



## CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

### AGENDA ITEM

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Report: Direction on the Formation of Human Relations Coalition

- 1) Motion to Note and File Report
- 2) Motion Directing Staff

### COUNCIL ACTION

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**Item Type:** Action Item

**Approved for** 12/5/2023 **calendar**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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On June 13, 2023, the City Council requested that staff bring forward a report on a Human Relations Coalition with the goal of bringing the community together.

Staff has researched the City's past human relations efforts and gathered information from surrounding agencies for Council discussion and consideration.

The report includes three main sections:

Part I: History of Glendale Human Relations Efforts

Part II: Surrounding Agencies Research:

- County of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission
- LA vs. Hate Initiative
- City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission
- City of Burbank Human Relations Council
- City of Pasadena Human Relations Commission
- Department of Justice, Community Relations Service

Part III: Options for Glendale

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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Provide direction on Council's preferred format for bringing the community together. Options include launching a public outreach campaign, forming a volunteer Coalition, establishing a formal City commission or adding human relations to an existing City Commission's purview.

## **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

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### **Part I: History of Glendale Human Relations Efforts**

The Glendale Human Relations Council (GHRC) emerged in 1963, responding to President John F. Kennedy's call for community organizations promoting racial harmony. GHRC focused on improving relations between Whites and Blacks. GHRC organized seminars, provided emergency assistance during the 1965 Watts riots, mediated housing issues, and established the interracial Calico Nursery School, influencing the Head Start Program. (See Exhibit 1)

In the early 1970s, GHRC expanded its efforts, sponsoring anti-drug programs and assisting families displaced by the Pacific Park expansion. The mid-1970s marked significant demographic changes in Glendale, and GHRC played a pivotal role in the Glendale Unified School District's bilingual-multicultural education plan, which persists today.

GHRC's involvement waned from 1980 to 1986 but rekindled in response to a well-publicized incident of harassment in 1986. In 1987, the City formed a Human Relations Committee (HRC) within the Police Department, addressing discrimination and harassment. The HRC, composed of volunteers with a city liaison, aimed to maintain a discriminatory-free work environment, achieving milestones like a new employee orientation program and handling discrimination issues.

In 1994, former Mayor Eileen Givens established the Human Relations Coalition to help the Police Department form hate-crime guidelines and to address incidents of racial tension in the community. That same year, the Human Relations Mutual Assistance Consortium (HRMAC) was formed as part of the LA County Human Relations Commission to organize the county's system to provide coordinated planning and service delivery when there was a need. It began with 10 cities—including Glendale—grew to 25 cities.

The year 2000 saw heightened community tensions after a stabbing incident involving 12th grade Hoover High School student. The Human Relations Coalition, initially with 40 members, dwindled to 12 by 2004, leading to its disbandment.

In 2008, the City Council considered re-establishing human relations efforts, opting for facilitated community discussions over a formal Coalition after a roundtable discussion hosted by the Mayor. See Exhibit 2 for Glendale News Press articles titled, "Council aims to nix tensions" dated July 5, 2008 and "Drayman changes course on relations" dated November 1, 2008.

Exhibit 3 is a timeline of the past 60 years related to Glendale human relations efforts.

## **Part II: Surrounding Agencies Research**

Staff has researched, contacted, and reviewed information from the County of Los Angeles, City of Los Angeles, City of Burbank, City of Pasadena, and U.S. Department of Justice to have a better understanding of the various Coalition structures and programs. The following is a summary of each agency's Human Relations effort:

### County of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission

Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission has been in existence for 75 years. Each County Supervisor appoints three Commissioners who serve multi-year terms. The 15-member Commission meets monthly. A designated team in the County's Department of Workforce Development, Ageing, and Community Services executes the Commission's work. One of the Commission's signature projects is the annual Hate Crime Report. The 2022 report will be made public later this month.

The Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission is dedicated to promoting positive human relations in a diverse, multicultural county. The Commission works to develop programs that proactively address racism, homophobia, religious prejudice, linguistic bias, anti-immigrant sentiment, and other divisive attitudes that can lead to intercultural tension, hate crimes, and related violence. Partnering with law enforcement, schools, cities, community-based organizations, youth, academics, policy makers, businesses, and other leaders, the Commission brings key players together to resolve immediate intercultural conflicts and to work toward the longer term aim of eradicating bias and prejudice.

The Commission has a three-year strategic plan with specific goals such as:

1. Responding to emerging human relations issues and cultural shifts.
2. Increasing equity and justice in LA County's criminal justice system.
3. Documenting, preventing, and responding to hate.
4. Engaging internal and external stakeholders with a comprehensive communications strategy.
5. Build capacity of La County agencies, cities, and organizations to advance equity and promote positive human relations.

### LA vs. Hate Initiative

In 2018, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors created the anti-hate campaign that has become the LA vs. Hate program, which is under the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. The LA vs. Hate program is a collaboration among County and community organizations to support residents of the County with a focus on developing programming and a system to reduce and prevent hate crimes and incidents, including bullying, harassment, and verbal abuse. By tracking and reporting hate incidents, this program ensures that resources are allocated effectively and that those targeted by hate receive the support they need. Anyone can report an act of hate and receive free and confidential support by calling 2-1-1, or by filing a report online at [www.LAvsHate.org](http://www.LAvsHate.org). The program:

- Promotes positive messaging on the importance of building inclusion and respect for all County residents and the need to report hate.
- Created and manages a reporting infrastructure through 211LA for reporting hate acts.
- Supports persons targeted by hate with case management services and resources.
- Targets community responses based on where and with whom hate acts are being reported geographically and by social sector.

Exhibit 4 summarizes ways local governments can get involved in the LA vs. Hate initiative:

#### City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission

The City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission is a mayor-appointed advisory board, promoting intergroup peacebuilding, equity, and human rights in the City of Los Angeles. It was established in 1966 following the Watts Civil Unrest and created a pathway for communication of local community concerns to be expressed to city leadership. The Commission meets on a monthly basis and consists of eight members including a president and vice president and is overseen by an Executive Director.

The commission was brought under the organizational structure of the recently formed Civil + Human Rights Equity Department (LA City Rights) focused on reducing bias and injustice. The department's work is focused on equity and empowerment, racial equity, hate prevention, upward mobility programming and youth programming. The Commission sees itself as a bridge between the community and the City when dealing with conflict.

Some of their programs include:

- LA Civil Rights Civil Rights Enforcement: Investigates discrimination in the private sector areas of commerce, education, employment and housing and issues penalties to violators.
- LA Civil Rights LA For All Campaign: Citywide anti-hate campaign Public Service Announcement and programming.
- LA Civil Rights L.A. REPAIR Participatory Budgeting
- LA Civil Rights Peace & Healing Centers

Exhibit 5 includes a summary of the Department's programs and initiatives.

#### City of Burbank Human Relations Council

The Burbank Human Relations Council (BHRC) was founded in 1958 as a community-based organization seeking to eliminate barriers that separate people from each other and build bridges of understanding. BHRC is not funded by the City of Burbank and is an all-volunteer, fully independent non-profit with 60 members. The membership fee is \$20 per year.

BHRC partners with the LA County Human Relations Commission, