



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Community Planning & Economic Development

Date: May 5, 2008

To: Council Member Scott Benson, Health, Energy & Environment Committee

Subject: "Minneapolis Disparities in Employment Report" and Council Resolution

Recommendation: Staff presentation. Approve Council Resolution directing Minneapolis Employment and Training staff to participate with Hennepin County in a joint "Racial Disparities in Employment" Steering Committee.

Prepared by: Catherine Christian, METP, 673-6230

Approved by: Cathy Polasky, Director of Economic Policy and Development, CPED

Presenters in Committee: Deb Bahr-Helgen, METP, 673-6226

Financial Impact

- No financial impact

Community Impact

- City Goals – One Minneapolis
- Living Wage/Business Subsidy Agreement Yes_____ No X

Supporting Information

The City of Minneapolis Employment and Training Program (METP) is committed to providing its residents with opportunities for jobs that support a family. Data shows that disproportionately higher numbers of African Americans and American Indians are living in poverty and are likely to be unemployed than White residents and other minority populations.

The City of Minneapolis "One Minneapolis" goal is focused on creating equal access and equal opportunity; reducing the employment disparity faced by African American and American Indian residents is an important objective to achieving that end.

METP delivers employment and training services through a network of community-based non-profit organizations. These ongoing services have resulted in successful job placements for many African American and American Indian participants.

METP is proposing several new initiatives to begin to address the challenge of reducing disparity in employment for African American and American Indian residents with the following actions:

1. Participate in a Joint City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County "Racial Disparities in Employment Steering Committee";
2. Focus additional resources on pilot employment projects or demonstration projects to test a variety of strategies for improving service delivery to minority populations and connecting participants with existing culturally appropriate services;
3. Provide additional cultural sensitivity training for staff, managers, and employers;
4. Engage human resource professionals from the private sector to develop a strategy for reducing disparities between minority and white workforce participation rates; and
5. Develop a joint City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County evaluation tool to measure progress on reducing workforce disparities.