



## **An Action Plan to Advance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion through ULI Colorado**

**October 6, 2020**

*“ULI opposes all forms of racial discrimination and injustice. ULI is an anti-racist organization that believes that Black Lives Matter. ULI commits to being a catalyst for change in our industry and in our diverse communities.”—Ed Walter, Global CEO, Urban Land Institute, July 2020*

*“There’s not a roadmap for ULI Colorado to follow. We’re creating our own path toward our goal. That’s what good organizations do – embrace change and constantly try to improve.”—Mike Zoellner, chair, ULI Colorado, 2019-21*

*“If we’re going to address social injustices, it takes work on everybody’s part. This is not a Black people’s issue or Brown people’s issue. It’s everybody. It affects every American and the real estate world.”—Mark Marshall, co-chair, ULI Colorado Housing Committee*

**Overview:** Recent events make it clear that the Urban Land Institute—its 45,000 members, 250 global staff, and many partners and supporters—has not done nearly enough to combat racism and to promote equitable outcomes from land use practices. Globally, ULI has made Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) its top priority. ULI’s goals for DEI include:

- *Diversifying the membership and staff of ULI by introducing more people of color, women and diverse populations into land use professions.*
- *Advancing people of color, women and other diverse populations as leaders in the world of ULI and the professions its serves.*
- *Bringing to light—and ending once and for all—the lingering effects of past and present discriminatory practices in real estate, including redlining and exclusionary zoning.*
- *Creating more equitable outcomes from land use practices, with a focus on reinvestment in underserved neighborhoods for the benefit of current residents and businesses.*

ULI Colorado’s DEI Action Plan recognizes that the time to pivot toward DEI is now. ULI Colorado’s DEI Action Plan is based upon the following inputs:

- A special DEI session with our 25-member Executive Committee (7/21/20)
- A focus group and written surveys with 20 graduates of the Real Estate Diversity Initiative (REDI) (7/22/20)
- A focus group and written surveys with 20 established land use professionals who are people of color (7/30/20)
- Participation in ULI’s global DEI Task Force
- Review of emerging DEI best practices throughout the ULI network

- Original research including one-on-one interviews

The five-part Action Plan proposes internal and external measures in the short term with long-term follow-up. Actions will be led by ULI Colorado staff and volunteer leaders.

***A) Committees (internal, short/medium term)***

*“Let’s stretch harder to find some of those other groups of people and connect with them in a personal way so we really get to know them and have a relationship with them.” —focus group comment, July 2020*

- Each ULI Colorado committee identifies at least one diversity champion within the committee, which could be one or both of the co-chairs. Avoid defaulting to a person of color for this role and encourage those who care about advancing DEI to volunteer.
- Diversity champions help to recruit women, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) to invite them to join ULI and their committee.
- Diversity champions also work to ensure diversity of speakers, panels, and future committee leadership.
- ULI committee chairs bring in more diverse speakers and topics, with specific goals for each calendar year.
- ULI Colorado forms a DEI Advisory Committee that includes a diversity of land-use veterans as well as the Diversity Champions from each committee.
- DEI Advisory Committee works with ULI Colorado staff to develop a mission, vision, and goals for ULI Colorado’s DEI efforts, to include DEI in ULI Colorado’s overarching strategic goals, and to help the organization advance DEI in all of its programs, efforts, and committees.
- DEI Advisory Committee recommends a leading member to join ULI Colorado Management Group that meets monthly.

***B) Membership (internal, short term and long term)***

*“No one wants to be the only woman or person of color in a room thinking they are only there for one reason.” —focus group comment, July 2020*

- Reach out to women and BIPOC professionals in land use to invite, welcome and engage them in ULI activities. ULI Colorado staff and volunteer leaders will focus on ongoing inclusion and relationships.
- Based on ULI’s demographic data collection that is currently underway, ULI Colorado will set long-term goals to increase diversity of membership. Once ULI Colorado has baseline demographic information, the organization can set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based) goals to increase the diversity of membership, leadership, and volunteers. With such goals, ULI Colorado can measure the success of its initiatives over time. In the meantime, ULI Colorado can use statewide demographic information to assess whether local membership reflects the demographics of Colorado communities.

