

**PROPOSED DESIGN FOR
THE SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE FOR
EQUITY- AND ACCESS-CENTERED PUBLIC-ENGAGEMENT STUDY**

INTRODUCTION

This design for research, analysis, and recommendation services was prepared for the Saint Paul City Council's Audit Committee, in response to its request to provide an access- and equity-focused engagement and research study, documented in a comprehensive report.

SITUATION

The Audit Committee was formed by the Saint Paul City Council around February 2019 to audit the work of City departments, with occasional assistance from independent consultants. This year, a focus of the Committee is on access, service delivery, and follow-up in response to non-emergency-related complaints from City residents, business owners, and workers. Of special importance to the process is evaluating access, service delivery, and follow-up across demographics of those served. Improving and enhancing current research efforts by Office of Technology and other City Departments in their own, internal work must take place in parallel with outreach to diverse users of the City's multifaceted information and complaint system. Data collected from providers and users will be synthesized into a final report that includes an equity assessment and recommendations for service improvement.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The deliverables for this project include:

- A summary of user input.
- Analysis that identifies concerns about access, service, and follow-up communication with users.
- Assessment of impacts that differ among demographics of users.
- Synthesis of user experience and process findings uncovered in City Department data.
- Recommendations for equitable process and product improvement.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The measures of success for this project will be:

- The final report will be easy to read, data-grounded, and readily useable by City Staff, City Councilmembers, the Mayor, and the media to highlight strengths, weaknesses, and possibilities for Saint Paul's non-emergency response system.
- Each City Department will receive personalized consideration in collection and analysis that honors its distinctive work, with user needs considered within context.
- All participants are engaged and feel valued for their diverse contributions to shaping and moving through the study.
- The resulting assessment and recommendations feel real, relevant, and fair to the experiences of users and City staff.
- Users with accessibility needs and those from historically under-represented demographics will see their stories highlighted in the report.
- Work is completed on-time and within-budget.

VALUE

This project will demonstrate value for the Saint Paul City Council Audit Committee because:

- Consultants have experience in collection and application of both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Experienced facilitators bring a deep sense of human behavior and diverse communication needs to their work leading interviews and focus groups.
- The consulting team represents a variety of intersectional identities—racial, immigrant, ability, sexuality, etc.—and brings those perspectives into client research and analysis.
- Consultants are familiar with public-sector work within highly charged political environments.
- Consultants prepare reports to be useable and readable by people of all abilities and neurotypes, which increases their usefulness in public discourse.

PROPOSED PROCESS, TIMELINE, & FEES

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & COORDINATION	June 7-October 29	\$4000
Special emphasis on sharing back with key contributors to this process, sharing abbreviated version(s) of Final Report and answering questions.		
HUMAN SYSTEM MAPPING	June 7-September 10	\$1000
Use initial data provided by the City, along with all public user interfaces, to sketch a stakeholder analysis of users and a network map of key relationships and communication flows in City departments. Add to these visualizations as we learn throughout.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create user map prior to engagement to include residents, business owners, employees; non/non-fluent English speakers; neighborhoods; user access to tech; and "all pertinent demographic characteristics" • Map the City side of the relational network, noting key nodes, connections, bottlenecks, and gaps • Define high-level questions for First Contact phase 		
FIRST CONTACT: CURIOSITY ABOUT BASICS	June 14-June 25	\$1000
Centering kindness and curiosity, build connection while continuing to map user networks and City Departments, asking high-level questions to uncover more data, both quantitative and qualitative.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to wide array of City administrative and service staff, asking high-level questions; define questions for Deeper Contact phase • Seek out and catalogue all readily available data on equitable access, service, and follow-up • Set informed targets for City contacts, including lunchtime opt-in conversations and 1:1s Reach out to wide variety of community organizations, asking high-level questions; define questions for Deeper Contact phase • Set informed targets for user contacts, including focus groups and 1:1s 		

