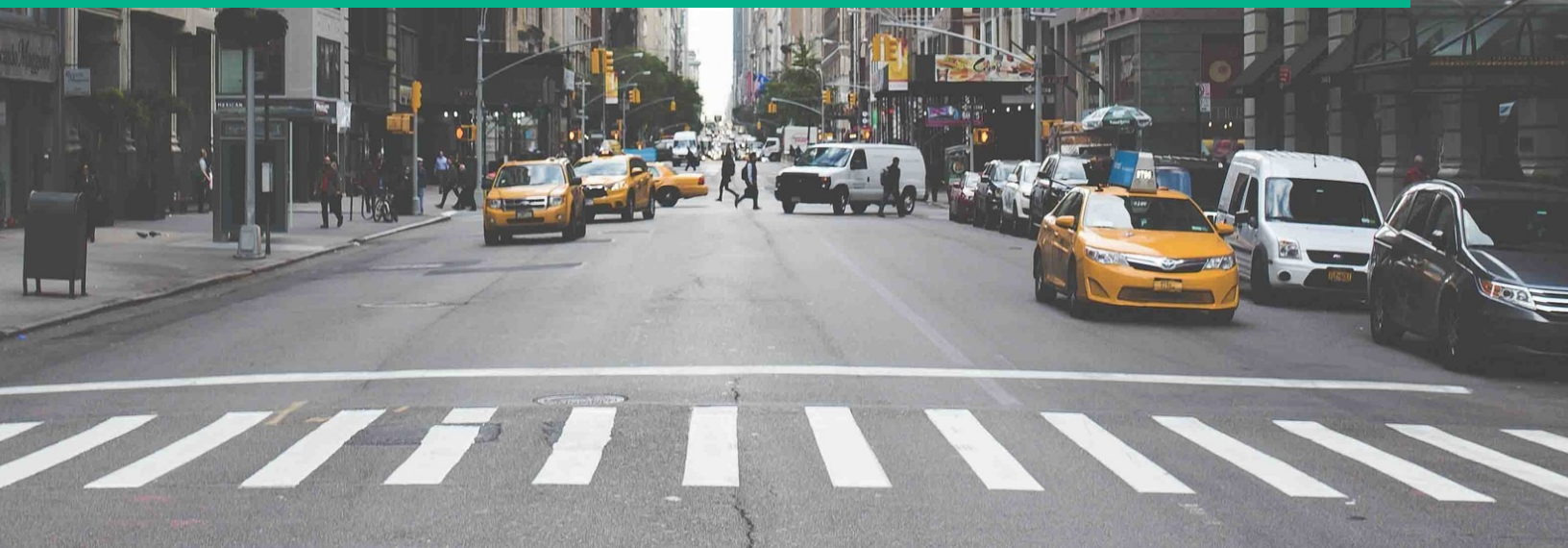




# AUDITING FOR EQUITY



*a plan by*

**BRADLANDER**  
for NYC Comptroller

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# AUDITING FOR EQUITY

While New York City is home to over 8 million people, who speak well over 600 languages across many races and ethnicities, our agency staff, the businesses we contract with, and government services that are provided often fail to reflect the diversity of our city and meet the needs of Black and Brown communities. Auditing for Equity utilizing an intersectional lens that consistently integrates race, gender/gender identity, disability, and other protected categories is integral to adequately identify structural racism and other forms of discrimination.

As Comptroller, Brad's Racial Equity Audits will evaluate agencies performance internally as an employer, efforts to expand equitable access and opportunities to external partners, and the three E's (efficiency, effectiveness, and equity) of programs & services that have particular impacts in communities of color.

## INTERNAL EQUITY AUDITS

The quality and effectiveness of the work each City agency seeks to do is only as good as the people they hire, starting with the Comptroller's Office. Persons who look like, who have lived in these communities, and experienced many of the issues the City seeks to solve are best positioned to know how best to do it. When the City's workforce is diverse and empowered, informed decisions are made which result in impactful outcomes.