- Survey sponsors, members and partners to learn about implementation of best practices for diverse recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention, and promotion.
- Promote ULI’s Public Agency/Nonprofit/Institutional Membership discounts by doing additional outreach to public organizations to encourage ULI participation.
- Work with ULI HQ to offer discounts and scholarships to BIPOC, such as to global ULI meetings and ULI Learning offerings.
- Post job and internship opportunities offered by members to our network.
- Work to ensure that people of diverse backgrounds, ethnicities and genders feel comfortable in ULI settings.

***C) Partnerships for systemic impact (internal and external, short-term initiation with long-term follow-up)***

*“Make sure that as young people are growing up, they understand real estate and how they can make a career out of it.”—focus group comment, July 2020*

- Reach out to BIPOC professional organizations such as chambers and real estate associations to partner on programming and outreach.
- Partner with other professional organizations, such as USGBC, AGC, AIA, APA, ASLA, NAIOP, and Housing Colorado on DEI-related programming and outreach.
- Explore partnerships with universities, community colleges, and vocational schools to reach diverse students interested in land use professions. For example, ULI Colorado could partner with Metropolitan State University of Denver (where around 50% of students are BIPOC) on the creation of a real estate program. ULI Colorado could also collaborate with University of Colorado’s Real Estate Center and University of Denver’s Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute on programs that explore pathways to equitable development outcomes, such as CU’s previous course on race and real estate.
- Creating professional diversity is a long-term goal. ULI Colorado can support this by reaching out to pre-college students to introduce them to the ULI professional world including design, planning, development, and finance. Explore partnerships with programs like the Denver Scholarship Foundation, Junior Achievement, Boys and Girls Clubs, ACE, and Arrupe High School’s work-study program that do career development among school-age people in underserved communities. Consider starting an outreach program like [Building Industry Leaders](#) (ULI North Texas has offered a seed grant).
- Partner with public, nonprofit, and neighborhood organizations, which have a more diverse workforce and include equity in their missions.

***D) Promote equitable development strategies through programming (internal and external, long-term)***

*“We need a systemic response to a systemic issue.”—focus group comment, July 2020*

- Update ULI Colorado’s strategic goals to include DEI.
- Use a “lens of equity” for exploring and evaluating projects and programs.

- Invite BIPOC members to participate in planning programming that they are interested in attending.
- For monthly registered programs, ensure a diversity of gender, ethnicity, backgrounds and viewpoints on ULI panels.
- Help members understand the impact their work has on communities and the legacy of the real estate industry's impacts on communities of color. For example, ULI Colorado should provide programming on the legacy of structural racism in land use (such as covenants that promote segregation, unfair lending and housing practices, exclusionary zoning, etc.).
- Recognize achievements in DEI through Impact Awards, Emerging Trends, and other programs.
- Research and promote the best practices in equitable development.
- Research and share positive financial models that demonstrate how social equity meets the "triple bottom line."
- Integrate DEI into all Advisory Services and involve translators as needed.
- Find sponsors to support Technical Advisory Panels (TAPs) in underserved communities.
- Support and promote wealth building opportunities for people of color and underserved communities in Colorado, such as through homeownership, capital markets, access to opportunities, and land trusts.
- Provide/promote unconscious bias and DEI training for volunteer leaders, members, and member companies.
- Support local minority- and female-owned businesses (contractors, vendors, etc.).
- Work with ULI national on taking a stand on relevant policies at the federal level, such as those related to affordable housing, opportunity zones, and the Community Reinvestment Act.
- Take nonpartisan stances on local policy and educate members about issues related to affordable and attainable housing, displacement, and equity. Provide rapid responses to unethical policies and actions, discussing what members can do.

***E) Leverage REDI to advance DEI (internal, short and long-term)***

*"Overall, REDI is great training and needs to take the next step of introducing people of color to more leaders in real estate."—focus group quote, July 2020*

- Work with the REDI Steering Committee to develop infrastructure for supporting REDI graduates after the program.
- Create "REDI Set Go" program to invite, welcome and engage REDI graduates into the ULI network and provide ongoing mentorship, programming and career opportunities.
- Create a "REDI Light" program for those who don't have time/resources to participate in the REDI program. This could involve working with ULI Learning to provide discounts for BIPOC to take ULI's existing online real estate development courses.
- Promote REDI graduates to the ULI network as potential interns and employees through e-newsletters, personal introductions, and career matchmaking.