



Equity, Inclusion and Affordability Committee

Overall DEI Update,
Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training,
Annual Small Business Update, & Focus
on Disability Inclusion

Items 6a, 6b, 6c and 6d
September 24, 2024

Item # 6a, 6b, 6c and 6d

Overall DEI Update,
Civil & Inclusive
Workplace Training,
Annual Small
Business Update &
Focus on Disability
Inclusion

Subject

Overall Updates on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion;
Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training;
Annual Small Business Update; and Focus on Disability
Inclusion

Purpose

Update the Equity, Inclusion & Affordability (EIA) Committee on progress made on DEI commitments, Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training, required annual update on small business outreach and a focused conversation on disability inclusion featuring Jill Houghton, CEO of Disability:IN

Recommendation and Fiscal Impact

None



DEI DIVERSITY
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Equity, Inclusion and Affordability Committee

Update on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training

Items 6a and 6b
September 24, 2024

The Current State

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiatives are Under Unprecedented Attack

DEI Efforts Face Public Backlash



DEI must DIE.

The point was to end discrimination, not replace it with different discrimination.

Diversity Policy Backlash Drives Cuts to DEI Staff

New workforce analytics data shows that as anti-DEI action grows, executives overseeing those policies are being cut at double the rate of other staffers.

The Supreme Court ends affirmative action in college admissions

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH MEN?

They're floundering at school and in the workplace. Some conservatives blame a crisis of masculinity, but the problems—and their solutions—are far more complex.

Corporate Women's Gains Fall Victim to Anti-Woke Backlash

D.E.I. Goes Quiet

How to approach DEI as a change of systems, not a change of people.

The anti-ESG backlash is not just an American phenomenon as Europe waters down its sustainability agenda

Source: Catalyst

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategic Roadmap Update of MWD

Goal	Action Taken	Work Outstanding	Next Milestone/Update
Culture/Change Management Work	Initial focus on defining values and vision for Met and how best to socialize them	Rollout plan to embed values in every aspect of Met's culture (conference rooms, performance management system, etc.)	Values and Met Vision embedded in C&IWP and messaged to 1,800 employees
Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training	Previewed training with HR/field staff; rollout schedule created; Executive leadership session on 8/26	Rollout of training to 1,800 employees; effective communications crafted and materials for reinforcement	14 Managers sessions are planned starting with a kickoff on 9/17
Partner to Build HR Capability	Partnership with HR on data/metrics, Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training and accommodations process	Ongoing partnership with HR on mitigating bias in processes, enhancing recruitment processes, culture and systems change	Successful rollout of Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training and embedding values reinforcement in performance management
Leader Toolkits	Leader Toolkit created to reinforce Values rollout and help Leaders facilitate conversations with teams	Solicit feedback from Managers to ensure successful rollout	Additional toolkits to strengthen Manager/Employee relationships
Launch formal succession planning practice for Met	Efforts to build the talent pipeline; some entry level hiring	Build formal succession planning for Met	Plan for '24-'25 fiscal year
Leverage Collective Genius	Existing Diversity Council, Managers Meeting	Launch leveraging collective genius	Plan for '24-'25 fiscal year

The Current State

Despite Significant Challenges, We Have Made Progress In The Last Year; Much Work Remains To Be Done



Progress Made/ Current Enablers

- ✓ Initiatives focused on **place-based, not race based** (i.e., underserved communities)
- ✓ Increasing traction around DEI/Culture efforts & EEO alignment
- ✓ Comprehensive plan to address existing areas of opportunity with data-informed insight
- ✓ 11 ERGs with strong leadership, history and employee engagement
- ✓ Good intentional work to mitigate bias, proactively identify opportunities
- ✓ Growing external brand capital for Met
- ✓ Key leadership and organizational changes made to accelerate the pace of change



Challenges that Remain/ Current Obstacles

- ❖ Recent and high-profile events leading to lack of trust, low employee morale & “us vs. them” dynamics
- ❖ Limited budget and resources to drive change
- ❖ Lack of consensus on how important DEI should be at Met and in the water industry
- ❖ Lack of current communication channels that reach every employee, including in the field
- ❖ Complex processes and structures that slow down progress
- ❖ Resistance to change

