

The City of Kalamazoo Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Assessment



Summary of Key Findings
2nd Presentation to City Commission
April 4, 2022

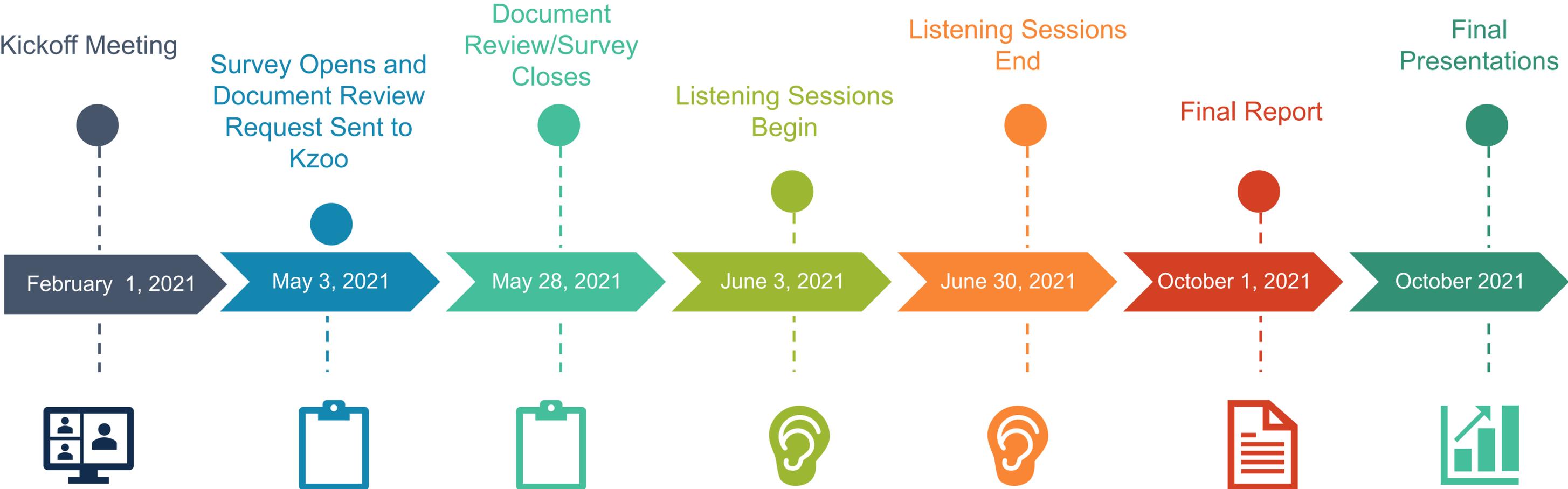
The City of Kalamazoo's DEI Goal



Become an anti-racist/anti-oppressive city government where Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging are internalized in its systems and culture

Assessment Timeline

Research for this assessment used a **mixed methods approach**: findings from a **survey**, a review of **policies and procedures**, and **listening sessions** were compared/contrasted.



Definitions of Key Concepts

Diversity
representation of different demographic groups with a range of differences that make people unique

Belonging
the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for an individual within a group