The Internal Equity Audits team will assess agencies based on the following indices and will begin with an assessment of the staff and policies of the Comptroller's Office:

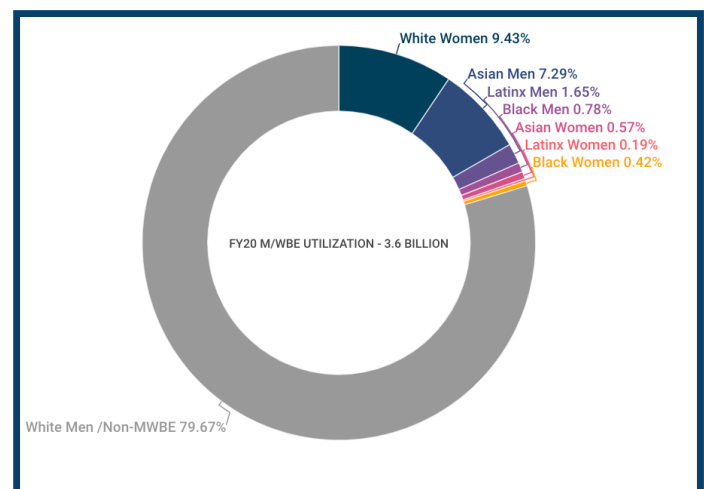
- The race/ethnicity, gender/gender expression, and sexuality of agency staff and leadership by position and salaries, expanding on Local Law 18 of 2019 which requires the Mayor to evaluate and eliminate pay disparity in the City's workforce;
- Pathways to promotions, particularly for underrepresented groups in management; and
- Agency/Office recruitment practices and development of pathways into government employment through public institutions (CUNY, SUNY, and public high schools).

As Comptroller, Brad will seek to work in partnership with City agencies, wherever appropriate, giving them advance notice of the audits this team will produce so that agencies can set ambitious new goals, impose better policies, and measure results to better achieve shared goals.

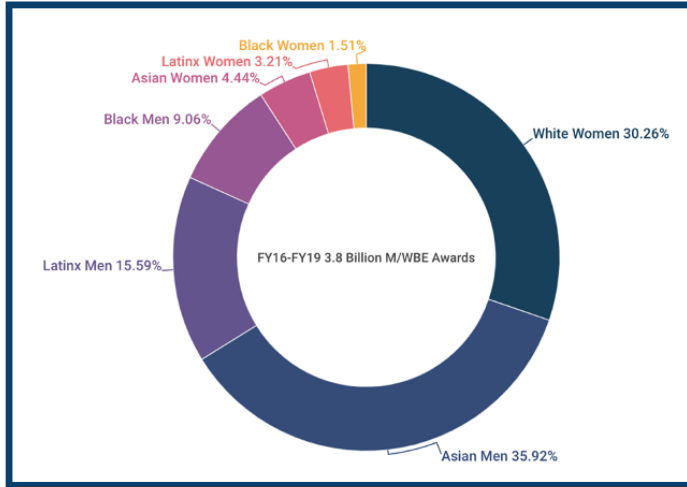
## EXPANDING EQUITABLE ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

### CONTRACTING WITH BUSINESSES OWNED BY WOMEN AND PEOPLE OF COLOR

The City's contracting budget is a vital tool for job creation and bolstering economic opportunities for New Yorkers. In Fiscal Year 2020, the City's \$22.5 billion contracting budget was used to procure essential goods and services for New Yorkers. Just a fraction (\$3.6 billion) of this budget was subject to M/WBE participation goals, meaning businesses owned by women and people of color could be intentionally sought after. Of this \$3.6 Billion, businesses owned by white men and/or those not certified as an M/WBE, were awarded nearly 80% of all contracts.