The Current State

In Group/Out Group Dynamics

(aka “Us” vs. “Them”)



Highlights of Progress

Despite Significant Challenges, We Have Made Progress; Much Work Remains To Be Done



- Named “Utility of the Year” at the GLAAACC Annual Awards Gala
- Partnered with CAAWEF and WELL on \$150k grant for DEI Leaders Academy to invest in next cadre of leaders for water industry
- Awarded a Racial Equity Grant by PFI for proposal to expand conservation efforts in disadvantaged communities; potential for greater investment from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Work on Tribal Outreach & Engagement opening doors for Colorado River negotiations



Vision

To be the industry leader in water delivery with unparalleled commitment to our people, partners and planet with **no one left behind**

Strategic, holistic stakeholder model as driver of organizational success

Five Strategic Priorities



EMPOWER the workforce and promote diversity, equity & inclusion



SUSTAIN Metropolitan's mission with a strengthened business model



ADAPT to changing climate and water resources



PROTECT public health, the regional economy and Metropolitan's assets



PARTNER with interested parties and the communities we serve



Organizational Focus

To be the industry leader in water delivery with unparalleled commitment to our people, partners and planet with **no one left behind**



Workforce Development

K-12 Outreach/Early Pipeline Development

- Cybersecurity Internship Program
- Apprenticeship Programs

Tribal Outreach & Engagement

- Pathways to Employment at Met

Addressing Structural Barriers & Enhancing Cross-Departmental Partnership

Historically Underserved Communities

- Foster Youth
- Transitional Workers (formerly homeless)
- Formerly incarcerated
- Disadvantaged communities
- Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU)

Good faith outreach efforts/EEO compliance



Strategic Initiatives

- Climate Justice Campaign
- Community Benefits Program
- Strategic Partnerships
 - CAAWEF
 - WELL
 - Homeboy Industries
 - California Conservation Corps
 - NAACP
- Vision and Values
- Workforce Analytics & HR Partnership
- Culture Transformation



Business Outreach & Community Engagement

Small Business Community

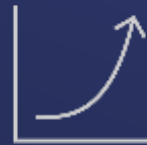
- MetWorks
- Community/Matchmaking Events
- Strategic Partnerships
- Project Labor Agreement (PLA)
- Equity in Infrastructure (EIP) Pledge

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Building a Strong Foundation & Writing A New Playbook



2023-2024
Building a Solid
Foundation

- Foundational Behaviors for a Workplace Free of Harassment and Discrimination
- Enhancing DEI Communications
- Solid Metrics Strategy
- Better Employee Support (ERGs/Diversity Council)
- Workforce Development