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DEEPER CONTACT: CURIOSITY ABOUT STORIES	June 28-September 3	\$24,150
<p>Focusing on narrative and qualitative data, collect & assess user input analysis of access points and city work processes, asking deeper questions to uncover more data, both quantitative and qualitative. Partner with community organizations to reach diverse users. Engagement questions will address ease of access, issue management, definition of resolution, speed of resolution, and follow-up communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users: Solicit and document user stories of residents, business owners, employees; apply equity lens to target groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Host focus groups with system users (virtual and/or in-person, if COVID safety allows; minimum of five sessions) Focus will be on collecting stories about successes, pain points, fears, & hopes. ○ Reach out again to key community organizations for assistance in hosting focus groups and engagement, with provision of resources to account for staffing and users' time (Fees reflect an allowance of \$3,750.) ○ Solicit ASL and spoken-language interpretation services via city and community resource recommendations (Fees reflect an allowance of \$5000.) ○ Watch for emerging opportunities for deepening understanding of user experience through interviews, small gatherings online or in-person (if COVID safety allows), and other creative means • Service providers: Reach out again to key City administrative and service staff, learning from City departments' ongoing internal studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Host 1-on-1 interviews with key City administrative and service staff to explore service-provision processes, uncovering important department differences and similarities, as well as positive practices and possibilities (virtual and/or in-person, if COVID safety allows; minimum of one per department) ○ Watch for emerging opportunities for opt-in sessions with City staff to solicit process-improvement data and ideas 		
MAKE SENSE OF THE DATA	August 9-September 17	\$8400
<p>Analyze findings & synthesize with existing and ongoing analysis. Emphasize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility factors when considering all available data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan city work processes impacting equity and efficiency from a user perspective • Deeply review existing and ongoing OTC and other departments' website & work process redesigns; synthesize with our findings, noting contradictions • Assess viability and appropriateness of multiple approaches that are appropriate to each department's context, sharing best, good, and emergent practices drawn from City and user wisdom where possible • Create recommendations for improved access to information and services, sortable by groups: process, organizational development, automation, and shared services 		
REPORTING & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVED ACCESS	September 20-October 18	\$10,000
<p>Document process and findings throughout; keep organized records of raw data and visualizations. Prepare reports with user-friendly visualizations of data from multiple City and community sources, centering both collective and outlier user narratives as catalysts for positive change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-point Report: Initial findings shared with the Audit Committee; approximately September 6 • Final Report: Delivery of final report to the Audit Committee, incorporating new data, updated analysis, and suggestions from the Audit Committee collected at the Mid-point; approximately October 4, 2021 • Report Presentation: Delivery of final presentation to the Audit Committee, City Council, Mayor & the public; approximately October 18, 2021 		
HONORING RELATIONSHIPS	October 19-31	\$1200
<p>Special emphasis on team members personally closing feedback loops with key contributors to this process, sharing abbreviated version(s) of the Final Report, answering questions, and expressing gratitude.</p>		
PROPOSED FEES		\$49,750

BOUNDARIES SHAPING THE WORK

Exclusions:

At no point will data be collected nor analyzed regarding emergency and non-emergency calls placed through the Ramsey County Communications Center. Every effort will be made by the consulting team to avoid impacting the efforts of Police and Fire Departments in their concurrent studies.

Our Values:

The engagement and data-collection methods we have adopted for complex contexts are rooted in these values, from which we do not deviate:

- **Inclusive Participation** – ensuring everyone in every room, real or virtual, has an opportunity to contribute. Special focus on creating and maintaining space for historically underrepresented voices is vital to equitable inclusion.
- **Profound Respect** – creating an environment where all participants feel welcomed and heard. In this project, respect for users and their stories will be evident alongside respect for city workers and their commitment to public service.
- **Honoring Narratives** – creating opportunities to safely share and examine both traditional and narrative data—stories that govern individual and group behavior—as valid artifacts of an organization’s context. User stories and those of City staff will weave themselves into a complex picture of a constantly evolving system. Where quantitative data helps us better understand problems and monitor improvement, qualitative data is the primary driver of systemic change.

PROPOSED TERMS

Proposed fees are detailed on the previous page, using our government rate of \$200/hour. Cultivate Strategy will review and agree to a contract that reflects fair terms and final pricing.

To the Saint Paul City Council Audit Committee, we would commit to:

- Plan, prepare, and coordinate with Audit Committee coordinator(s).
- Coordinate with City Department staff.
- Tailor session aims and design for interviews and focus groups.
- Prepare highly interactive virtual environments and supplementary assessment materials for focus groups.
- Compile quantitative and qualitative inputs into reference documents and visualizations.
- Coordinate a diverse project team, cross-pollinating our understandings for a wiser, more comprehensive result.
- Hold the proper liability insurance for City-level work.

We would ask that the Saint Paul City Council Audit Committee:

- Provide 2-3 project advisors to help us navigate City Departments and culture to build mutual trust and assure tailored design.
- Respond to communications within two business days to keep the project moving.
- Honor negotiated coordination time to stay on budget.
- Ask the Project Coordinator directly for any desired renegotiations or scope changes, with written follow-up, to keep understandings congenial and explicit.
- Expect communications during normal business hours to honor work/life balance for all.
- Support us in quickly acquiring necessary prior written approvals for all subcontractors, including translators.

