



# LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL, ASHEVILLE NC

---

LOSRC has committed itself to eliminating racial disparities and supporting disadvantaged individuals and communities. After the killing of George Floyd, the Council's Executive Director issued a [memo](#) condemning the event, outlined the Council's commitment to eliminating racial disparities and supporting disadvantaged individuals and communities and identified that the "region has significant racial disparities in most every aspect of our society". It has developed an online [Story Map](#) to share data based on racial disparities within the region to promote a conversation to better understand these challenges and how to address them. The BIPOC population in the region is small, which has resulted in challenges working with census data, but the Council intends to continue to update the report and hopefully include additional information.

The Council has a DEI committee that meets monthly, consisting of Council leadership, a contracted HR firm, and staff. The Committee is reviewing hiring and contracting policies, and updated the policy manual in 2021 to reflect the changes. MPO and RPO participation plans were also updated in 2021 and reflect the Council's efforts to ensure outreach to all communities. The Council intends to continue using zoom to conduct public outreach, hoping to ensure it is reaching communities that are still vulnerable. It has

conducted internal DEI training for staff since 2021 and has begun bringing in outside consultants to conduct it. The training has raised awareness of terminology and how individuals interpret messaging differently. Additionally, the Council has begun hiring more diverse staff and is becoming more intentional as an affirmative action employer.

Although the Council may face difficulties, including recruiting minority applicants in a largely white and rapidly developing area, it sees the possibilities to affect change by continuing to partner with outside organizations, including the City of Asheville, local non-profit organizations, and community groups. Members of the community have reached out to Land of Sky for assistance in DEI training and the Council may begin to help them develop their own DEI statements. As part of its workforce programs, they have held hiring fairs at public housing developments, and partnered with the [Asheville Chamber Inclusive Hiring Partners](#) program and [ARC INspire](#), which are both focused on re-entry, second chance hiring and supporting those with substance use disorders. LOSRC is also a member of the [Generation Plus](#) team, which is working to reduce isolation, build social networks, educate and advocate for the LGBTQ+ 55 and older population. The Council's focus on the BIPOC community, racial disparities and underrepresented communities will allow it to refocus its work to ensure that it is positively affecting these communities.

Links:

[Racial Disparity in the Land of Sky Region](#)  
[State of Black Asheville](#)

