff***

Retention of all employees in general is an important human resource and diversity management issue because of the high cost associated with turnover. Diversity management literature (e.g. Fenn & Irvin, 2005) emphasize the importance for organizations to put effort in retaining diverse employees in addition to recruiting and hiring as a diversity strategy. Providing existing employees with opportunities to advance their skills and career is one of the important strategies for retaining employees. Employee development includes providing programs such as formalized yearly trainings, certifications and education incentives, employee assistance programs and on-the-job mentoring.

Recognizing the importance of employee retention, Clackamas County offers several employee development programs. In the implementation of these programs, special emphasis is placed on 'equal access' to assure all employees, regardless of their demographic or cultural background, are presented with the opportunities. 'Equal access' is a recurring theme in several of the County's organizational documents, including the Affirmative Action Plan, employment policies, and the Employee Handbook. Some formal employee development programs and career advancement opportunities are offered at the organization-wide level coordinated by the Department of Employee Services. In addition, there are some programs that are offered at the departmental level. Employee development program organized by departments attempts to incorporate specialized needs of the employees' specific to the department.

Despite the eagerness among the managers to support employees' career development, some managers expressed concern that they are somewhat constrained in what they can recommend to their employees and there is little to no support for managers themselves concerning program or staff development. Some employees emphasized the need to have some mentoring system for employees. Helping the new incoming employees navigate the workplace seemed to be an important support lacking currently for Clackamas County in retaining, especially, diverse employees.

### ***1. Providing Employee Development Opportunities for All Employees***

Clackamas County has outlined in the Affirmative Action plan a promise to provide career counseling to all its employees (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 33), skills and career development training (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 12; Employment Policies and Practices, p. 3 & 9), and to develop promotional paths for paraprofessional and technical level jobs that do not otherwise have promotional potential (Affirmative Action Plan, p.11). For example, acknowledging that many low level job classifications lack opportunities upward mobility, the County proposed transitional job classifications for paraprofessional positions that may ease a possible transition to higher level positions (Affirmative Action Plan p. 11).

The restructuring of current classifications to encompass a broader range of possible skills is another way that Clackamas County is attempting to promote and retain diversity within its ranks (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 11). Clackamas County also strives to implement consistent and fair employee performance evaluations (Employment Policies and Practices, p. 35), and establish clear performance expectations (Employment Policies and Practices, p. 18). These



County organization-wide policies and programs all provide the foundation for the County’s employee development efforts.

Clackamas County also has a resource library available to all employees who want to explore their career options (Employee Handbook, p. 37). While the information is not available online, employees can send in requests for resources via email. The requested materials are then sent to the employee through the County’s interoffice mail system. This practice may improve the accessibility of the resource library for certain populations, such as individuals who have disabilities that prevent them from driving vehicles, have unusual working shifts, or live out of the area, by not requiring employees to physically visit the library located on the County’s main campus.

In addition to the centralized organization-wide employee development programs, managers at different departments are given a certain amount of flexibility to work within their departments to develop personalized and relevant skills training and career development training plans (Affirmative Action Plan, p.12). For example, the Clackamas County Roads Department has developed a skill-based pay program that emphasizes on-the-job training. Advancement to higher pay grades is now more dependent on skill development and no longer just on seniority (Leadership Focus Group Transcript) As one employee stated, “Now we just have a skill-based program that’s based mainly, the training, on seniority. So when someone comes in the door, they know, eventually, that as their skill level increases and their seniority, they are going to get more opportunities to train, so it eliminates a lot of the, I guess, somewhat the competitiveness among the genders.” (Leadership Focus Group Transcript).

## Table 12: Sample List of Organization-wide Employee Development Opportunities

Clackamas County Employee Development Programs	Program Purpose	Project Influence
Leadership Academy	The Clackamas County Leadership Academy is a year-long program designed to develop and cultivate leadership skills in participating employees.	16-18 employees per year
Bloodborne Pathogens Communication and	Countywide program	All employees
Leadership for an Effective Workplace	Countywide program	All employees
Effective Writing CPR/AED/ First Aid	Countywide program	All employees
Frontline Leadership Series	Countywide program : Supervisory skills, Managing Priorities, Preventing Harassment, Meeting Management	All employees

**2. Eagerness to Promote Employee Development; though Managers Need Support.**

As noted in the previous section, several professional development programs are in place for the employees who work for the Clackamas County. Employees who show interests in furthering their potential are generally supported in their efforts and “will get the opportunities” (Employee Focus Group Transcripts, p. 12).

Unfortunately, managers expressed that they feel somewhat constrained in the options available for them to support their employees. These feelings are at least partially due to managers’ interpretation of union requirements regarding additional training. One of the Leadership Focus Group participants noted

“... we really encouraged employees to take responsibility for grabbing at any opportunity they can and make it their desire to do it, rather than managers or supervisors saying ‘this is what I want you to do.’ And it’s too bad, but I think we’ve kind of been forced to do it that way just because of contract language.” (Leadership Focus Group Transcripts, p. 8).

Managers also noted that they do not get much support in providing effective employee development opportunities. It is often up to the initiative of each individual employee to seek out various opportunities that the County provide.

**3. Need for Employee Mentoring Program**

Some employees noted the importance of having a staff mentoring program. The absence of the mentoring can leave some employees feeling alienated and unsupported in their roles, particularly if they are new to the job. As one of the focus group participants stated,

“If you have someone who can tell you how to navigate the system, it puts you ahead of the game. If nobody is doing that for you, you feel like you’re out there all alone” (Employee Focus Group Transcript, p. 25).

Another individual implied that mentoring would have increased their promotion potential, stating

“there are certain basic things that if I was going to grow into a bigger and better job that I’m not afforded the opportunity to do, simply because of where I’m at... If someone was mentoring me, he may have taught me maybe how to work with the union, negotiations or something.” (Focus Group- Directors, p. 13)

## ❖ Statistical Snapshot

### ***Demographic Composition of Upper Management***

In order to assess the potential promotional opportunities for diverse employees, demographic compositions of the Clackamas County’s upper management (Directors and Managers) were analyzed using 2012 employee profile data.

As seen in Table 13, 16.67% of Directors are non-white and 55.56% are female; 7.52% of Managers are non-white and 67.67% are female. In comparison to the proportion of non-whites among overall employees (9.98%), there is a higher proportion of non-white members among the Directors, and lower proportion of non-whites among the Managers. For both Directors and Managers the proportion of females is higher than that of overall employees (50.34%). This number, however, needs to be interpreted with caution, since the actual overall number of Directors and Managers are smaller (18 Directors and 133 Managers), small change in number of non-whites and females can affect the percentage. Nevertheless, the statistics seem to suggest that Clackamas County is more diverse at the Directors’ level both in ethnic/racial and gender composition. At the Managers’ level, there seems to be some opportunities to increase the proportion of managers of color.

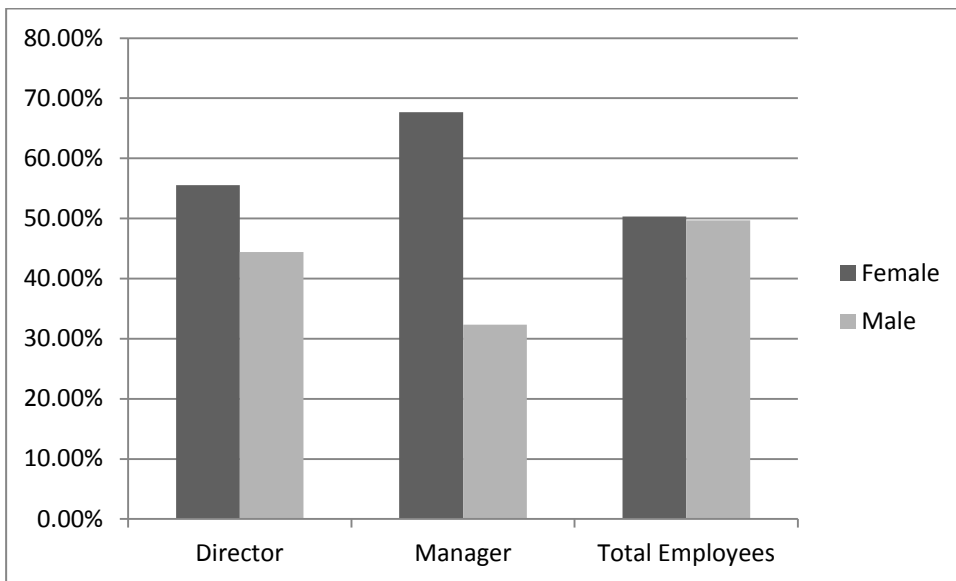
**Table 13. Demographic Composition of Upper Management**

Job Title	Total	Non-White		Female	
		Number	%	Number	%
Director	18	3	16.67%	10	55.56%
Manager	133	10	7.52%	90	67.67%
Total Employees	1784	178	9.98%	898	50.34%

Figure 11. Ethnic Composition of Upper Management



Figure 12. Gender Distribution of Upper Management



## Demographic Composition of Terminated/Laid-off Employees

Demographic composition of the employees who were terminated was analyzed to assess the state of employee retention at the Clackamas County. Proportion of white employees and employees of color were examined for those who were laid-off due to budget reasons, and the overall number of employees terminated since the year 2000. As seen in Table 14 below, employees of color constitute approximately 12 to 13 percent of overall employees who were terminated. Considering that the percentage of total employees of color being 4.71% in 2001 and 9.98% in 2012, it seems that higher proportion of the employees of color was terminated than the white employees. This may indicate that the employees of color have a lower retention rate than the white employees.