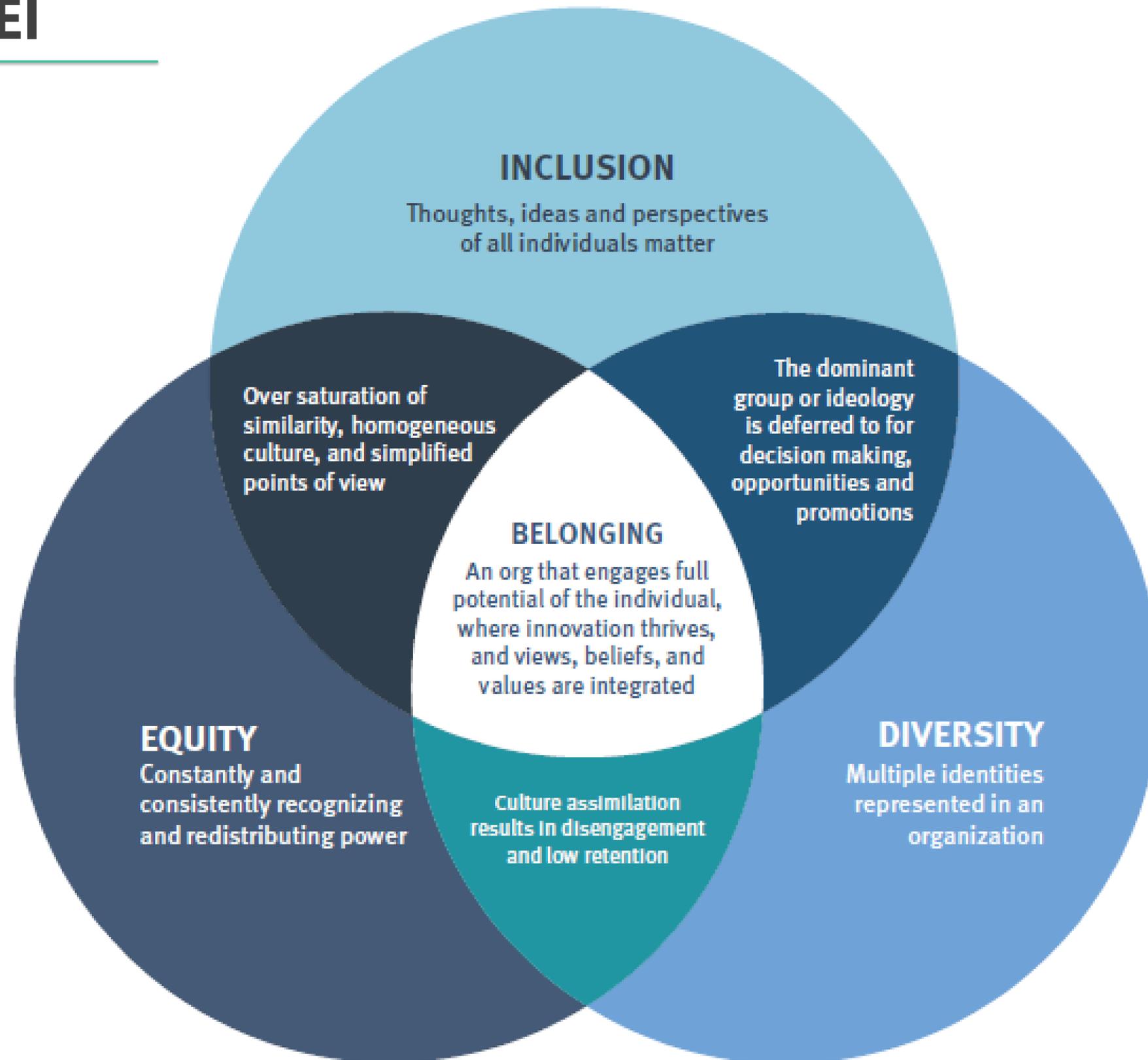
Equity
the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups

Anti-racism
the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably

Inclusion
the action of creating an environment that engages, respects and values multiple perspectives, ideas, and individuals

Anti-oppression
the active process of identifying and eliminating all forms of oppression (racism, sexism, classism, ablism, heterosexism etc.) by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably

Why DEI



Summary of Findings

1

A lack of standardized protocols and coordination of DEI efforts into one strategy

2

A lack of internally demonstrated commitment to DEI leads to skepticism and disengagement of staff from the DEI effort

3

Higher rates of microaggressions and unfair treatment toward Black and women employees were seen as dismissed or unaddressed by supervisors and are commonly unreported

4

Racial and ethnic isolation, an over-representation of men and disparities in job type, longevity and salary contribute to a lack of psychological safety for BIPOC and women employees

5

Gender disparities in job classification and salary and normalized sexist microaggression contribute to a work culture that centers the experiences and background of men

Primary Need and Key Obstacles

Primary Needs

Primary Obstacles

1

Level
Setting

2

Safe Space

1

Extreme
Lack of
Diversity

2

Lack of
Psychologic
al Safety

3

Skepticism

Misperceptions of DEI

"I am concerned that these principles are being prioritized over the competence of employees, and that unqualified employees are being hired or retained simply because they help meet certain statistical benchmarks."

