



Voices of our Community Listening Session Report from the Human Relations Commission

City Council

Adriana Eberle, Chair, Human Relations Commission
Minka van der Zwaag, Human Services Manager

Recommendation

Receive the report from the Human Relations Commission (HRC) resulting from the Voices of our Community Listening Sessions on Local Experiences of Islamophobia/Anti-Arab Hate and Anti-Semitism and provide feedback.

Listening Session Public Comment Recap

Some of the experiences shared at public comment included:

- Fear to identify with their culture, religion or heritage, especially in public settings
- Harassment experienced by local students based on their religion or heritage
- Hate incidences
- Feeling unsafe at one's place of worship
- Feeling unsupported by the larger Palo Alto community
- Symbols of hate seen around town in the form of graffiti or other means

Recommendations from the HRC

HRC Recommendation	Staff Response	Relevant Sections of Equity Action Plan
1. Ensure that training on increasing religious tolerance and decreasing discrimination based on ethnicity and nationality is included as part of the city's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) training for City employees, boards and commissions.	Aligns with 2024-2025 Equity Action Plan	<p><i>Cultivating Experiences and Appreciation:</i></p> <p>Item 1.2 - Share information on cultural and heritage months/holidays.</p> <p>Item 1.2 - Review Citywide events through an inclusion and equity lens and identify gaps.</p> <p>Item 1.3 - Create a process that includes the HRC for annual calendar setting related to holidays/heritage months.</p>
2. Increase messaging of efforts by the City on equity/inclusion and the implementation of a social media campaign on the "Palo Alto Way" highlighting the City's Equity Mission Statement.	Aligns with 2024-2025 Equity Action Plan	<p><i>Fostering an Inclusive Environment:</i></p> <p>Item 2.1 - Share DEIB values with New Employees</p> <p>Item 2.2 - Conduct Quarterly Interactive DEIB Workshop Training for all Employees</p> <p><i>Applying an Equity Lens</i></p> <p>Item 3.3 - Begin to partner with the HRC to work with other commissions to apply an equity lens to their work.</p>
3. Ensure that the Council Calendar includes the major holiday of the faith communities represented in Palo Alto.	Aligns with 2024-2025 Equity Action Plan	

Recommendations from the HRC - Cont.

HRC Recommendation	Staff Response	Relevant Sections of Equity Action Plan
4. Review the legality of sponsoring/co-sponsoring religious holiday celebrations. This recommendation might be added to the work that the City is already doing regarding the holiday framework the HRC previously recommended.	Aligns with 2024-2025 Equity Action Plan	<i>Cultivating Experiences and Appreciation:</i> Item 1.2 - Share information on cultural and heritage months/holidays. Item 1.2 - Review Citywide events through an inclusion and equity lens and identify gaps. Item 1.3 - Create a process that includes the HRC for annual calendar setting related to holidays/heritage months.
5. Research the concept of forming an interfaith community advisory group to build bridges within the Palo Alto community, including schools and libraries. The interfaith community advisory group would include a liaison from the HRC.	HRC to convene gathering of Faith Community	<i>Fostering an Inclusive Environment:</i> Item 2.1 - Share DEIB values with New Employees Item 2.2 - Conduct Quarterly Interactive DEIB Workshop Training for all Employees <i>Applying an Equity Lens</i> Item 3.3 - Begin to partner with the HRC to work with other commissions to apply an equity lens to their work.
6. Establish a Palo Alto Police Department “Liaison” or first point of contact to the Faith Community for non-emergency matters.	PAPD is amenable to identifying a liaison	

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CITY OF
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