Table 14. Demographic Composition of Terminated/Laid-off Employees since 2000

Reason of termination	Total	White		Employees of color	
		Number	%	Number	%
Layoff (Budget Constraints)	229	199	86.90%	30	13.10%
All unemployed from 2000	1663	1462	87.91%	201	12.09%

### Diversity Goal 4: Cultural Competence

Clackamas County defines cultural competence as having the knowledge and awareness that enables employees to successfully engage diverse coworkers and communities (Emmett Wheatfall, 2012).

Clackamas County provides multiple avenues for the employees to acquire, develop and maintain cultural competence. The County has formal diversity training programs, and offers other educational opportunities for the employees. Employees' opinion varies with regard to the scope of the diversity-related trainings and educational opportunities. In the focus group sessions some employees and managers, expressed the desire to have more frequent, on-going, in-depth diversity training, while some others noted that the employees are getting tired of too many diversity trainings.

Clackamas County also recognizes that developing cultural competence improves the quality of the interactions with diverse citizenry and clientele. Employees, however, provided a mixed assessment of the current quality of county-employee's interaction with diverse clientele.

Some managers expressed the need for more support mechanisms specifically for managers. They noted that managers get frequent messages from the top management to promote diversity. However, managers are not clear "how" they can do it. Both employees and managers also expressed that it is not easy to assess individual employee's level of cultural competence.

## **1. Diversity Training and Other Educational Opportunities**

Clackamas County offers multiple avenues for diversity training and education for the employees to gain knowledge and skills to enhance cultural competence. The importance of diversity training is well expressed in the Affirmative Action Plan, diversity training materials, and the DAC/DLC minutes. The Department of Employee Services (DES) organizes different types of formal diversity trainings with different target audience; all employees in general, managers, and new employees. They also coordinates quarterly brown bag lunch gathering with different diversity topics for discussion and annual diversity day inviting diversity experts to meet with county employees. (See Section2: Cox's Component 2 Education for more details).

Participants of employee focus groups and the leadership focus groups also expressed that diversity training and other educational opportunities are essential for enhancing cultural competence of the employees at the County. One of the leadership focus group participants said,

“We have things like the diversity brown bag series. I've gone to those and I've learned a lot from those. So the county offers opportunities like that to learn about other cultures.”

And, one of the employees at the focus group session listed key components of cultural competence and said,

“What's useful for everyone in terms of working with difference? [Employees need ] Communication training; awareness; paying attention to learning style, particularly adult learning”

People who participated in the focus group discussion provided varied opinions on their assessment of the effectiveness of the diversity training and educational opportunities currently offered by the County. While most of them recognized and appreciated having multiple opportunities for diversity education, some noted that the current level of diversity training is not enough in terms of frequency and the depth in the content. They observed that most employees obtain some level of diversity training when they are new hires. However, it is not being followed up later in their career in a systematic manner. Focus group participants expressed their concern that without appropriate follow-up trainings, the County's diversity efforts may not be able to achieve the desired level of cultural competence among employees. They also pointed out that the existing training program helps lay the foundations to develop cultural competence, but it is quite basic. Some focus group participants advocated for advanced, on-going training, including ones that are specifically for managers. It should be noted, however, that some focus group participants also expressed their concern that the employees are getting tired of too many diversity trainings. (See Section2: Cox's Component 2 Education for more details).

The importance of addressing cultural competence as part of managerial skills is also expressed in the Affirmative Action Plan, the Employment Policies and Practices, diversity training materials. It is noted in the DAC/DLC minutes and the focus groups discussions that some

employees feel some managers do not value diversity and lack culturally competent managerial skills. Some noted that current management skill training sessions involve limited amount of diversity content and there may be a need for additional training and support for managers related to diversity (See Section 2: Cox's Component 2 Education for more details). One of the employee focus group participants said,

"I do think there should be emphasis placed on leadership roles and how to respond to certain behaviors. There should be specific training for supervisors and managers on how to deal with issues and challenges around diversity."

## ***2. Recognition of the Importance of Enhancing Culturally Competent to Serve Diversifying Citizenry and Clientele***

Clackamas County recognizes that it is important to enhance both individual and organizational cultural competence in order to serve diversifying citizenry and clientele in a respectful manner. Clackamas County's various organizational documents demonstrate a strong focus on making improvements in the respectful treatment of diverse clientele,

The Diversity Leadership Council (DLC), a community advisory group, and the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC), an employee advisory group, have worked collaboratively to move the County forward in the area of cultural competence, particularly as it pertains to serving a diverse clientele. On May 22, 2012, the two groups met to discuss and coordinate the diversity recommendations that they later presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on June 5, 2012. The recommendations presented emphasized the importance of improving services and service delivery to better meet the needs of the County's diverse communities. More specifically, the DLC's portion of the presentation included recommendations to partner with culturally specific service providers, implement on-going employee training on topics such as intercultural communication and customer service for all clients, and identify gaps in service delivery in order to focus future efforts and resources on those gaps. The DAC's recommendations also advocated for signage and interpretation services for clients with limited English proficiency

<http://www.clackamas.us/bcc/documents/presentation/presentation20120605d.pdf>.

On July 19, 2012, the BCC approved a resolution (Resolution Valuing Diversity in Clackamas County), which was written in response to the DAC's and the DLC's recommendations. The resolution, among other things, directs staff to increase multilingual signage and communication capacity, and conduct town hall meetings in rural County communities in order to improve accessibility. The resolution also indicates that plans to move the diversity manager position to an executive level position will be considered. This change would allow for better coordination of diversity efforts, including efforts to improve services for all clientele. (BCC Agenda, Thursday, July 19, 2012).

Although the adoption of the resolution suggest Clackamas County's recognition that improving cultural competence is an important part of serving diverse citizenry and clientele, some

employees in the focus group discussion provided slightly less optimistic vision of Clackamas County's relationship with the community and noted;

"We have folks who won't come to a meeting up here because they think their photos will be taken and sent to the Sheriff's Department and their family members will get deported. So that has really negatively impacted our ability to work with the Hispanic community."

The nature of this comment seems to suggest that more effort is required for the Clackamas County to gain trust from the community of color.

### ***3. Challenges to Holding Employees Accountable to Act Culturally Competent***

While the County is taking steps towards developing employee and organizational cultural competence, employees referenced instances of co-workers acting inappropriately. On such occasions, it is also sometimes difficult for individual employees to hold others accountable to act in a culturally competent manner. Managers in the leadership focus group shared difficulties they face in raising awareness to act culturally competent especially when there is a work culture that are not highly sensitive to cultural differences, and the inappropriate behaviors and comments were exhibited in a casual interaction. One manager said,

"Sometimes when you're just in the moment--- like when you are walking by and you hear something. My staff has a joke now, they kind of mock me, in a good-natured way. They'll say 'In-a-proprate'. Because they know that I will call them on it, I'll say 'that's not appropriate, that's not okay' because sometimes you just have to call them on it, even when it's uncomfortable. You know, you don't make it a big deal, but you just say, "you know, that's not appropriate, that's not okay." So you just have to do it right in the moment. Sometimes you call people aside, but sometimes you need to send the message, you can't say that at work and you especially can't say that when I'm hearing. So I have a duty to call it, to call the behavior and let anyone who heard that to know that it's not okay. So, that's what I do."

Managers emphasized the importance of the leaders becoming a role model, and taking action to correct the inappropriate behaviors. However, some concerns are expressed in the DAC/DLC minutes and at the focus groups that they have observed indications that some managers exhibit behaviors that suggest they do not value diversity and they lack in culturally competent managerial skills. One employee stated,

"Unfortunately, not all leaders here in Clackamas County do [set a positive example]. And they can behave pretty inappropriately."

### ***4. Need for More Support Mechanisms for Managers***

Participants in the leadership focus group emphasized the importance of providing more support to managers in their effort to promote diversity. They recognized that the County



offers variety of training and education opportunities, but not many of them specifically focus on the managers' diversity management skills One of the participants in the leadership focus group said,

"I would just add that, yes we need to try and maintain a balanced diverse workforce, but don't forget about those that we have now. Help us learn how to do that, help us, like we were just talking about now, have those opportunities to share our strengths and our weaknesses for feedback. And help us and then we can be the leaders and reach out."

They noted and expressed appreciation for County's efforts to develop new leaders by offering trainings such as Leadership Academy, however, they also pointed out the importance of providing support to the existing managers. One manager said,

"Support us in supporting diversity. Don't just tell us. You know, give us some real tangible-- what does it mean? Don't just give us 5 more diverse employees in the applicant pool to get them up into our interview process. That isn't it. That is not going to make our workforce more diverse, okay? Give us some real tools. Support us in the daily things that we do. Don't just say at the quarterly management meeting, "We value diversity". Well, of course we do."

Managers in the focus group sessions noted the most useful support comes from the informal network of managers. They pointed out that having opportunities for managers to exchange ideas and engage in informal problem-solving discussion would be most useful. They observed that currently there is no formal forum or opportunity for managers to support one another, unless they each take an initiative to network with other managers. Some departments use their monthly or quarterly managers meeting for some informal roundtable discussion. But most of the time managers meetings are not opportunities for them to discuss issues. One manager suggested having informal roundtable discussion where they can,

"...sit at a table and get to know someone a little bit, then maybe go to lunch, and so we have sort of an informal... where I can call [the person] up and say, "Hey, I'm having this kind of issue, what do you think?"

