



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

Report: Human Relations Committee Update and Direction

1. Motion directing staff

COUNCIL ACTION

Item Type: Action Item

Approved for January 14, 2025 **calendar**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the request of the City Council, a preliminary group was convened to discuss human relations in the City of Glendale. The group identified emerging themes in the community as well as additional stakeholders to include in a Human Relations Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff on the scope and makeup of a Human Relations Committee.

ANALYSIS

In December 2023, City Council requested the convening of an informal group in dialogue tasked with identifying human relations issues in Glendale and bringing those back to Council for approval before moving forward.

Nineteen community members and City staff convened throughout 2024 to refine the scope of human relations challenges and identify potential stakeholders to bring in for future discussions. The names and organizations of group members are listed in Exhibit 1.

The following themes emerged during these discussions:

1. Social Division and Polarization

The community is experiencing increased division, with polarization fueled by misinformation, external influence, and aggressive online discourse. This makes it difficult for people to respectfully disagree and engage in civil dialogue.

2. Lack of Community Cohesion

There is a growing trend of social isolation. This leads to a lack of trust, difficulty forming connections, and feelings of insecurity or exclusion. The end results are weakened social bonds and a diminished sense of belonging.

3. Discrimination and Exclusion

Discrimination and exclusion marginalize individuals and create divisions within the population. Fragmented communities lead to increased misunderstandings between groups.

4. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Community members are experiencing mental health challenges, including feelings of unease and anxiety. Access to adequate mental health support and resources remains limited, making it difficult for some to address their needs and protect their rights. A specific emphasis was also placed by the group on challenges related to disabled residents and children with disabilities.¹

5. Education and Continuous Learning

Opportunities for continuous education and training are limited, both for individuals and organizations. This lack of development can lead to gaps in understanding and behavior that can contribute to intolerance.

¹ Council has expressed prior interest in establishing an Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities. Given the interest in disability issues within this group, there may be an opportunity to create a dedicated subcommittee within the Human Relations Committee to address this.

6. Anonymity and Erosion of Accountability

The combination of anonymity and a lack of consistent, organized responses to emerging issues facilitates negative behavior. A lack of accountability contributes to the spread of misinformation and a decline in civility.

While economic struggles were frequently discussed as a contributing factor to these issues, the group concluded that addressing economic matters would not fall within the scope of human relations. The connection between economic challenges and the other identified themes remain an important consideration.

To ensure that a Human Relations Committee reflects Glendale's diverse population and includes voices from key constituencies, the group recommends engaging local organizations to nominate prospective representatives. The group recommends convening multiple organizations that fall into the following categories to self-select a single representative for each:

- Service clubs
- Student and teacher groups
- Advocacy organizations for vulnerable populations
- Disability advocates • Religious organizations
- Armenian groups
- Korean groups
- Latino groups
- Black groups
- Filipino groups
- LGBT+ groups

STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH

Topics discussed by the Human Relations Group impact the wellbeing of residents and businesses in Glendale. Community members helped in the creation of this report. Additional outreach will be conducted based on Council's direction.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA/NEPA)

This item pertains to organizational or administrative activities of the local agency that will not result in direct or indirect physical environmental effects and is therefore exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).

CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE

This item is exempt from campaign disclosure requirements.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. Council may note and file this report.
2. Council may ask staff to conduct additional research.
3. Council may consider any other alternative not proposed by staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

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EXHIBITS/ATTACHMENTS

Exhibit 1: Group Members