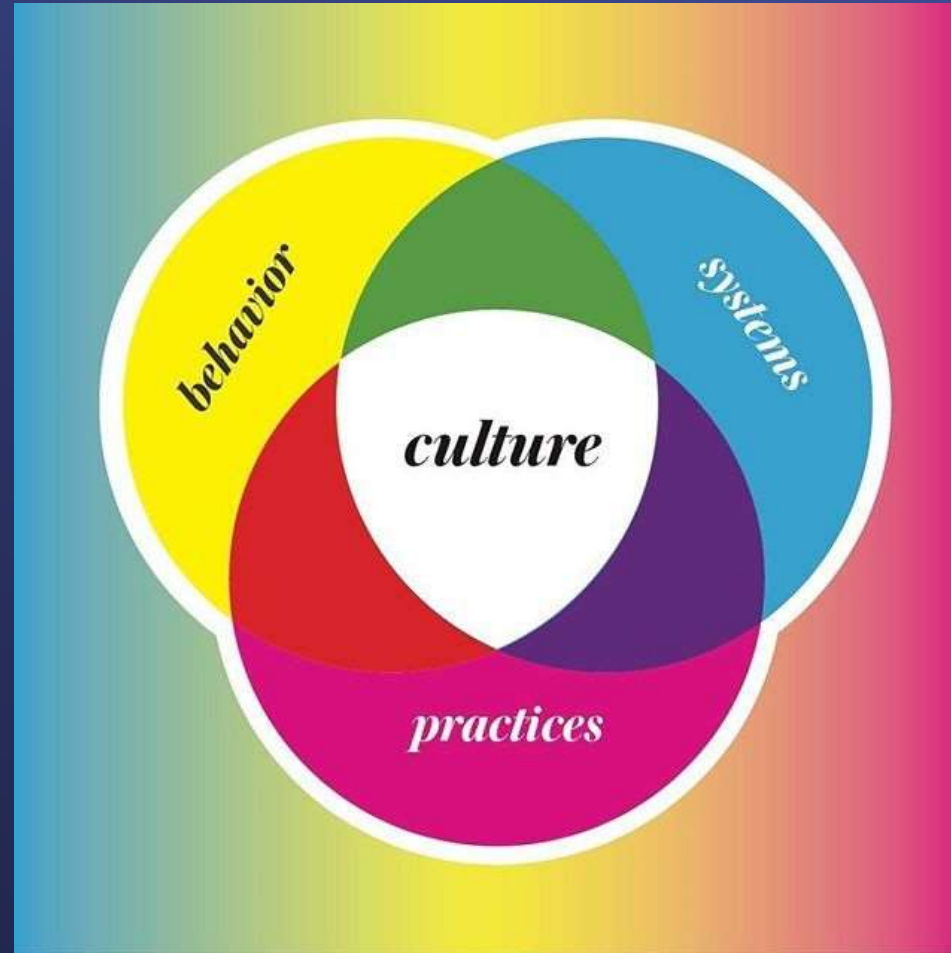
2024-2026
Accelerating The
Pace of Change