Another leadership focus group participant described that this kind of informal exchange among the managers, especially between those who are new to the County and those who have been at the County for a long time, will facilitate culture change at the Clackamas County.

"Things like that, I think would be helpful. Because a lot of us bring leadership skills from things we've done before and have only been here a few years. But there's also a lot of us who joined as step 1, pay grade 1 and have made it to the director's level. And their whole experience has been here. And enough of those are prevalent around here. We have to recognize that's our culture. Our culture is people who got out of high school, started at the county and have been here forever. . . . it would be helpful for us to have

rounding out experiences, and rounding out conversations, and diversity of opinion, diversity you, know, of things.”

## ***5. Challenges in Measuring Cultural Competence***

Participants of both leadership and employee focus groups noted the difficulties of assessing the level of cultural competence that will allow the County to hold people accountable. They noted that if there is a good way to accurately assess the level of cultural competence and reflect it in the performance evaluation, it will help guide employees to act in a culturally competent manner, and also send message to all County employees. One of the leadership focus group participants said,

“If we put on everybody’s job evaluation or if we’re hiring managers or employees and asking a question in every interview about diversity, that sends a powerful message. If we talked about putting it on performance evaluations for people that have some decision-making authority to say, you know, how do you measure up in this area? Then I think that sends a county-wide message.”

For the moment, employees observed that the level of individual’s cultural competence is not measured in a systematic manner, as one employee put it;

“We don’t assess staff members’ cultural competency levels to interact effectively with diverse coworkers and community members. Yeah, we don’t, but to me that’s not the county’s responsibility”

One exception noted in the employee focus group was by the H3S employees who pointed out that there was a recent attempt to address the issue of the level of cultural competence, because of the federal regulation. This employee said,

“The only place where I see that there’s some level of competency measurement or training, and it’s only been over the last six months, is in primary care. And I think that that came about because of federal requirements. . . . So, within the last six months, there has been a group at the primary care level working to create a cultural competency program and they presented that several months ago at an all-staff meeting.”

## Section 2: Findings Related to Cox's (2001) Organizational Change Components

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### *Cox Component 1: Leadership*

Leadership is the first component of Cox's organizational change model and, according to Cox, the most important. In terms of organizational change, leadership is what guides and inspires an organization towards a collective goal or vision (Cox, 2001, p. 18). Cox outlines six elements of leadership that are essential to change. They are "(1) creating a vision, (2) being personally involved (to demonstrate required new behaviors), (3) establishing the right organization design", (4) integrating diversity work into the organization's overall strategy, (5) creating a management philosophy, and (6) developing a communication strategy (Cox, 2001, p. 32-33).

According to Cox, leaders of an organization include CEOs, heads of departments, diversity officers and coordinators at all levels, members of diversity councils, HR staff members responsible for diversity efforts, and heads of labor unions (Cox, 2001, p. 33). Cox also emphasizes that successful diversity efforts require a strong commitment from those individuals in top leadership positions (Cox, 2001, p. 33-34). At Clackamas County, such leadership positions include the Board of County Commissioners and the County Administrator.

Leaders of Clackamas County have been supportive of promoting diversity. As part of their diversity and inclusion initiative, the Diversity Leadership Advisory Council (DLC) was created by Board Order in 2003. DLC consists of up to 19 community members appointed by the Board of Commissioners, and they serve as a community liaison to the County government related to diversity issues. The County also created a Diversity and Inclusion Manager position within the Department of Employment Services in 2001, and the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) was formed by the employees in 2010. The two councils — DLC that represents community interests and DAC that represent employee interests — as well as the Diversity and Inclusion Manager and the Department of Employee Services, has been the champion in taking a leadership role in implementing diversity programs and elevating awareness on diversity issues within the County.

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012, DLC and DAC made a joint recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to implement actions to further the County's diversity and inclusion efforts. On July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the County Board of Commissioners adopted a Resolution Valuing Diversity at Clackamas County, which stated the County's commitment to value and promote diversity, and some concrete actions steps that will be taken. The adoption of this resolution is Clackamas County leadership's public commitment for diversity. However, during the focus group sessions that took place prior to the adoption of the resolution in July, during February to May of 2012, some concerns were expressed that it is not very clear whether the entirety of the Clackamas County leadership is committed to the diversity efforts. Some observed that the County's philosophy and vision for diversity is not unclear, and the County's strategic plan include limited discussion on diversity.

## ***1. Leadership by Diversity Advisory Groups***

The Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) is a community advisory group that was created by the Board of County Commissioners on May 15, 2003. The DLC consists of 7 members, each appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. The primary purpose of the DLC is to serve as a liaison between the County government and the people of the County on issues relating to diversity. According to the Clackamas County webpage, members of the DLC possess unique knowledge regarding issues facing minorities, experience with reaching traditionally underserved populations, and/or speak one of the County's dominant languages other than English. The members of the DLC are equipped to help Clackamas County better meet the needs of its diverse communities.

In addition to the DLC, the County also has an employee advisory group called the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC). Established in 2010 by Clackamas County, the DAC serves to support the County in achieving its diversity goals. The DAC is made up of 15-20 employees representing a multitude of County departments and divisions. In 2012, the DAC won the Achievement Award presented by the National Association of Counties for its work in the area of diversity. This work includes authoring a monthly diversity column for the employee newsletter, and organizing employee brown bag lunches with panel discussions and guest speakers on a variety of diversity issues. The DAC also sponsors annual diversity seminars for employees. In 2011, the DAC organized and implemented a Diversity and Cultural Awareness Fair. The fair was open to all County employees, and various community groups and non-profit organizations were present to provide information and answer questions.  
(<http://www.clackamas.us/childreneyouthandfamilies/diversity.html>)

The County's diversity advisory groups, the Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) and the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC), play important role in leading the County's diversity efforts. Together, these groups provide a variety of benefits to the County. They facilitate communication of the County's diversity efforts to employees and community members. They help increase employee buy-in, and obtain diverse input from the community. In addition, these groups are involved in planning and implementing various diversity events, such as employee brown bag lunches that and County-wide diversity celebrations.

The diversity advisory groups monitor the County's progress towards achieving diversity goals and bring diversity issues to the forefront of the organization. Most recently, DLC and DAC jointly submitted a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners, which resulted in the adoption of the Resolution to Valuing Diversity at Clackamas County on July 19, 2012. The resolution includes a commitment by the County to implementing a number of the recommendations put forth by the DLC and the DAC. The work of the DLC and the DAC members were recognized and commended by the Commissioners for moving the County's diversity efforts forward.

## ***2. Leadership by Diversity and Inclusion Manager and the Department of Employee Services***

The County's Department of Employee Services (DES) management team, specifically the department director and the Diversity and Inclusion manager, has been taking a leadership role in promoting diversity programs, and are strongly committed to the County's diversity efforts. Both the department director and Diversity and Inclusion manager are advocates of diversity in the workplace, demonstrating passion and a willingness to move the County's diversity goals.

The Diversity and Inclusion Manager is responsible for developing and implementing the County's diversity activities, and communicating about those activities broadly to the employees and the community members. The Diversity and Inclusion Manager is also responsible for addressing organizational issues relating to diversity, and developing a Strategic Diversity Plan for the County. Some of the specific duties concerning this position include supporting recruitment and outreach efforts, designing and delivering diversity education, and responding to employee concerns related to workforce diversity issues.

DES, where the Diversity and Inclusion Manager is housed, works to meet the human resources needs of all County departments. The department's responsibility includes, but are not limited to, hiring and recruiting, assuring compliance with personnel policies, providing employee development training and addressing employee relation challenges. DES integrates diversity considerations into the human resource management work. It has contributed in raising the awareness of diversity issues throughout the County and moved the County forward in its diversity efforts.

## ***3. Concerns on Top Leadership Commitment for Diversity***

Prior to the adoption of the Resolution Valuing Diversity in Clackamas County, some concerns were expressed by the employees on the commitment of the top leadership on diversity. During the leadership focus group some participants shared their observations that they feel the County top leadership is not really serious about diversity. They noted that diversity is treated as one of those things they do because they have to. One participant shared the general observation on how diversity is discussed among the executive management team and said,

"I think the county is doing a lot, lot better than they used to, but not everyone has bought into it. . . . It's almost like, yeah, we gotta do this so we don't get in trouble and being sued. So let's just do it. I think over time, it will happen."

Another person also noted,

"an issue like this [related to diversity] was brought forth [at the executive management meeting] and I just didn't think it was really brought forward with enthusiasm. It was kind of like, here it is, the board is kind of looking at it, so you all might want to look at it. And if I was a manager hearing that, I read into people's words all the time, so I would

say, — okay, I’m going to take a look at it, but it’s not something that I’m going to prioritize.”

The degree of indifference or apathy towards diversity efforts observed among the leadership team is of concern. Especially if the mid-level managers and other employees perceive that the top leadership do not really think diversity matters.

Some efforts have been made to get more buy-in and commitment on diversity from the top leadership. In 2011 and 2012, the Board of County Commissioners participated in leadership-focused training on diversity as part of the County’s annual day of diversity training (“A Day With…” training). Managers also receive diversity training as part of Frontline Leadership, the County’s training program specifically for employees in management positions.

