



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

FEBRUARY 2026

SUMMARY

About Willamalane's Strategic Action Plan

In 2021, Willamalane created its first board-approved Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan. As expected, the understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion has evolved, both in this organization and across the nation.

Moving forward, Willamalane will use the term Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). DEIB isn't about favoring one group or individual over another. In fact, it is inclusive rather than exclusive. This work is about identifying and removing barriers to access, so that all people have an equitable opportunity to engage.

Willamalane's Commitment

As Willamalane moves forward with the updated and board-approved 2026 DEIB SAP goals, the district has made the following commitments:

- Recognizing past challenges as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Determining productive steps toward positive change.
- Strengthening equitable opportunity throughout the district.

Organization of the Plan

As part of the 2026 DEIB SAP, Willamalane identified some main areas that are integral and important to this work:

THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE

Willamalane is committed to using language that considers multiple identities and clearly describes how to continue working toward the district goals.

INTERNAL FOCUS

Internally, Willamalane focuses on fostering an inclusive and consistent recruitment, hiring, and promotion practice and supporting a positive work culture where everyone feels welcome and can authentically belong.

COMMUNITY FOCUS

As a leader in the community, Willamalane works toward continued collaboration and partnerships, which includes self-reflection, cultural responsiveness, and humility.

INTEGRATION OF WILLAMALANE STRATEGIC PLANS

Willamalane strives to provide high quality operations, management, and service to the community, which align with all strategic plans. Summaries of additional reports are available on the website.

TAKING THE NEXT STEPS

The district is committed to being responsive, updating policies and procedures, programs, and facilities. Creating and supporting a welcoming environment where everyone feels like they belong is one of Willamalane's primary goals.

DEIB Willamalane Spotlights

Since the 2021 DEI Strategic Action Plan, the district has accomplished many of the goals in the previous plan, as well as new initiatives. Willamalane's ultimate goal is to integrate DEIB into all facets of programs, facilities, parks, and internal culture, creating welcoming spaces where everyone belongs. Some of the successful initiatives from the last four years serve as examples that we can celebrate and learn from as our DEIB work continues to evolve.

- All Are Welcome initiative
- Essential accessible programs
- Sensory booths at public events
- Pride Swims
- Increased bilingual outreach and engagement
- Intentional and expanded recruitment
- Increased accessibility and outreach in parks and facilities
- Native outreach and relationship-building

2026 DEIB Strategic Action Plan Goals

The five goals were created to be meaningful, measurable, and to encourage long-term growth. Objectives for each goal were created by the executive team (Human Resources Division, Strategic Partnerships & Development Division, Recreation & Community Services Division, Marketing & Communications Division, Business Operations Division, Facilities, Parks, & Planning Division) and their staff with consideration to objectives being specific, actionable, and measurable. Where applicable, definitive quantifiable targets are included as built-in accountability.



2026 DEIB Strategic Action Plan Update

The DEIB SAP has been updated in a way that is easy to understand, audit, and revise. The update of the SAP began with an audit of the 2021 SAP in 2023, and was completed after gathering and analyzing a multitude of data in 2025.

Strategic Action Plan Timeline



Strategic feedback

Soliciting and gathering feedback and input from staff was a primary part of creating the 2026 plan. One example is the 2024–2025 comprehensive SWOT analysis, which was informed by multiple staff workshops and an internal Work Culture, Inclusion, and Belonging survey. Information gathered through qualitative and quantitative methods ultimately informed the goals and objectives.



2024-25 SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Robust DEI framework
- Financial investment in staff
- Integrated DEI conversations
- Active DEI department and committees
- Collaborative and skilled DEI staff
- Measurable progress and resource commitment
- Enhanced cultural exposure and communication
- Focus on accessibility and partnerships
- Adaptive and consistent approach



WEAKNESSES

- Lack of bilingual staff
- No allocated department funding for DEI initiatives
- Barriers to internal communication
- Impediments to training and engagement
- Internal resistance to collaboration
- Need for more defined goals and metrics
- Absence of multicultural programming
- Lack of diverse representation (board, leadership, staff)
- Internal and historical barriers and discomfort
- Not enough DEI visibility



- Broaden community engagement
- Collaborate with Team Springfield
- Amplify success as a model
- Reduce barriers for community partners
- Develop strategic partnerships
- Enhance park experience with tech (QR codes)
- Prioritize Latine/o/a community needs and bilingual staffing
- Make Willamalane a safe space for diverse community members and staff



- Polarized political climate
- Societal unrest and economic pressure
- Misinformation and information overload
- Varying acceptance and resistance
- Oregon's lack of diversity
- Reputation and "word of mouth"
- Distraction from core mission
- Burnout and sustained effort
- Complicated partnerships
- Fear of criticism

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

Conclusion

The 2026 DEIB Strategic Action Plan is a guiding document for staff and Willamalane's board of directors. It also serves as documentation of the district's commitment to DEIB principles and intentions to continue assessing this work. Progress on objectives will be shared with the board of directors as quarterly reports included in the Executive Director's Board Report and annual DEIB SAP progress update presentation to the board. The district's intention is to re-examine the DEIB SAP every five years. Follow-through on commitments and accountability are essential parts of Willamalane's continued work to make parks, facilities, and programs welcoming and inclusive.

Willamalane is grateful for the opportunity to listen, discuss, learn, and grow with the community and staff who dedicate their time to identifying and reducing barriers, embracing positive change, and strengthening equitable opportunity throughout the district.

Read the full plan at willamalane.org/deib