2026+
Advancing DEI
Thought Leadership
in the Public Sector



Culture/Change Management Values for Metropolitan



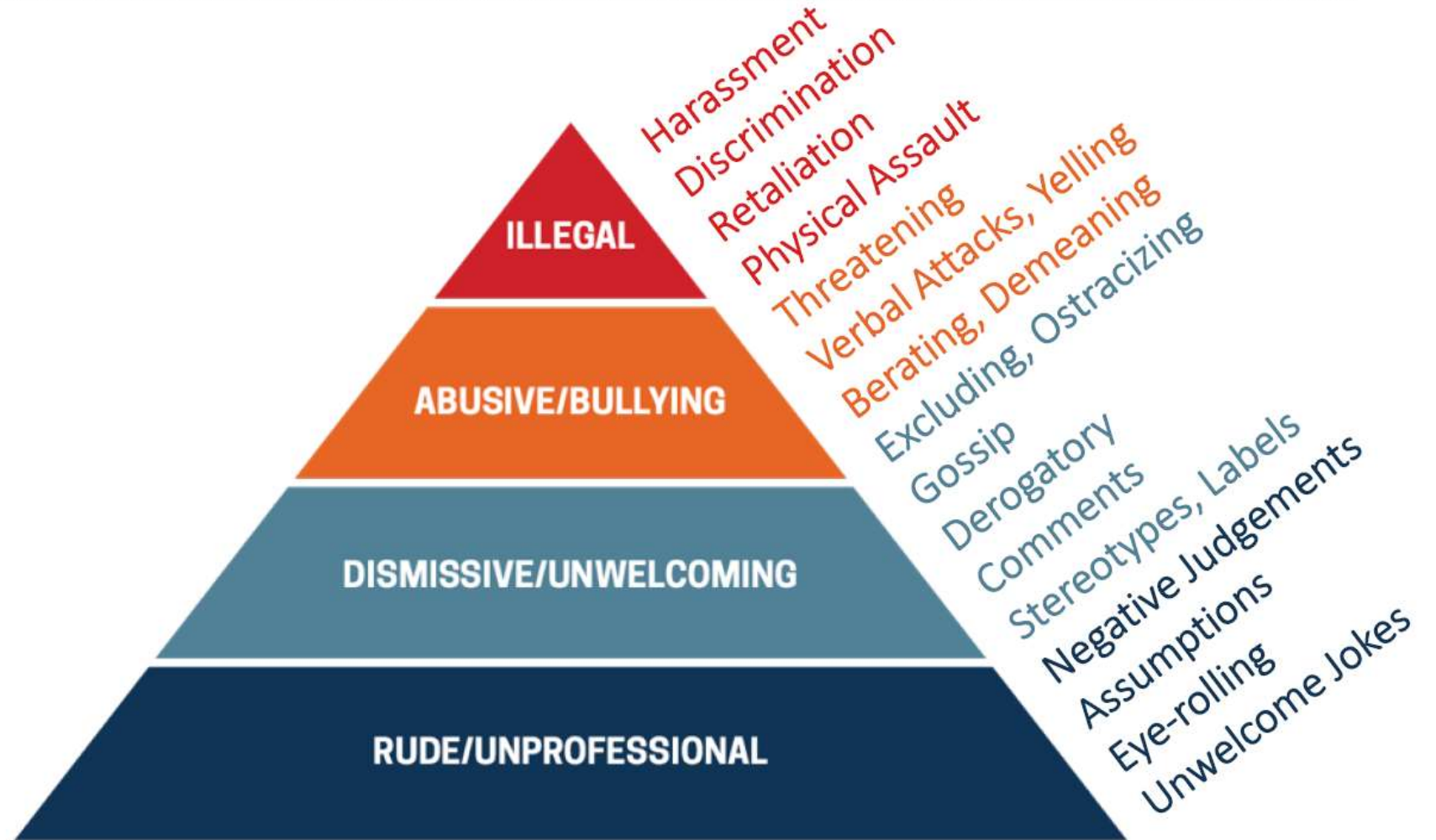
Source: Harvard Business Review

“The culture of any organization is shaped by the worst behavior the leader is willing to tolerate”

Gruenter and Whitaker

Diversity,
Equity &
Inclusion
Building a
Strong
Foundation &
Writing A
New Playbook

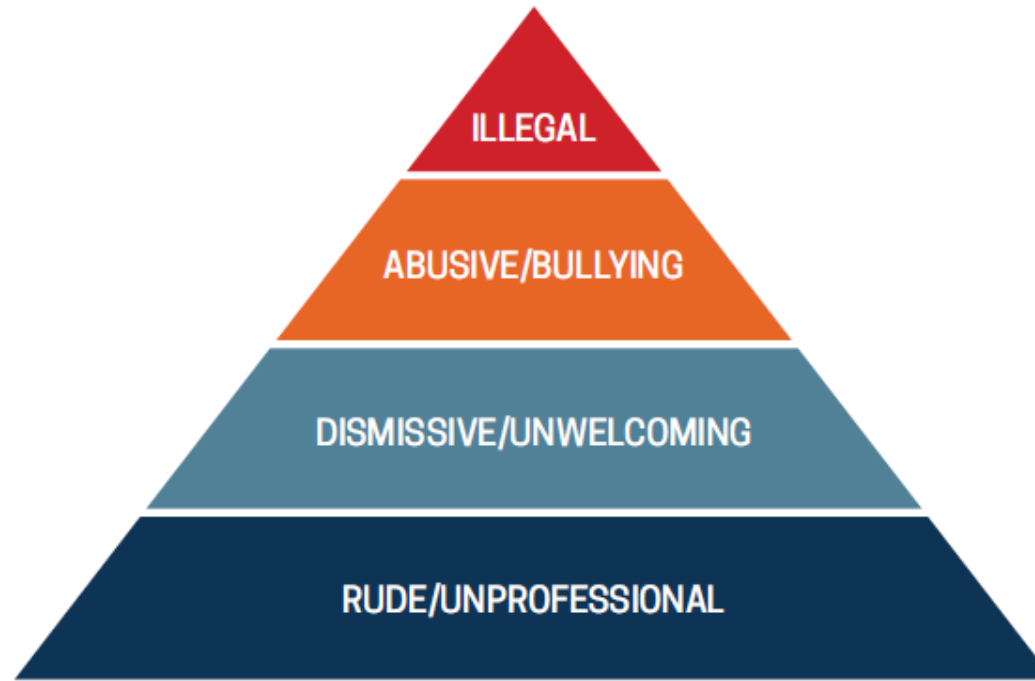
UNCIVIL BEHAVIOR IN TODAY'S WORKPLACE



Source: ELI

Diversity,
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Inclusion
Building a
Strong
Foundation &
Writing A
New Playbook