#### ***4. Concerns on Lack of Clear Vision for Diversity***

The 2010 Clackamas County Strategic Plan recognizes diversity as the key strengths of the County. It states, “As the County looks forward to the future, it will continue to rely on our unique diversity as a key asset in navigating the financial challenges that it may face”(Strategic Plan, p. 7). The plan, however, does not provide specific vision on the County’s diversity efforts.

In 2009, the Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) raised the need for a County diversity statement. DLC developed a statement and it was published on the County’s website. However, the focus group participants pointed out that the statement has since been removed from the website or the link has become inactive. Search on the Clackamas County website with the search word “diversity” (as of July 25, 2012) only generated a link to the web-pages on DLC and information on domestic partnership. Neither website included County’s vision or mission statement on diversity

In 2010, when DAC was formed, it put forth its guiding vision stating;

“We strive to understand, value, and incorporate the contribution each employee brings to the county so that we can build a multicultural workplace and reflect the growing diversity and inclusion of our community.”

However, both in leadership and employee focus groups participants indicated that they are not clear what County’s diversity vision is. One employee remarked,

“I don’t understand what the diversity plan is in the County. It’s not defined. What is the plan? What are we trying to do? What’s the mission statement?”

Also one of the managers in the focus group session commented,

“I’m sorry. I have forever had a hard time with this conversation, not just here, but the whole diversity thing because I’m just not sure what we are supposed to do about it.. . I’m hearing community, I’m hearing employer, . . . I’m a little confused as to what

problem we're supposed to be tackling here . . . - there's part of me that feels, yeah, it's important, but if we're triaging our [other social] problems, it's probably not very high on the list. So I don't know what we're supposed to be doing."

These comments suggest that there is a need to establish a clear vision asserting the County's commitment to diversity, as well as the need to initiate a comprehensive communication plan supported by the County's leadership. As Cox (2001) advocates, communication is essential to build employee buy-in and a shared commitment to an organization's vision for diversity. If a vision is not communicated effectively, employees may not be aware of where the organization needs to go or be inspired to take the organization there.

The Resolution Valuing Diversity Clackamas County recently adopted on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 may serve as the County's vision for diversity and help employees and community members understand County's commitment for diversity. The resolution states,

. . . Whereas, Clackamas County is committed to providing the best service possible to our customers and a work environment in which employees from all backgrounds feel welcome and have an opportunity to succeed based on their merit; therefore, be it resolved that:

1. The Board of County Commissioners establishes as a key priority the goals of striving for high quality customer service and equal access to opportunity to people of all backgrounds who live in or do business in Clackamas County, including but not limited to people who live in rural areas, people from historically disadvantaged groups, English Language Learners, seniors, youth and veterans; . . .

### *Cox Component 2: Research and Measurement*

Clackamas County has taken clear steps towards strengthening its research and measurement components. First, the 2001 diversity assessment established a baseline for the County's diversity efforts. By conducting a follow-up diversity assessment for 2011-2012, the County intends to examine the progress that has been made since 2001. The 2011-2012 assessment will also provide Clackamas County a basis to develop a survey that can be administered to employees at pertinent intervals. In this way, the County will be able to measure progress in terms of its diversity efforts into the future. The County's annual Affirmative Action data analysis also represents a systematic approach to progress measurement. Lastly, the county's Diversity Advisory Council has been active in developing and administering surveys to track the progress of its diversity activities, such as its Brown Bag Lunch series.

Research and measurement are key components of organizational change. According to Cox, in order for organizational change to be successful, it must be informed by accurate and pertinent data (Cox, 2001, p. 20). Progress should be measured consistently and systematically (Cox, 2001, p. 20). Organizations can use research and measurement to build commitment among leaders

and employees, enhance the quality and relevancy of diversity education, and gain a better understanding of the current diversity climate (Cox, 2001, p. 60-66).

At this time, Clackamas County does not have a systematic mechanism in place to assess and track the overall level of cultural competency of employees. The development and implementation of the employee diversity survey will allow the County to measure the level of employee cultural competence, and track it over time. The question remains whether this survey will be administered systematically and at regular intervals, as well as how the data will be used to inform decisions and increase employee buy-in for diversity efforts.

### *Cox Component 3: Education*

Cox stresses education as an integral component of any effective organization change (Cox, 2001, p. 77). According to Cox, education is not just training, but rather it encompasses a variety of other learning opportunities, such as personal coaching and discussion groups (Cox, 2001, p. 21). It is important that diversity education be tailored to meet the specific needs of the employees. Organizations should first establish an understanding of the level of employees' awareness of diversity issues, depth of knowledge, and their readiness for change (Cox, 2001, p. 82).

Clackamas County provides diversity education in a variety of ways. It includes diversity days, brown bag lunches, diversity conference and formal training for managers, employees, and new employees. The broad range of learning opportunities provided to the employees indicates the County's commitment to diversity education. The assessment on the frequency and the content of that diversity education by the employees, however, is varied. Some employees noted that the coverage and the depth of the content of the diversity training is somewhat limited, and expressed their desire to have more advanced training. On the other hand, some employees commented that there are "too many" diversity trainings and people are fatigued.

### **1. County Commitment to Diversity Education**

The policy document describes diversity education as an important part of the County's diversity efforts. For example, Clackamas County's Affirmative Action Plan stipulates diversity training for managers and supervisors as an important part of the County's EEO/Affirmative Action program. The Affirmative Action plan calls for manager and supervisor training that addresses the potential impacts of certain selection techniques, strategies for conducting effective performance evaluations, and various other diversity issues (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 12). The Affirmative Action Plan also indicates that training is provided to all members of oral board panels, which demonstrates intent to reduce bias in the selection process through training efforts (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 33).

Moreover, the Department of Employee Services (DES) develops and implements various diversity training programs for employees and managers. These training programs include



‘Building Connections’, a diversity training for all county employees; ‘Front Line Leadership’, a training for managers that incorporates diversity training; and quarterly brown bag lunches that highlight a different diversity topic each quarter. DES also coordinates ‘A Day With...’, an annual diversity day for which the county hosts a different expert on diversity to conduct training for employees. Diversity education is incorporated in the new employee orientation, as well. In addition, Clackamas County sponsors and sends employees to participate in an annual diversity conference for public employees — the Northwest Public Employees Diversity Conference. Clackamas County is involved in the planning of the conference, and the conference offers participants an opportunity to share their experiences and learn what others in the region are doing to promote diversity in the public sector.

**Table 15: List of Diversity Education Opportunities**

	Type	Target audience	Frequency	Length of event	Started since	Approx number of people attended (annually)
“Building Connections “	Training	All Employees	Monthly (except August & December)	3.5 Hours	2003	
“Front Line HR”	Training	Management	Monthly	All Day	2008	25
New employee orientation	Training	New Employees	Monthly	Half Day	2007 (Diversity Included)	150
Quarterly Brown Bag Luncheon	Discussion	All Employees	Quarterly	1.0 Hour	2008	30
A Day With . . .	Discussion/Lecture	All Employees	Annually	All Day	2009	75
Northwest Public Employee Diversity Conference (NWPEDC)	Conferenc/Event	Public employees in the region	Annually	All Day	2003	100
Cultural Diversity Fair	Event	Employees and public	Annually	3.0 Hours	2011	200
Cinco De Mayo Celebration	Event	Employees and public	Annually	Half Day	2009	100
Say Hey		Potential Employees	Quarterly	2.0 Hours	2005	7

## **2. Concerns on the Content and Coverage of the Diversity Training**

While the County's various diversity training programs demonstrate the organization's commitment to provide education to promote organization change toward higher diversity and inclusiveness, some employees commented that the current training content is somewhat limited and it will be helpful to have longer and more in depth training. One employee in the focus group session stated,

"The [existing] training seldom address the real problems, and the reaction to going is usually negative."

Similarly, another employee said,

"Right, we need to be more diverse. Okay, of course, but now what. How do we get there? You know, work with us, help us. Help us be more culturally competent. Give us some tools. How do we make sure that our environment is inviting?"

The current training is focused primarily on the meaning and importance of diversity and cultural differences (Building Connections, p. 6, 8, 9; Frontline Leadership, New Employee Workshop, slide 5). Other integral components of diversity change efforts, such as intergroup conflict and issues arising out of affirmative action, are addressed, but a sufficient amount of time is not allotted to their discussion (Frontline Leadership; New Employee Workshop, slides 1,2,3,4,5). The above comments from the focus group participants suggest they do not consider the current coverage of those trainings are adequate.

Another employee in the focus group suggested a 'staged' approach and said,

"I think that you could certainly become more focused [with the diversity training]. If you're going to have this [diversity training] as an ongoing thing, then you can have the entry level diversity class, then let's start talking about specific topics and some planning around how we are going to meet the needs of a certain population."

Some employee pointed out that they feel the existing diversity training program is not long enough to cover important contents. Currently, 'A Day With...' diversity events and the regional diversity conference are one-day events. The formal diversity training for all employees "Building Connections " is a 3.5 hour session. Cox states that a three-day education program, with each day consisting of 8 hours of training, is the "bare minimum" criteria for an effective diversity training (Cox, 2001, p. 83). This length of training can help participants develop awareness of diversity issues, provide them with more in-depth knowledge, and prepare them to be ready to change their behavior (Cox, 2001, p. 83). Thus, the relatively short sessions of the diversity education offered by the County may be limiting effective development of cultural competence among the employees.