While the City has generally improved its contracting with M/WBEs in recent years, businesses owned by women of color have received the lowest value of contract awards. Between Fiscal Years 2016-2019, M/WBE-owned firms were awarded \$3.5 billion in contracts, businesses owned by Black Women, Latinx Women, and Asian Women received less than 5%.



Each agency must fulfill their mandate to expand equitable access and opportunities to firms that have been traditionally left out of doing business with the City, including M/WBE-owned firms.

This audit will assess:

- ACCO's compliance with and implementation of existing M/WBE policies and laws
- RFP evaluation criteria of prior bids with M/WBE participation goals
- Racial/Gender demographics of Evaluation Committees
- Frequency of training for ACCOs, Contract Managers, and other staff

## PENSION FUND MANAGEMENT

New York City's five pension funds hold the retirement security of more than half-a-million teachers, health care workers, fire-fighters, police officers, payroll administrators, and other public sector workers and retirees who served our city for decades. As a fiduciary for these funds (worth \$240 billion as of November 2020), the NYC Comptroller plays a critical role in overseeing the city's investment portfolios to ensure they are invested responsibly, so our public sector workers have the secure future they deserve.

As Comptroller, Brad will protect the investments and security of city employees, while closing the disparity gap asset managers of color face by:

- Publicly publishing the percentage of assets under management by race/gender
- Embedding race/gender in the evaluation and hiring of asset managers and consultants.
- Work with industry experts, asset managers, and other internal personnel to increase private equity investments with M/WBE managers, hedge funds, and consultants.

## DISPARITIES IN SERVICE

The services all government agencies directly provide or offer through contractors, must be of the highest quality, efficiency, and meet the actual needs of communities. We know through countless examples that there are disparities in access, timeliness, and quality of these services more often than not experienced by communities of color. As Comptroller, Brad will establish an Equity Audit Steering Committee which, in consultation with community leaders & activists, will develop a framework for prioritizing specific agencies or issue areas such as:

## QUALITY-OF-LIFE COMPLAINTS

Every community, whether it's Canarsie in Brooklyn or Forest Hills in Queens should be accessible, clean, and safe. The City often receives complaints of poor response times for vital services, including snow removal and garbage pick-up. By auditing agency deployment and resource allocation, Brad is committed to identifying gaps in services and working with agencies to adjust their practices.

## HOUSING AND SHELTER

Housing insecurity has only been exacerbated by the pandemic. The City must continue to invest in the building of affordable housing and strengthen protections for renters. Brad will seek to bring transparency to affordable housing programs by auditing which applicants are and aren't ultimately approved, vacancy rates, and the City's ability to effectively resolve housing-related complaints.

## ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Through contracts and subsidies, the City creates thousands of jobs with very little knowledge of who becomes employed. Where assessments are

conducted, economic development programs are often found to short-change communities of color. Similarly, it is unclear who benefits from Workforce Development programs, and their effectiveness of connecting individuals with meaningful employment. Brad will explore auditing the City's economic and workforce development policies to root out racial disparities in these programs and advocate for reform.

## HEALTH AND MENTAL WELLNESS

Disparities in access to quality healthcare, result in more avoidable illnesses and deaths. Black women in New York are more likely than others to die from breast cancer, cervical cancer, and colorectal cancer. Black women also have the lowest rates of early diagnosis and detection for these cancers. Brad will audit the Department of Health and other agencies and health-related City spending on programs and initiatives including Thrive to assess where we are failing to address these disparate health outcomes in communities of color.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Communities of color too often bear the burden of the City's bad and inequitable infrastructure decisions. Communities of color are far more likely to be exposed to hazardous waste, toxic emissions, and noxious materials as the result of our City's siting decisions. Those same neighborhoods often also suffer from severe disinvestment in local parks, libraries, public transit, and schools. In addition to advocating for the overhaul of our City's infrastructure planning processes, Brad will explore conducting infrastructure audits to identify racial disparities in the repair needs of our City's existing infrastructure and the City's ongoing budget decisions to advocate for more equitable investments.