UNCIVIL BEHAVIOR TRIANGLE



OUTCOMES OF UNCIVIL BEHAVIOR

- Decreased Efficiency
- Low Morale
- Brand Damage
- Low Productivity
- Reduced Engagement
- Decreased Performance
- Turnover
- Distrust
- Increased Disruption
- Accidents or Safety Concerns
- Decline in Quality
- Lawsuits and Claims

Source: ELI

Culture/Change Management Values for Metropolitan



Safety – Promote physical and psychological well-being of people



Trust – Act in ways that demonstrate integrity and build genuine connection



Accountability – Deliver solutions and drive shared success



Respect – Treat others as they would want to be treated and be a good steward of the planet



Teamwork – Think “we over me”

Diversity,
Equity &
Inclusion
Building a
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Foundational Behaviors for a Workplace
Free of Harassment and Discrimination



Actionable Behaviors, Skill-building and
Tools for Productive and Inclusive Workplace Interactions



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Building a Strong Foundation & Writing A New Playbook

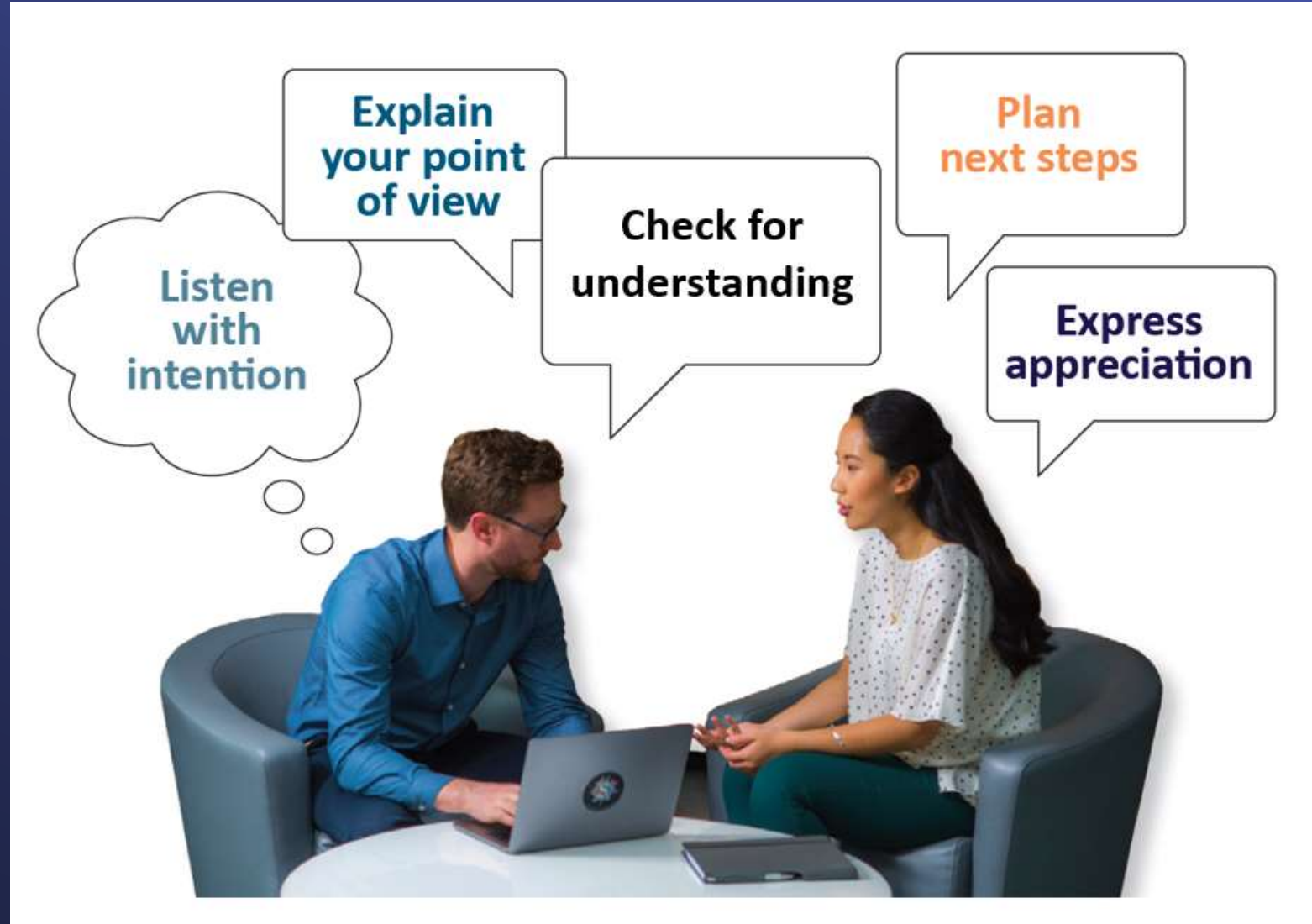
INTRODUCING A MODEL FOR **SPEAKING UP AND LISTENING**