Furthermore, participants in the leadership focus group sessions emphasized an importance of diversity skills among managers. Some noted that current management skill training sessions

involve a limited amount of diversity content and there may be a need for additional training and support for managers related to diversity (See Section 2: Cox's Component 2 Education for more details). [Check Cox 2: Education, and expand the content with some FG quotes and DAC/DLC minutes]. Managers themselves expressed the desire for opportunities to acquire skills that would help them become better managers of a diverse workforce. For example, focus group participants commented,

"...support us in supporting diversity. Don't just tell us. You know, give us some real tangible [skills]- what does it mean? Don't just give us five more diverse employees in the applicant pool to get them up into our interview process. That isn't it. That is not going to make our workforce more diverse, okay? Give us some real tools, support us in the daily things that we do."

"I have been through a lot of diversity training and I personally think we get over-trained. But I do think there should be emphasis placed on leadership roles and how to respond to certain behaviors. There should be specific training for supervisors and managers on how to deal with issues and challenges around diversity."

### *Cox Component 4: Alignment of Management Systems*

Cox (2001) describes organizations as "social systems, and changing them requires that all major components of the system be reviewed and changed to achieve alignment" (p. 103). He identifies time factors, space factors, and people process factors as the key management components that need to be examined for promoting diversity and inclusiveness in the organization (Cox, p. 104). Time factors relate to scheduling, workday length, schedule flexibility, and time off policies. Space factors relate to workplace cleanliness, the presence of class distinctions and barriers, and how the presence of physical barriers separate people in the workplace. People process factors relate to recruiting and promotion practices, career development and succession planning, and compensation policies. (Cox, p. 104). These factors are interdependent with each other. Cox notes that in order to assure long-lasting changes in diversity it is important to recognize this interdependency of management factors and initiate changes that are aligned with each other. In this 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment, Cox's three factors in the Clackamas County's organizational systems were examined to see how they are addressed by the County.

#### **1. Time Factors**

##### ***Workday Length***

Many county employees now work on a "Four-Ten schedule," working from Monday through Thursday, 7am-6pm. Although this work schedule allows employees to have a three day weekend, it does require longer work hours during a week. This longer work hours may pose some challenges to some County employees. For example, single parents with young children, the majority of whom are women, might struggle to find adequate daycare for 10 or more-hours during the week days. Four-day work week, however, can be used as a recruitment tool to

attract people who prefer non-traditional work-schedule and may contribute to diversify the workforce.

### ***Schedule Flexibility***

Though Clackamas County appears to provide adequate schedule flexibility for basic staff training (Affirmative Action Plan). Focus group participants acknowledged that participating in the county sponsored classes are part of the work day. This does not extend to cross training, advanced career development training, or succession oriented training, for employees looking to move up in the workplace.

### ***Time-off policies***

Clackamas County seems to adequately address employee leave and time-off in its employment policies. Though many specific issues that arise cannot be anticipated, well-constructed policies can be broadly applied to a variety of situations. The exception may be the Crime Victim Leave policy, which has the same eligibility time frame as FMLA leave. Employees must work at least an average of 25 hours per week for 180 days to qualify, and the policy extends to immediate family members only. Part-time employees, regardless of their length of employment, may find that they do not qualify for Crime Victim leave. (EPP 8)

## ***2. Space Factors***

### ***Presence of job class distinctions and barriers***

It was noted by one of the interviewees that there is little to no regular employee interaction with the county commissioners. This implies that there is an invisible “barrier” between regular staff members and elected officials.

### ***Physical barriers***

County offices are disbursed across different places in the County. This can inhibit interactions among county employees who work in different buildings. If the County were to provide a formal forum for managers to exchange ideas related to diversity, as was suggested by some of the focus group participants, this challenge may be addressed (See Diversity Goal 4. Need for More Support Mechanisms for Managers)

### **3. People Process Factors**

#### ***Career development and succession planning***

Clackamas County appears to be limited on both career development training and a county-wide succession plan. It is acknowledged in the Affirmative Action Plan that the county needs to develop a career development protocol; it has yet to be developed further. A career development training program and a succession plan can both help Clackamas County adjust to the inevitable wave of public employee retirements that has already started and may see anywhere from 20-30% of highly skilled, experienced staff members leaving within the next five years (see Retention and Development).

#### **Compensation policies**

Two interview subjects felt that the County's approach to attracting bilingual staff is not effective. Although the County offers a second language incentive, some employees expressed their observation that the County culture remains unwelcoming to bilingualism. One interviewee voiced his or her perception of County policy, stating ,

“Beavercreek clinic is a federally qualified health center, and part of the federal requirements is that everything is bilingual, which would mean that the external sign announcing Beavercreek clinic. But county policy only allows us to use English.”

A few employment policies (EPP 31 and 32) suggest that temporary and part-time employees at the County have limited access to benefits. Although this is not unusual, this can be a barrier for the County to retain diverse talented and highly skilled temporary or part-time employees. A skilled temporary employee may eventually be hired as full-time, a lack of adequate benefits in a part-time or temporary position may encourage them to find work elsewhere.

#### ***Cox Component 5: Follow-up***

Cox (2001) advocates that organization change efforts require a follow-up process that encompasses implementation of decisions, creating and implementing measures of accountability, and putting systems in place to collect and apply lessons learned in order to enhance future diversity activities and outcomes. Cox recommends four actions for effective follow-up: (1) a plan review, (2) keep score, (3) provide incentives for positive behavior, and (4) manage knowledge retention and transfer.

The County appears to be weaker in having clear follow-up plans. .Currently, it does not have a plan for a systematic plan review, and does not have a standard diversity measures to keep track of the progress. It also does not have explicitly stated incentives for diversity efforts, and insufficient opportunities for information sharing that allows knowledge transfer.

## ***1. Lack of Systematic Plan Review***

An effective plan review model involves a regular review of substantive data. It is a mechanism to hold employees accountable for implementing diversity efforts and achieving results (Cox, 2001). Clackamas County maintains annually updated Affirmative Action data, which indicates the number of minorities and women working for the County. The review also involves an analysis of Affirmative Action progress by department and in accordance with department goals (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 6). This is undoubtedly an important piece of the review process; however, limiting the review to the number of minority and female employees is insufficient in capturing all of the efforts the County has for promoting diversity. The Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) has been actively tracking its diversity activities, such as its Brown Bag Lunch series. Still, Clackamas County may consider enhancing its review process to include a systematic look at what is being done, in terms of specific processes and programs at all levels and across departments, to promote diversity throughout the organization.

## ***2. Gaps in Diversity Measurements***

Cox (2001) emphasizes the often quoted principle of measurement, “You don’t get what you don’t measure” (p. 132). As noted in the previous section, Clackamas County is doing a commendable job of tracking the number of minority and female county employees, and has seen an increase in minority and female employees over the years. Employees, however, shared their observation on things that are not measured. For example, employees indicated that the number of job fairs attended is measured and reported by the Diversity and Inclusion Manager, but they do not receive reports on the number of diverse candidates in the applicant pool for a given job opening. Another measurement that will be crucial to the strengthening of the County’s diversity efforts is the cultural competence of its workforce. This, however, can be addressed with the implementation of the employee survey.

## ***3. Lack of Explicitly-Stated Incentives for Diversity Efforts***

Cox (2001) claims that incentives, including monetary awards, personal and group recognitions, and chances to advance, can encourage desired behavior change. Currently, Clackamas County does not have explicit incentives to reward employees for their exemplary efforts to promote diversity. This suggests that an opportunity may be present to consider various incentives for advancing diversity goals.

## ***4. Insufficient Opportunities for Information Sharing***

Managing knowledge retention and transfer involves sharing knowledge from one part of an organization to another, whether that be across workgroups or entire departments (Cox, 2001). This reduces overlap in programs and activities, thereby promoting the efficient use of diversity resources. Information transfer also helps to ensure that best practices are being employed throughout the organization.

According to employee comments through the interviews and focus groups, there seems to be more informal than formal opportunities for information sharing at Clackamas County. While such informal opportunities add value to diversity efforts, it is still important for the County to have formal systems in place in order to facilitate information-sharing among employees. In addition, certain employees feel left out of the informal avenues of information transfer. One employee noted, “I would love to have someone I could call and reach out to and say, ‘Hey, here’s this situation I have, what do you think?’”.

### **Section 3: Assessment Applying the Three Stage Model**

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The 2001 Diversity Assessment applied the “Three Stage Model” (See Table 2) in evaluating the County’s readiness for change. The 2001 report described Clackamas County as a Phase One-Compliant organization. This 2011-2012 Diversity Assessment suggests that through its effort to develop diversity and inclusion, the County has since progressed to a **Phase Two - Responsive organization**. Current assessment identified certain aspects of the County that still places it under the Phase One category. However, there are other elements in place that suggest that the County is closer to becoming a Phase Three- Inclusive organization.

Phase Two organizations are characterized by a strong focus on matching employee demographics to those of its clients. The County’s emphasis on its Affirmative Action goals reflects this focus. Additionally, during focus group sessions, employees talked about the importance of representativeness, or the need for the County’s workforce population to reflect the demographics of the County as a whole. For example, one of the focus group participants noted,

“How nice would it be for a Hispanic person to come in and see one of their neighbors working at the County. It’s something like that, that makes the County feel more accessible.”