- Honor an estimated 1 hour per week for Project Coordination unless otherwise agreed. Coordination, scope, and design conversations that exceed 1 hour per week will be billed at our government rate. Significant departures from the project must be renegotiated in a new contract or addendum.

PROJECT TEAM

Full Team Coordination, Analysis, & Documentation

Sherry P. Johnson Project Coordinator

City Departments, Process Improvement, & Quantitative Data Team

Brigid Riley Senior Project Advisor, Facilitator, & Organizational Development Pathfinder

Johnese M. Bostic Data Manager, Facilitator, & Quality Improvement Pathfinder

Community Users, Product Improvement, and Qualitative (“Narrative”) Data Team

Kia Moua User Stories Coordinator, Facilitator, & Diversity / Equity / Inclusion Pathfinder

Sherry P. Johnson Complex-Systems Consultant, Facilitator, & Accessibility Pathfinder

TEAM EXPERIENCE

Year(s)	Client	Focus	Methods
2020-21	Summit Hill Association	Gathered input about neighborhood concerns from people living and working in Summit Hill neighborhood of Saint Paul.	Online focus groups with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BIPOC neighbors ▪ Renters ▪ School leadership ▪ Businesses ▪ General audience
2019-20	“The Future is Grand” Grand Avenue Task Force	Co-founded and Co-chaired task force to respond to commercial vacancies, coordinating with three nonprofit organizations and the Saint Paul City Council.	Facilitation and project management included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designing process and facilitating 8, high-visibility meetings ▪ Documenting consensus recommendations for the City and District Councils. ▪ Spearheading collection of over 60 interviews with Grand Avenue businesses ▪ Designing narrative assessment to collect over 150 stories about Grand Avenue from community members using specialized online software platform ▪ Creating accessible reports documenting key steps along the task force’s journey
2017-18	Whittier Alliance	Gathered input about neighborhood concerns from people living and working in the Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis.	In-person focus groups with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Businesses and larger institutions ▪ Social Services providers ▪ Renters ▪ Homeowners ▪ Latinx community ▪ Somali community

Year(s)	Client	Focus	Methods
2017	Kindering, 4Culture, & Seattle Office of Arts & Culture	Facilitated half-day retreat with a disability-advocacy group to identify more access points for neurodivergent people in the arts sector.	In-person retreat with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 representatives of 14 Seattle metro-area arts organizations Neurodivergent and disabled artists and arts staff
2017	Tangletown Neighborhood Association	Gathered input about neighborhood concerns from people living and working in the Tangletown neighborhood of Minneapolis.	In-person focus groups with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renters Residents Seniors Key informant interviews with seven community leaders
2017	Foundation for Healthy Generations	Co-designed two-day learning collaborative to assess system-wide best practices for community health workers.	Two-day learning collaborative included over 60 participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrators State officials Program funders Public health experts Community health workers from 6 clinics throughout Eastern Washington Their supervisors Non-fluent-English speakers Indigenous health practitioners
2017	South Carolina DHEC Wellness Committee	Facilitated strategic planning workshop to guide overall work.	Process hosted a newly formed committee and impacted implementation of wellness programs for an agency of 3500 employees
2016	King County Transit Access Division	Facilitated interdepartmental retreat of Access staff to improve on-time service.	Half-day, in-person retreat for 30 participants included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process improvement ideation Kinesthetic work with creative problem-solving Subsequent coaching was provided on conflict-resolution skills and role definition with core staff

Year(s)	Client	Focus	Methods
2016	South Carolina Public Health Association	The organization was planning for their Annual Meeting and wanted to assign tasks for a successful process to getting all meeting components accomplished. The committee participated in a consensus workshop first to determine the goals for the conference.	Facilitation included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Workshop Action Planning Workshop
2015	Nokomis East Neighborhood Association	Coordinated gathering input about neighborhood concerns from people living and workshop in the Nokomis East Neighborhood of Minneapolis.	In-person focus groups with constituents organized by topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing & Livability Environment Commercial & Streetscape Key informant interviews with seven community leaders
2011-2014	District 4 & East Side Prosperity Campaign	Coordinated community engagement and asset-mapping. Presented community grant's success indicators and challenges to foundations	Work included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data management of community narratives and assets Narrative engagement Hosting panels and forums Process improvement toward equitable outcomes for the Gold Line through Engage East Side Resident Network
2013-14	Hennepin County Public Health Department	Exploration of potential roles for the health department in promoting mental well-being at the population level.	Key informant interviews with 46 individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 community thought leaders representing 24 organizations 18 academic/government thought leaders representing eight organization Interviews were conducted with at least two organizations or individuals serving these county population groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American American Indian Asian Indian Chinese Hmong Vietnamese Latinx Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Recent immigrants Low-income residents