No one needs a conversation model when the conversation is easy, but:

- How do we talk with each other when the stakes are high?
- How can we work resolve conflicts?
- What will happen if we don't talk at all?
- What tools will help us create alignment so we can move forward?



Diversity,
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In loving memory of Nathan Purkiss, first President of our
Pride ERG and lifelong advocate for building a more inclusive
world



Equity, Inclusion and Affordability Committee

Annual Small Business Update

Item 6c
September 24, 2024



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Core Objectives



Program Overview

History and Milestones

- 2002 – The Board adopted the Business Outreach program
 - 18% Small Business Goal
- 2006 – The Board adopted the Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise program
- 2015 – The Board approved an increase in the SBE goal
 - 25% Small Business Goal
- 2022 – Board-approved Equity in Infrastructure Program Pledge
 - CA EIP Agencies formed an alliance

Community Engagement

Metworks

- Hosted in-person Conference in Moreno Valley-
September 2023
- Member Agency Participation – CIP Overview
 - Inland Empire Utilities Agency
 - Western MWD
 - Eastern MWD
 - West Basin MWD
- PLA Support Team
- MC3 apprenticeship readiness programs

Community Engagement

MetWorks

- March 2024 hosted largest in-person conference in Carson
- Focused Outreach on Pure Water Project

Launched the MetWorks Bench

- Increase visibility and connections between large and small firms
- Mentor/Protégé Program
- Focused matchmaking events



MetWorks

Community Engagement



Community Engagement

Awards and Recognition

- Regional Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
 - Jeannette Correa – Woman Advocate of the Year
- Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber
 - Utility of the Year Award
- Hispanic Small Business Coalition
 - Public Sector Leader of the Year
- Asian Business Association of Orange County
 - Supplier Diversity Advocate of the Year

Strategic Initiative

Equity in Infrastructure Pledge

- Increase access and reduce barriers for Historically Underutilized Businesses
- Improve workforce opportunities for underserved communities

Updates

- Hosted listening session with Diversity business leaders
- Increased outreach to DBE firms
 - \$4.5m awarded to DBE firms
- Launched the CA EIP Working Group

Strategic Initiative

CA EIP Highlights

- MWD Hosted the inaugural California Plan meeting on January 22, 2024
- Topics covered included sharing of best practices, reciprocal certification, and an overarching need to create better communication about outcomes around EIP

CA EIP Partners



Strategic Initiative

Project Labor Agreement

- Unique core employee flexibility for non-union SBEs/DVBEs with 25 or less employees
- Additional resources through the PLA administration team to support SBEs and DVBEs with PLA training and education