Phase Two organizations are also concerned with helping leaders develop new skills to manage a diverse workforce. Clackamas County embodies this concept in several ways. For instance, the County’s Affirmative Action Plan indicates that diversity training for managers and supervisors is an important part of the County’s EEO/Affirmative Action program. The Affirmative Action plan calls for manager and supervisor training that addresses the potential impacts of certain selection techniques, strategies for conducting effective performance evaluations, and various other diversity issues (Affirmative Action Plan, p. 12). Managers also receive diversity education as part of the County’s quarterly management training. Moreover, employees expressed their concern for diversity training for managers in focus group sessions. For instance, employees indicated a need for more or enhanced management-specific diversity training, while County leaders verbalized a desire for tools that would enable them to become better leaders of diversity.

At the same time, the County has put in place organizational elements that could shift the County towards a Phase Three- Inclusive organization. The County has mindfully adapted of human resources policies that addressed the needs of an increasingly diverse staff. Since 2001,

the County also created a Diversity and Inclusion Manager position, which has played, and will continue to play, an integral role in moving the County's diversity initiatives forward. Furthermore, the Board of County Commissioners recent adoption of the Resolution titled Valuing Diversity in Clackamas in July 2012 may serve to clarify the County's diversity mission and values, while paving the way for organizational change.

Concurrently, however, the opinions and attitudes expressed by County employees and leadership suggest that the practice and perceptions at the individual level have not quite caught up with the intent of the organization, as expressed through its structures, policies, and programs. Employee comments during focus group sessions, for example, indicated that some employees do not yet value workforce diversity. During a leadership focus group session, one participant stated,

“There are a lot of pressing issues in our society right now and in our workforce right now and in our County right now, and I think that this is one of those things that, to me, it's a nice thing to strive for, but I'm not sure. When I weigh out cost and benefit and where it falls on the scale that it's going to have the push behind it. Or I don't even know that I would recommend that we spend a lot of money or have this big rollout of something when we're laying people off and when we're having so many, you know, budget issues and trying to find money to assist people who are really in crisis. So, I don't know, it's kind of a hard-- there's part of me that feels, yeah, it's important, but if we're prioritizing our problems, it's probably not very high on the list.”

Other employee comments indicated that the County environment is still somewhat suppressive of certain diversity topics. Religion and sexual orientation were specifically noted as topics not to be discussed, even in casual conversation. One employee said,

“I think that there is an attitude in regards to a lot of these [diversity] issues: do not talk about it. You will get in trouble, leave it alone. So it could be a chilling effect. It's not exactly welcoming.”

This gap in the practice and organizational intent represents a challenge that will be important for the County to address if it is to become a truly inclusive organization. The recommendations put forth in the following section aim to address this issue, as well as provide additional guidance to Clackamas County as it moves forward in its diversity efforts.



## Section 4: Recommendations

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### *Goal 1: Recruiting and Hiring*

#### **1. Continue Efforts to Improve the Public Image of Clackamas County**

Some employees in the focus group sessions noted that unfavorable public perceptions of Clackamas County present a barrier to attract diverse applicants. In order to diversify the staff, Clackamas County needs to continue working on improving its public image. In particular, the County needs to strengthen its reputation for having a welcoming work environment for people with diverse backgrounds. It also needs to establish among the public a perception that the County is not too far from Portland to commute, and that it is a desirable place to live.

Clackamas County can coordinate a public image campaign and present itself as a good place for everyone to work, live and raise a family. Print, broadcast and social media outlets can be used to highlight positive attributes of the County, dispel myths, and increase publicity of the County's diversity programs. The County's website also needs to be evaluated to see if it presents the County as a welcoming and desirable place to work and live.

#### **2. Review and Develop Easy and Accessible Application Process**

Participants of focus group discussions shared their perception that the current online application system is not easy for people to navigate. Clackamas County has been making improvements in the online application system, however, the prevalence of the perception among the employees that the online application system is a barrier in promoting hiring diverse employee is worth noting. It is recommended that the County further explore this potential issue. The County can actively solicit feedback from employees and applicants to identify any shortcomings of the existing system. If the employee perception about the online application system is based on an older system, it may be worthwhile to launch a campaign noting all employees about the updated online application system.

### *Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Workplace*

#### **1. Continue Efforts to Develop Diversity-friendly Organizational Culture**

Testimonies given by employees for this assessment suggest that there is still has room for County managers and employees to take action in creating a welcoming work environment. It is difficult to change an organization's culture; and making significant changes in the organizational culture is a hands on approach. Beginning with managers, all employees need to play a role in ensuring that some small groups of employees do not feel isolated or unwelcome.

All employees need to know how to recognize and point out behaviors, comments and systems that may isolate someone or make someone feel uncomfortable. Brown bag lunches, the Cinco de Mayo event, etc. are a positive start. However, if employees do not take actions to create norms and a culture that values differences, then these events could end up being irrelevant in

terms of creating organizational change. In other words, employees at all levels, but especially managers, need to be empowered to be active agents of change.

### *Goal 3: Retention and Development*

#### **1. Implement Formal Mentoring Program**

Clackamas County may benefit from the development of a formal mentoring program. According to the United States Office of Personnel Management, a strong mentoring program can help an organization with employee skills enhancement, organizational development, culture change, knowledge transfer, staff retention, and even recruitment efforts (United States Office of Personnel Management, 2008). Employee comments in the interviews and focus group discussions suggest that there are some informal mentoring opportunities available to employees on an individual basis, but no formal mentoring system is currently in place at the County. Some employees would benefit from a formal mentoring program because it would provide them with an opportunity to expand on their basic training and develop a strong working relationship with a more established employee. This may also strengthen the County's efforts in succession planning by giving outgoing employees the chance to pass on knowledge and provide more in-depth training to other employees as mentors.

#### **2. Implement Succession Planning that Incorporates Diversity**

Clackamas County does not currently appear to have an official succession plan that incorporates diversity considerations. Employees interviewed for this assessment pointed out that the County has an opportunity to diversify the demographic makeup of its employees as the existing employees retire. According to a report from the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO), approximately 20 to 30 percent of the public sector workforce will retire within the next five years (Williams, 2011). This presents a huge potential staffing challenge for Clackamas County, but it also gives the County the opportunity to fine tune department succession plans, develop and implement new programs to promote staff development, and increase retention rates. In 2007, the Clackamas County Fire District #1 took part in a research project with the aim of helping the Fire District executive officers develop their own succession plan (Weninger, Scott. 2007). In 2010, the Fire District released a strategic business plan that included a succession planning initiative for their employees (Clackamas Fire District #1; Strategic Business Plan. 2010). The goal is to have a finalized plan by 2012. Although Clackamas County does not necessarily have to take the same aggressive approach to succession planning that Fire District #1 has chosen, failing to formulate its own plan may leave the County unprepared for the inevitable staff turnover.

#### **3. Review the Layoff Policy to Improve Retention of Diverse Staff**

Clackamas County may consider examining how its layoff policy impacts the County's effort to retain diverse employees. Review of employee data for layoffs due to budgetary reason suggest that employees of color constitute approximately 13 % of total budgetary layoffs since 2000. In

contrast, the percentage of employees of color is approximately 5 % (2001) to 10 % (2012) of the entire workforce. The review may be effective in revealing the reasons for this possible disproportionate impact of layoffs on employees of color.

#### ***4. Develop Department Level Programs that Promote Diversity***

While there are several countywide programs that promote diversity and employee development, individual County departments may benefit by tailoring those programs to fit their own needs. Developing a healthy approach to diversity is important for all departments within the County, but those employees whose jobs involve a greater degree of public interface than others may benefit from more advanced and specific training. The approach to Countywide employee development has certainly not been ‘one-size-fits-all’, but there could be greater focus within departments on addressing diversity and employee development issues they do not necessarily share with other departments.

### *Goal 4: Cultural Competence*

#### ***1. Develop Support Mechanisms for Managers***

Managers at Clackamas County will benefit from receiving support to help them become better leaders in developing diversity. Support can be provided in the form of leadership training, advanced diversity training, formal networking opportunity, and mentoring. Through those opportunities the County can equip managers with better tools and knowledge that will help them manage diversity.

#### ***2. Develop a Meaningful Way to Include Cultural Competence in Performance Evaluation Process***

In order for the County to keep improving individual employees’ cultural competence, it is important to provide feedback to the employees on how well they are supporting the County’s diversity efforts. To that end, the County should consider incorporating diversity-related standards or expectations into the formal performance evaluation process. For example, employees can be appraised according to their effectiveness in interacting with diverse staff and co-workers. Such diversity measures should be represented in each employee’s performance objectives and development plans so as to promote cultural competence development among individuals throughout the organization.

### *Cox Component 1: Leadership*

#### ***1. Develop a Clear Vision for Diversity and Communicate It Widely***

Employee focus group sessions indicated that there is still confusion regarding the intent of the County’s diversity efforts. Consequently, it will be important for Clackamas County to develop a clear vision for diversity. While the Board of County Commissioner’s (BCC) recent adoption of a

Resolution Valuing Diversity on July 19, 2012 may serve to clarify the County's vision, it will still be important for that vision to be communicated widely to establish buy-in and a shared commitment among County employees. The vision can be displayed in County facilities and on the County website. The BCC, and other County leaders, can also verbally communicate the vision frequently in order to keep the vision at the forefront of employees' minds, and to signify that it is a matter that should be taken seriously. Furthermore, the vision can be communicated to key community stakeholders in order to broaden its impact. Community stakeholders can also serve to hold the County accountable in turning its vision into a reality.