"Continually talking about and separating employees into groups based on race, sex, religion, orientation and other issues that have nothing to do with working together or accomplishing work goals."

"The focus of DEI becoming so strong that we lose sight of quality, accountability, and responsibility."



Perceptions of Overall Commitment to DEI

3

Skepticism

81%

of survey respondents perceive that within the organization there is no explicit commitment to equity

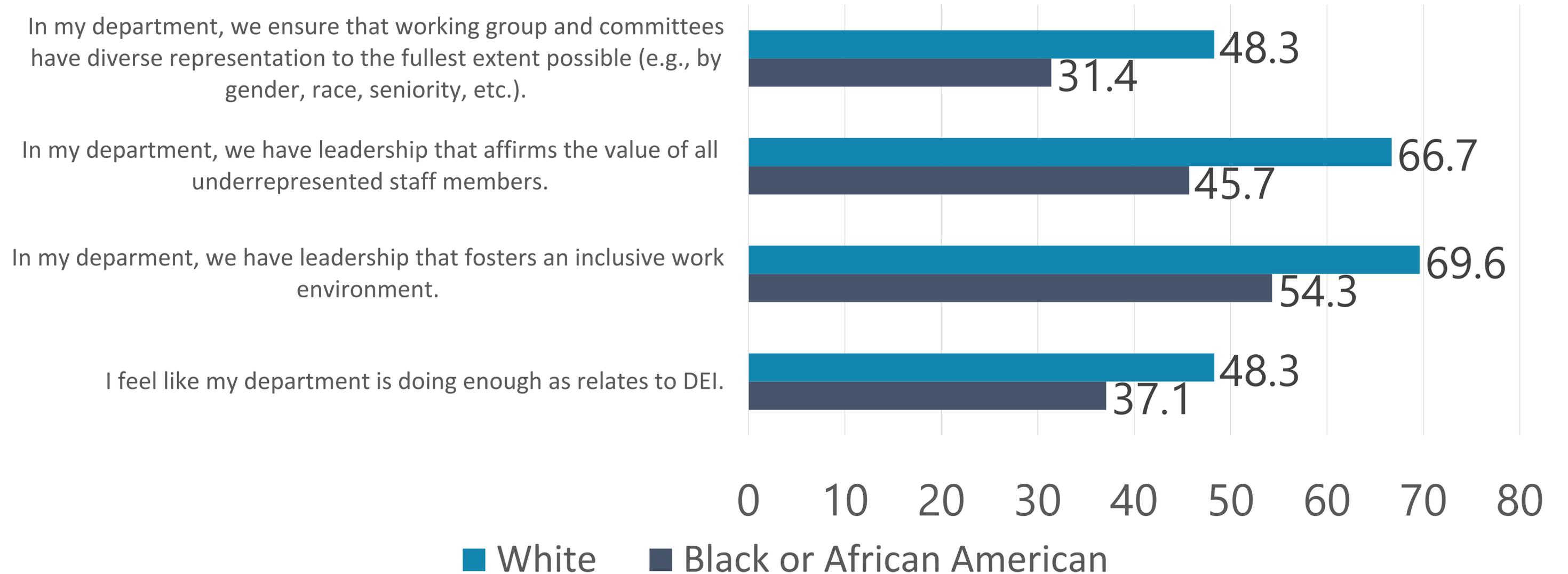
"DEI efforts, awareness, education and practices **need to trickle down** to all levels of the organization."

"I feel like you don't get the participation in these things because the **people don't believe that the city is trying to really change**. They're tired of doing these surveys...and they don't really see a big change in the city. It feels like, what are you doing it for? Are you doing it to say that you did it, or are you doing it to really try and make some change?"