Year(s)	Client	Focus	Methods
2013	The Isuroon Project	Somali adolescent sexual health promotion.	Focus groups with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Somali youth ▪ Parents ▪ Health care providers
2012-13	The Food Group (formerly Emergency Foodshelf Network)	Needs assessment of public housing sites in Ramsey and Hennepin Counties about potential growth in mobile services.	Key informant interviews with public and supportive housing area managers across metro counties. Phone and/or email contact with 93 individual property managers.
2012-13	Otto Bremer Foundation	Exploration of ways for the foundation to address dental care needs of low-income individuals and families.	Key informant interviews with leaders in the dental health arena. Focus groups with multi-sector dental care providers or content experts, including individuals from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Private practice ▪ Higher education ▪ Community care ▪ hHealth plans ▪ Community collaboratives ▪ Government

CONSULTANT TEAM

With a background in youth arts education, community engagement, and volunteer coordination, [Sherry Johnson](#) (she/her/hers) understands the power of a clear, compelling purpose to lead community and organizational development.

As founder of Cultivate Strategy, Sherry advises nonprofits, public sector leaders, and small businesses in strategy, engagement, and working in complexity. Drawing from her personal experience with a midlife autism diagnosis, she helps clients transform by engaging their intuition, embracing mindfulness, and releasing long-held narratives that have stifled innovation, inclusion, and accessibility.



Sherry is a skilled facilitator, coach, and curriculum designer who currently serves as a Board member of the Summit Hill Association after Co-Chairing the Grand Avenue Neighborhood Task Force. Sherry is a Certified ToP Facilitator, a Qualified ToP Trainer, and a certified facilitator of the Diamond Inclusiveness Assessment™ (DIA). She holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Master of Education from the University of St. Catherine. [Click here to see samples of her work.](#)

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CONSULTANT TEAM, *continued*



Brigid Riley (she/her/hers) specializes in organization and Board development, strategic planning, small and large group facilitation, and project management. She is a certified Technology of Participation® (ToP®) facilitator and trainer, emphasizing authentic participation by all. Brigid has honed her facilitation practice through extensive work with local, state, and national groups.

Her background includes executive leadership in the nonprofit sector and community-focused public health programs, with special emphasis on reframing how we think and talk about youth, young parents, adolescent sexual health and the concerns of LGBTQ populations.

Ms. Riley Brigid holds an undergraduate degree from the University of St. Catherine, Saint Paul, MN, and a Master of Public Health from the University of Minnesota. She is an alumna of the Policy Fellows program at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs, and the Emerging Leaders Network, a leadership development program of Minnesota public health associations. She received the Betty Hubbard Maternal and Child Health Leadership Award from the Minnesota Department of Health for her work to promote adolescent sexual health for Minnesota youth. [Click here to see samples of her work.](#)

Kia Moua (she/her/hers) consults and trains on racial equity and intercultural collaboration, and she has organized social justice events at the local, national, and international scale.

Kia was founding Co-Director of the Hmong Women’s Oral History Project in La Crosse, WI and has served on the boards of the West Side Safe Neighborhood Council, Community Neighborhood Housing Services, Hmong College Prep Academy, Hmong Women Achieving Together, and the West Side Community Organization.



Kia is a contracted facilitator for the Anti-Defamation League with the K-12 World of Difference Curriculum and Managing Implicit Bias for Law Enforcement. She is a Child Welfare Foundations Supervisor and Trainer for the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Kia is a co-developer of the Diamond Inclusiveness Assessment™ (DIA) and a qualified administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). She holds a Master of Human Development degree with an emphasis on Antiracism Studies from Saint Mary’s University.



Johnese M. Bostic proudly works to assess the effectiveness of efforts to improve health outcomes and eliminate health disparities, while fostering partnerships on policies, programs, and initiatives to address dimensions of wellness.

As a native of South Carolina, Johnese enjoys volunteering at her church, spending time with family and traveling. She earned her B.A. in Behavioral Science from Columbia College, an Associate Public Manager Certificate through the SC Department of Administration’s Human Resources Division, and a Project Management Certificate from the University of South Carolina.

She has over twelve years of experience working with diverse populations, faith-based organizations, non-profits, and other community groups. As a trained Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and Technology of Participation (ToP) Facilitator, Johnese uses design thinking to foster innovative approaches and sustainable change.

She serves as Governing Councilor of Public Health Education and Health Promotion for the American Public Health Association; Past President of the South Carolina Public Health Association; member of the Board of Directors of the Action Council for Cross Cultural Mental Health; and Human Services Ambassador for the National Museum of African American History and Culture.