## ***2. Further incorporate Diversity Into the County's Strategic Plans***

Both the County's Strategic Plan and the Action Plan for a Sustainable Clackamas County address diversity in terms of the County as a service provider. These plans discuss strategies for meeting the needs of and improving services to a diverse clientele. Ways of enhancing the workforce diversity of the County as an employer, however, are not specifically indicated. Therefore, it will be important for Clackamas County to incorporate into its strategic plans the initiatives for addressing workforce diversity issues and strategies for leveraging the County's diversity to improve organizational performance. In this way, the County will establish a clear link between its overall organizational goals and workforce diversity efforts (Cox, 2001).

For example, the County's Strategic Plan includes an area of focus called "Provide Financial Stability and Leadership". Under this area of focus, the plan highlights two examples intended to provide planning guidance for the County's departments. One of the examples is "Seek the expertise of our employees to work more innovatively and effectively to serve our residents." While this may have been an opportunity for the County to discuss utilizing the diversity of its employees to enhance service delivery, none of the specific five year goals outlined under this example make reference to workforce diversity. The examples are not meant to limit departmental planning or serve as priorities; however, the County may consider using an example to emphasize potential planning efforts related to the diversity of the County's staff.

## ***3. Consider Establishing Office of Diversity and/or Chief Diversity Officer Position***

Clackamas County may benefit from establishing an independent Office of Diversity with the Chief Diversity Officer assigned to report directly to the County Administrator. Literature on managing diversity as a cultural change effort notes that the effort is more effective when it is led by people who are highly regarded and have significant decision making authority in the organization (Cox, 2011). Giving the Office of Diversity and the Chief Diversity Officer a clear leadership role in promoting diversity, the County will be able to take broader and better coordinated culture-change initiatives in its approach to diversity.

Other public organizations in the region elected to establish a central office for their diversity efforts. For example, Multnomah County has the Office of Diversity and Equity, (<http://web.multco.us/diversity-equity/>), City of Portland has the Office of Equity and Human Rights ( HYPERLINK "<http://www.portlandonline.com/equityandhumanrights/index.cfm>"

<http://www.portlandonline.com/equityandhumanrights/index.cfm?>) and Portland State University has the Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion ( [HYPERLINK "http://pdx.edu/diversity/" http://pdx.edu/diversity/](http://pdx.edu/diversity/)).

## *Cox Component 2: Research and Measurement*

### **1. Use the Diversity Survey to Enhance Diversity Education**

Employee opinions suggest that the County's diversity education program may not be meeting the needs of its workforce. For instance, employees in the leadership focus groups expressed an interest in learning skills that would help them better manage their diverse employees. Consequently, the County may consider using this assessment and the all-employee diversity survey to make the training more relevant to employees and enhance its diversity education programs.

The diversity survey can be used to identify where employees are at in terms of the three stages of learning- awareness of diversity issues, need for more in-depth knowledge or readiness to change behavior (Cox, 2001). With this understanding, the County's diversity programs can be tailored to better meet employees' learning needs. Another way the County can use the diversity survey, as well as this assessment, is to develop case scenarios based on employee feedback, and use those case scenarios in training sessions (Cox, 2001). This will help to ensure the relevancy of the training programs by bringing real organizational challenges into the learning curriculum. Lastly, both the diversity survey and this assessment may be useful in communicating the organizational need for diversity training. For example, the County can use these tools to demonstrate that the County still faces certain challenges related to diversity and communicate how the diversity training intends to address those specific challenges.

### **2. Improve Systematic Planning of Diversity Efforts**

Clackamas County currently engages in a variety of diversity efforts. While the work that the County has done is commendable, the County can further maximize the effectiveness of its efforts by increasing the intentionality behind its diversity activities. More specifically, Clackamas County can connect programs and events, such as the brown bag lunches and diversity fairs, to specific diversity goals. By instituting this kind of systematic planning of diversity efforts, the County is likely to be more successful in achieving organizational change.

## *Cox Component 3: Education*

### **1. Institute Longer and More In-depth Diversity Education Programs**

The limited content and duration of the County's diversity education programs and activities are a challenge to the County's diversity change efforts. The County can consider developing longer and more in-depth diversity training. In particular, it will be important for the County to extend its all-employee training programs to meet Cox's recommended minimum of three 8-hour day sessions (Cox, 2001). Longer training programs provide participants with the time

necessary to move through the three stages of learning, namely, awareness of diversity issues, in-depth knowledge and readiness to change behavior (Cox, 2001). Additionally, longer training sessions will also allow the County to cover a broader range of diversity topics, as well as to incorporate organization-specific issues into the training curriculum.

Moreover, the County can develop and implement department-specific and management-specific training programs. Department-specific programs may be effective in increasing the relevancy of training to employees, thereby strengthening employee buy-in and engagement. Management-specific training can be designed to meet the specific needs of managers and supervisors, and provide them with the tools to be more effective leaders of diversity. Managers are in a unique position of influence among the employees they lead and, therefore, should be paid particular attention when it comes to diversity change efforts. In other words, these leaders of the organization can make or break organization initiatives because employees often look to them for behavioral cues, which means that their commitment to diversity, as well as their ability to effectively leverage the diversity of their employees, is crucial to the success of the County's diversity change efforts.

## ***2. Evaluate Management/Supervisory Training for Diversity***

For the reasons mentioned above, it is also recommended that Clackamas County review its management and supervisory training programs for diversity considerations and incorporate diversity principles as appropriate. This will benefit the County's diversity change efforts in two ways. First, it will ensure that the management/supervisory trainings are not promoting unfavorable practices. And second, embedding diversity into all management/supervisory instruction will further emphasize the need for employee leaders to integrate diversity considerations into all aspects of their management activities, rather than treating diversity as a solitary issue.

### *Cox Component 4: Alignment with Management Systems*

#### ***1. Consider Ways to Overcome Physical Divide***

Employees expressed that there is little interaction between employees and County Commissioners. In the leadership focus group sessions, managers also expressed an interest in increasing information-sharing across departments. To this end, Clackamas County should examine how the physical layout and location of its County buildings promote or inhibit interactions between staff and leadership, and interactions across different departments. Based on its assessment, mechanisms to facilitate better communications across physical divide can be developed.

### *Cox Component 5: Follow-up*

### ***1. Provide Formal Opportunities for Information Sharing: Particularly Among Managers***

Participants in the leadership focus group sessions indicated a desire to establish formal opportunities for information sharing. The County may consider instituting monthly roundtable meetings for managers and supervisors. This would allow County leaders to share ideas, experiences, and concerns. Employees would also be able to get feedback from their co-workers on how to deal with difficult workplace challenges they may be facing. The content of the roundtables may not necessarily be limited to the topic of diversity; however, it would still provide a venue for such issues to be raised and addressed.

### ***2. Recognize Employee and Community Efforts with Diversity Awards***

Clackamas County should consider giving diversity awards recognizing individuals or teams who demonstrate exceptional contribution toward the vision of diversity. Providing public recognition for exemplary performance related to diversity development can be an effective motivator for employees. The award can also be given to the community members who contributed in making Clackamas County a welcoming place. The award can consist of certificate and a ceremony with high-visibility. It can include a modest monetary award, but this is not mandatory.

The presence of this kind of award also sends messages to both the employees and the community that diversity is a priority for the County. Publicizing the award ceremony, will also be an effective public image campaign to improve the County's reputation as a welcoming place to work and live.

### ***3. Conduct Systematic Reviews of Diversity Efforts***

As indicated previously, there seems to be gaps in the County's review of its diversity efforts. While the County is consistent in looking at the number of minorities employed by the County each year, the County can still do more in terms of providing a substantive review of the organization's diversity plans. Discussing with County leaders, across departments and at various organizational levels, their planned activities related to diversity can be effective in improving employee accountability and organizational change outcomes (Cox, 2001). This type of review will be particularly important in light of the Board of County Commissioners' recent adoption of the Resolution entitled Valuing Diversity on July 19, 2012. Establishing a vision and expectations for action is a critical component of a diversity change effort. At the same time, though, in order for a vision to have its desired effects, it should be followed up with a systematic review of the plans of those responsible for its implementation (Cox, 2001).





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## Appendix A. Key concepts for coding

The following codes were created based on key concepts of the Four Diversity Goals and Cox's Change Model. The codes were then used to perform a qualitative analysis of the County's organizational documents and focus group/interview transcripts. Key themes were assessed by reviewing the frequency of these codes identified in the different documents and transcripts.