Contractor Academy

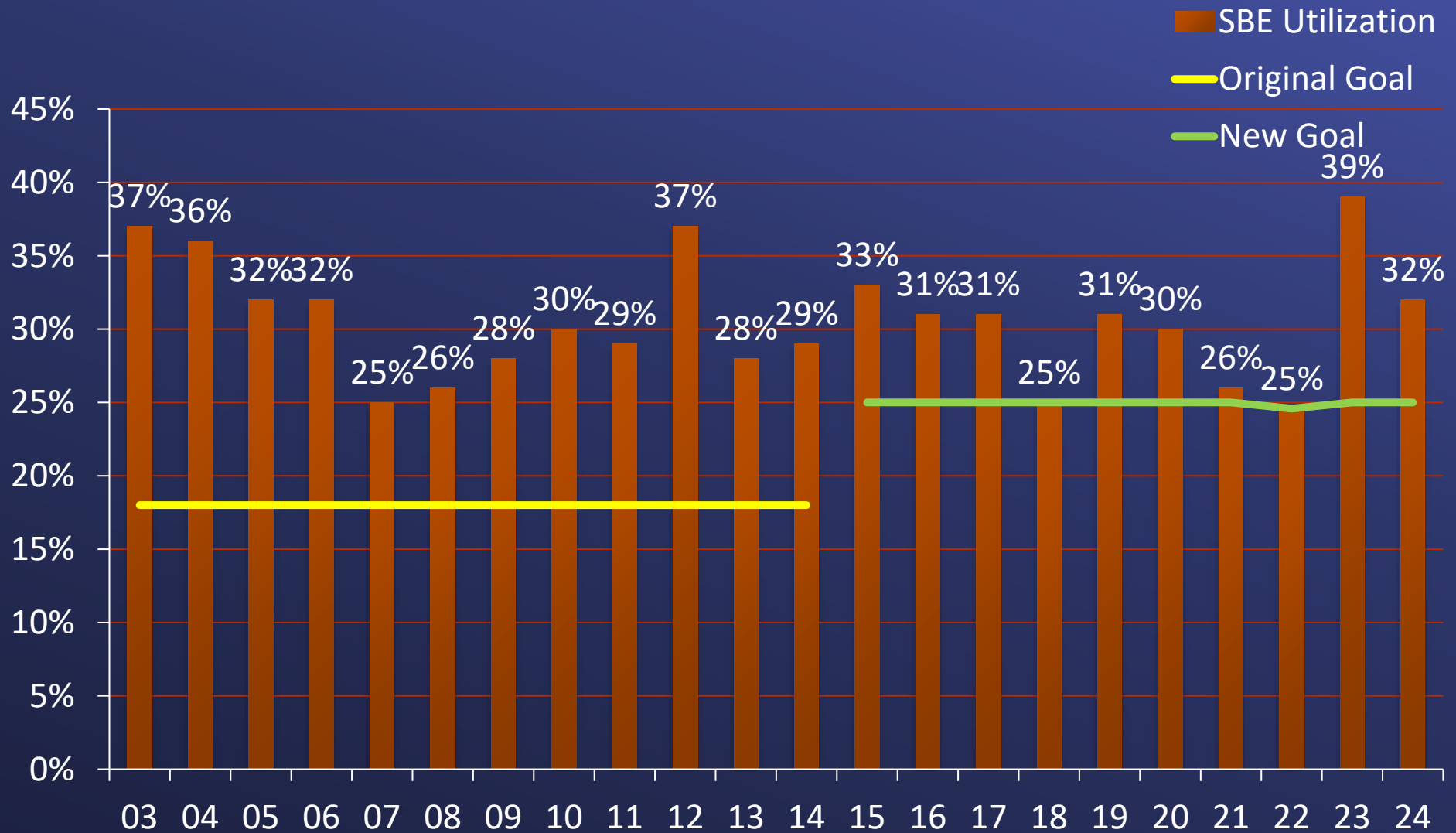
- Four week In-Person training
- Partnership with SBDC Networks
- Overview of Bonding, Labor Compliance and PLA Overview