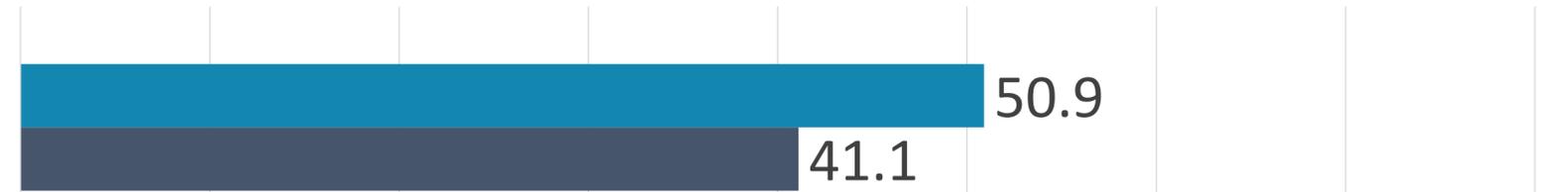
Perceptions of Commitment to DEI by Race and Gender

Perceived High Commitment (score 8-10) to DEI by Race (%)



Perceived High Commitment (score 8-10) to DEI by Gender (%)

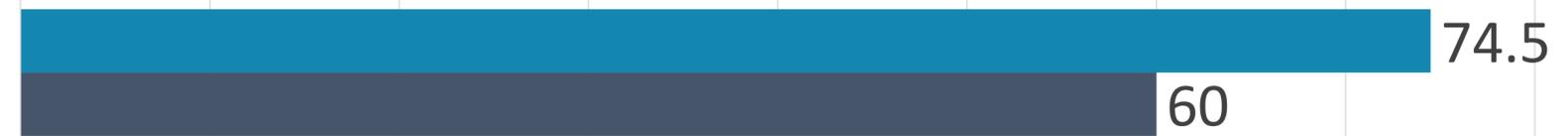
In my department, we ensure that working group and committees have diverse representation to the fullest extent possible (e.g., by gender, race, seniority, etc.).



In my department, we have leadership that affirms the value of all underrepresented staff members.



In my department, we have leadership that fosters an inclusive work environment.



I feel like my department is doing enough as relates to DEI.



■ Male ■ Female

MPHI Recommendations

01

Create a coordinated DEI strategy

02

Establish an Internal DEI accountability leadership team

03

Develop a comprehensive DEI data collection and use plan and policy

04

Explore new and improved ways for employees to bring discriminatory action to light

05

Establish a baseline of the City of Kalamazoo’s philosophy and values for supervision and management that centers a DEI lens

06

Establish a coordinated approach to charging and supporting each department in setting a mission, vision, and plan for quality improvement, including DEI goals, benchmarks, and accountability.

07

Build an anti-oppression curriculum for every level of the organization

08

Establish a vision and plan for addressing and supporting the overall wellbeing and sense of belonging of employees across the organization.

09

Establish an Equity in All Policies committee

10

Expand and sustain a permanent appropriation for your Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion to reflect the enormous scope of this work