### Welcoming and Respectful Work Climate

- positive employee-manager relationship
- employee support groups/affinity groups
- "zero tolerance" of workplace harassment
- encouraging diversity of thought
- absence of favoritism towards certain employees
- absence of pigeon holing diverse staff (e.g. only seen as being able to serving diverse clientele)
- inclusion of diverse employees
- accessibility to benefits, such as disability benefits
- respectful treatment of diverse clientele
- minority individuals are featured in County publications
- periodic update and review of policies that support diversity (for employees)
- use of images and artwork to create a welcoming environment
- employee directory
- employee access to County Commissioners
- celebration of employee accomplishments
- meaningful County orientation
- availability of flexible hours
- absence of discrimination
- grievance policy for discrimination in place
- subsidized transportation to work
- support of work/life balance
- no fear because of any dominant groups

### Recruiting and Hiring

- hiring tests are relevant to the job
- minimum job requirements are used to identify qualified applicants
- building relationships in diverse communities
- use of diverse publications to advertise job openings
- job class specifications are kept up to date
- hiring focused on skills, knowledge and abilities
- job advertisements match with job class specifications
- hiring processes are consistently tested for disparate impact

- involving Department staff in recruitment efforts
- documentation of hiring decisions
- college recruitment
- avoid biases/discrimination towards certain groups (sexual orientation, race, gender, disability, language, etc.) affecting the outreach and hiring process
- improving public image of Clackamas County as a good place for everyone to work and live
- competitive compensation
- building accessibility- public transportation
- building accessibility- people with disabilities
- advertising of jobs in multiple languages
- participation in job fairs
- established measure for a sufficiently diverse applicant pool
- recognizing unique attributes of the applicant
- minority individuals featured in promotional documents
- employment recruiter position
- internship/apprenticeship program
- absence of concerns of reverse discrimination
- diversity questions are incorporated into the interview process
- easy and accessible online application
- entry level positions exist for job series
- hiring permanent minority employees, not only temporary
- involving department staff, particularly minorities, in hiring and selection efforts
- open advertisement and competition for vacant positions
- policies facilitate the achievement of County Affirmative Action goals
- process for review of hiring process and results is in place
- similar distribution of employees compared to County demographics
- training for those involved in the selection process to reduce bias/discrimination

## Retention and Development

- schedule flexibility to attend job interviews
- managers encourage and support employee development
- schedule flexibility to attend training
- fair access to training for current and future job opportunities
- training programs are of high quality
- consistent employee performance evaluations
- performance evaluations that set clear expectations and hold managers and employees accountable for results
- managers held accountable for employee development
- comparable funds available for the education of all employees
- anti-discrimination policy to promote diversity

- mentorship program
- clearly defined career ladders and lattices
- shadowing and cross training
- second language incentive pay for those who are specifically tapped into for their second language capability.
- documentation of promotion decisions
- succession plan in place
- Career Development Program in place
- layoff policy protects diversity hiring
- career counseling
- exit interviews are conducted and documented
- high retention of diverse employees
- incentives for participating in training opportunities
- internal job openings are advertised to all employees
- policies promote career advancement and promotion among current employees

### Cultural Competence

- diversity awards are presented
- management skills training
- employee accountability with respect to diversity (i.e. diversity as a component of performance reviews)
- diversity council exists
- diversity training
- county-wide diversity conference
- office of diversity exists
- diversity council has resources
- diversity council members represent a variety of job titles and other diversity dimensions
- access to diversity related events and training
- department diversity coordinators
- diversity efforts are part of a cohesive strategic plan
- diversity manager position
- good diversity training for managers
- office of diversity has resources
- office of diversity is well respected
- regular diversity training
- support mechanisms are in place for managers

### Leadership

- diversity advisory group reports to the County's leadership
- diversity is stated in the management philosophy
- diversity manager reports to the County's leadership

- the County's vision for diversity is clearly stated
- leadership is personally invested in diversity efforts

#### Research and Measurement

- there is a clear measurement plan for assessing progress
- there are baseline measures to assess progress
- there is a clear benchmark to assess progress
- County-wide cultural assessment has been conducted

#### Education

- content covers 'cultural differences'
- training on organizational change
- content covers 'diversity and organization culture'
- content covers 'meaning and importance of diversity'
- content covers 'acculturation'
- content covers 'group identity effects and hiring promotion and performance appraisal'
- content covers 'institutionalizing diversity competency'
- content covers 'issues of affirmative action'
- content covers 'prejudice, stereotyping and inter-group conflict'

#### Alignment of Management Systems

- organizational adherence to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulations
- organizational adherence to Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) regulations
- organizational adherence to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations

#### Follow - up

- information sharing across departments County-wide
- periodic review of diversity plans (substantive review of the outcomes)
- provide incentives/awards to recognize positive actions/behavior
- use benchmarks to keep score on the progress of diversity efforts

## Appendix B: Employee Focus Group/Interview Guide

[Thank the interviewee for participating]

[Self Introduction]

[Explain the purpose of the interview. General timeline. Ask them if they are concerned with anything. If you are tape recording ask for permission. Also tell the interviewee that you are taking notes]

### **Welcoming and respectful work culture**

Q1. “How do you feel about the general work culture and climate in [Insert Dept Name]? In general, do you think people feel welcomed in the workplace?”

[Then follow up by asking: ]

FQ1-1: “What is your observation about the general work culture and climate in XXX [dept] with regards to people of different race, gender, age, sex, disability, religion, etc.?”

FQ1-2: “How do you observe whether people are welcomed in the general work culture as a member of the group(s) that they identify with?”

FQ1-3: “How would you describe employee interactions across job functions or job levels?”

[If the interviewee start relating the story based on their own experience and the group they identify with, then great. If not, you can also probe by asking ]

FQ3 “How do YOU feel? Do you feel welcomed in the workplace?”

Q2: “Can you tell us how you see Clackamas County management promotes diversity and attempts to create a welcoming workplace for people of diverse backgrounds?”

FQ2-1: “In what ways do you think Clackamas County could better accommodate your needs and lifestyle, or those of someone you know?”

### **Recruiting and Hiring**

Q3: “How do you feel about the way Clackamas County recruit and hire diverse staff? Any observations as to whether the County has a healthy balance among people of different race, gender, age, sex, disability, religion, etc.?”

FQ3-1 “Do you feel that your status as a diverse person affected Clackamas County's decision to hire you?”

FQ3-2 “What effect do you feel this has had on your job performance and your relationship with fellow coworkers and management, if any?”

FQ3-3 “What relationship, if any, does your status as a diverse person have with your current position?”

Q4: “What is your observation about whether the staff within [insert name of department] has a reasonable representation of the overall population in Clackamas County?”

### **Retention and Development**

Q5: “What is your observation about how Clackamas County retain and develop a diverse staff in terms of race, gender, age, sex, disability, religion, etc.?”

Q6: “What is your observation about how Clackamas County provides opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds moving up within your division or being given added responsibilities?”

[Then reserve this as a probing question]

FQ5-1: “Can you describe some specific examples of people from diverse backgrounds moving up within your division or being given added responsibilities?”

FQ5-2a: “Do you see people from diverse backgrounds provided with opportunities to participate in development activities, such as trainings or continuing education classes?”

FQ5-2b “Does your department provide diverse individuals with opportunities for advancement? How would this compare to opportunities given to the overall staff?”

### **Cultural competence**

Q7: “How do you assess current staff members’ level of cultural competency skills to interact effectively with diverse team members and customers?”

[Use this as a follow up]

FQ7-1: Do you feel you have been given the necessary information, tools, and training in order to improve your relationships with people of differing backgrounds at work?

FQ7-2a: “What kinds of things may be useful for the Clackamas county employee to further improve their cultural competence skills and knowledge?”

FQ7-2-b: If there is one area among race, gender, age, sex, disability, religion, etc. where you feel there needs to be more improvement among the staff members, what do you think it would be? Why? What do you think Clackamas County can do to create a more welcoming environment for persons from different backgrounds?

Q8: Is there anything you would like to add?

# Appendix C: Leadership Focus Group Script

## Setting the stage and tone

Facilitator/note taker self –introduction

Thank the participants for attending

Explain why they were invited to this focus group

“As leaders in the County, you were asked to participate in this focus group section. Not all leaders were asked to participate as individual participants were randomly selected from a qualified pool of candidates.”

Explain the objectives of the study

“The purpose of this study is to assess the diversity climate of Clackamas County and the County’s efforts in promoting and managing diversity in the workplace.

Explain time, confidentiality, and other issues in the informed consent.

Ask for the informed consent. Ask for audio taping consent.

Ask for brief self-introduction of the participants.

## Questions

Invite participants to discuss the work culture and climate

“How would you describe the general work culture and climate in Clackamas County? What is your observation about the general work culture and climate with regards to people of different race, gender, age, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc?”

“Can you tell us how Clackamas County management promotes diversity and what efforts are made to create a welcoming workplace for people of diverse backgrounds?”

Invite participants to discuss recruiting and hiring practices

“What is your observation regarding the way Clackamas County recruits and hires diverse staff members? Do you feel that the county has a healthy balance among people of different race, age, gender, religion, etc? Do you think County employees are representative of the overall population of Clackamas County?”

Invite participants to discuss retention and development practices



“In your opinion, how does Clackamas County retain and develop staff of diverse backgrounds or identities (race, gender, orientation, religion, age, etc)?”

“How does Clackamas County provides opportunities toward advancement to people of diverse backgrounds?”

Invite participants to discuss employee cultural competency

“How do you assess current staff members’ level of cultural competency skills to interact effectively with diverse team members and community members?”

“What kinds of trainings, activities, or tools, may be useful to the Clackamas County employees as well as management, in improving their cultural competence and knowledge?”

Invite general comments from participants

“ What are the things that you think Clackamas County can do to further promote diversity and inclusion?”

“What do you think people in the management and leadership position can do to further promote diversity and inclusion?”

“Is there anything else you would like to add?”

Thank participants and conclude

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