Contract Awards

Small & Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses

- 2023-24 total contract dollars awarded to small business
 - Achieved 32 percent or \$93m
 - Direct Awards: \$45m
 - Subcontracting Awards: \$49m
- \$5.3k awarded to DVBEs

Total SBE Utilization





Equity, Inclusion and Affordability Committee



Focus on Disability Inclusion

Item 6d
September 24, 2024

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Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategic Roadmap for Disability Inclusion

Goal	Action Taken	Work Outstanding	Next Milestone/Update
Data Informed Insight	Pursued data informed insight on current status of Individuals with disabilities at Metropolitan; data presented at May 2024 EIA meeting	Outreach efforts and continued partnership with HR/EEO Office to enhance our hiring and recruitment for Individuals with Disabilities	Currently examining outreach efforts under new DEI Workforce Development Manager
Culture Change - Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training	Intentionally built in scenarios with Civil & Inclusive Workplace Training to address microaggressions and workplace dynamics that affect Individuals with Disabilities	Rollout of training to 1,800 employees; effective communications crafted and materials for reinforcement	14 Managers sessions are planned starting with a kickoff on 9/17
Best Practices in Disability Inclusion	Partnership with HR to ensure compliance with ADA/FEHA; bringing in CEO of Disability:IN Jill Houghton for Board conversation	Pursuing disability inclusion holistically and strategically as opposed to initiatives-based approach	Partnership with VOICE to rebuild trust and collectively engage in best practices, including Disability Equality Index
Leader Toolkits	Leader Toolkit created to reinforce Values at Met	Consider Manager Toolkit to help managers better support disability accommodations	Additional toolkits to strengthen Manager/Employee relationships
Evolving Approach and Continuous Improvement	Continue to partner with VOICE and engage with resources to inform best practices in disability inclusion; continued efforts around Met culture	Plan for '24-'25 fiscal year	Plan for '24-'25 fiscal year

Disability:IN

 /DisabilityIN

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 DisabilityIN.org



Disability:IN is the leading nonprofit resource for business disability inclusion worldwide. We empower business to achieve disability inclusion and equality.

- Network of 550+ corporations
- Invigorate disability initiatives
- Explore best & next practices
- Inspire cultural change
- Realize positive business outcomes



Learn more about [Disability:IN](#)

Disability Prevalence

Your Employees & Customers are People with Disabilities



It is estimated that
1.3 billion
people around
the world experience a
significant disability
(World Health Organization)



**27% of
Adults**
in the U.S. have some
type of disability
(Centers for Disease Control)



Research suggests more
than
1 in 5 Adults
in the US live with a
mental illness
(National Institute of Mental Health)

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Water & Disability: Key Drivers of Sustainable Business



The Sustainability Dimension of Inclusive Workforces

Disability is a sustainability matter

65%

Fortune 500 Companies Report on Disability Inclusion in the Workforce

10%

Fortune 500 Companies Report Self Identified Workforce Disability Percentages

36%

Fortune 500 Companies Include Disability in Supplier Diversity Programs

32%

Fortune 500 Companies Report on Disability-focused Employee Resource Groups

6%

Employees at Fortune 500 Companies Self Identify Disability

What does excellence look like?

Accessibility & Inclusion Across Your Enterprise

Culture & Leadership

Demonstrates a sustained, visible cultural commitment to disability inclusion and demonstrate visible leadership commitment to disability inclusion throughout the organization.

Employment Practices

Demonstrates a sustained commitment to benefits, recruitment practices, employment practices, and accommodation practices that fully incorporate and include individuals with disabilities.

Enterprise-Wide Access

Demonstrates a sustained commitment to workplace accessibility, including facilities, technology, and more.

Supplier Diversity

Demonstrates a sustained commitment to supplier diversity practices that fully include and utilize Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBEs), including Service-Disabled Veteran DOBEs and Veteran DOBEs

Community Engagement

Demonstrates a sustained commitment to public-facing engagement practices that celebrate and support individuals with disabilities.

Thank You!

 /disabilityin

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 /company/disability-in



Thank You!
Questions?