Visioning a Future of DEI and Belonging for the City of Kalamazoo



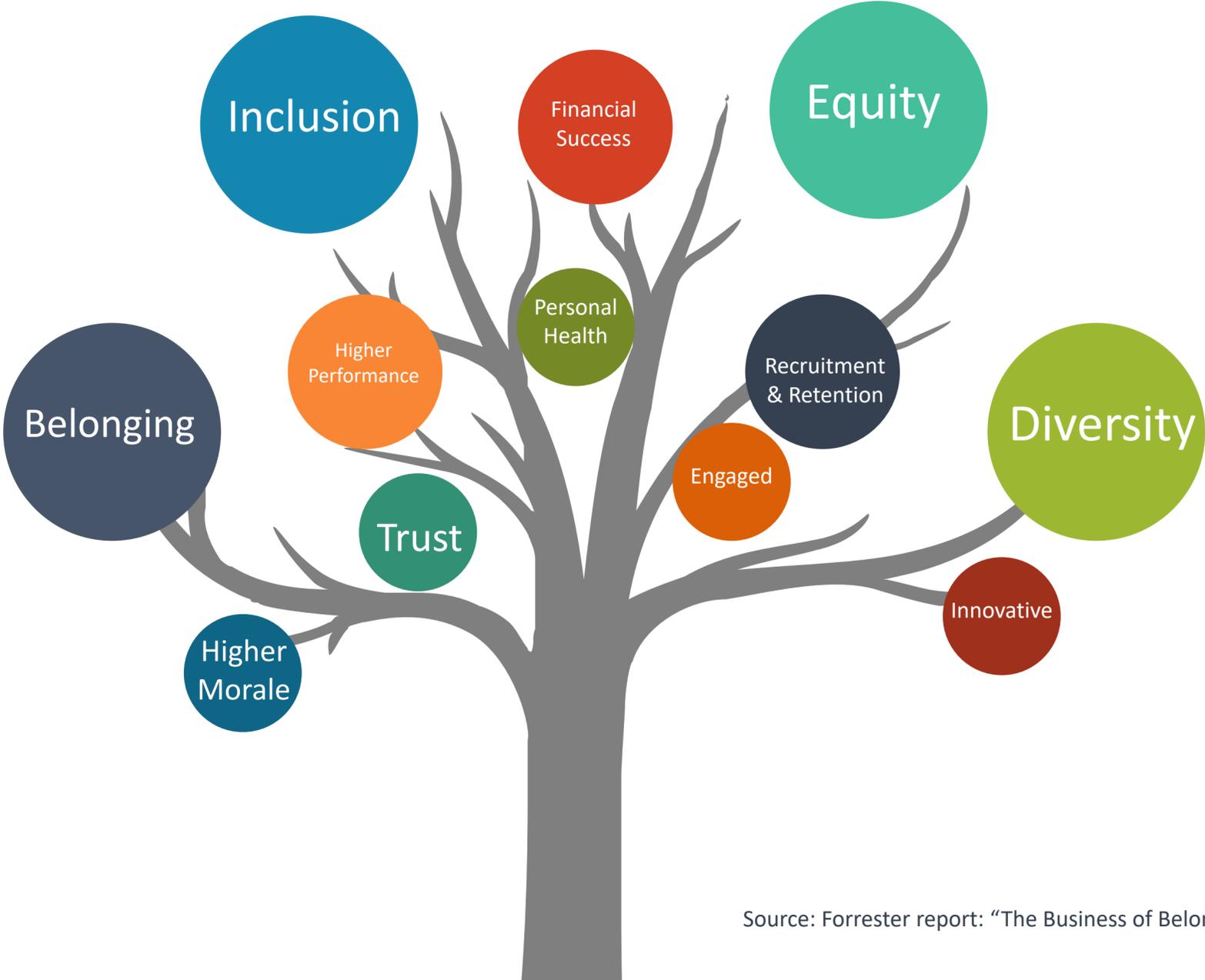
The City of Kalamazoo: An anti-racist/anti-oppressive city government where Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging are internalized in its systems and culture

Why DEI

BELONGING: A Destination and Driver of All other Areas of Success

Belonging is the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group. It is when an individual can bring their authentic self to work. When employees feel like they don't belong at work, their performance and their personal lives suffer. Creating genuine feelings of belonging for all is a critical factor in improving engagement and performance. It also helps support business goals.

--Cornell Office of Diversity and Inclusion



Source: Forrester report: "The Business of Belonging"

Purpose of the DEI Assessment

"To achieve our goals in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, we first have to understand where we are. We want our work to be focused and transformational, and *we want equity to become ingrained into the culture of our organization so that our internal and community-facing work and relationships will reflect that culture.*"

~ Dorla Bonner, Kalamazoo DEI Director

"As we begin *our journey toward becoming an anti-racist organization*, we must first acknowledge the role the City of Kalamazoo has played in systemic racism. This acknowledgment, coupled with the assessment and other developments in our Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion show that we are taking actionable steps on this journey...We understand that words are not enough, and *we must demonstrate our commitment to transformational change with credible action to change policies, promote community healing and increase trust*, and ensure community members are treated fairly and are truly valued."

~ Jim Ritsema, City Manager

Purpose of DEI Assessment

ASSESSMENT GOAL

Provide the foundation for an inclusive, human-centered and data-driven DEI Action Plan that centers the voices of employees most impacted by inequity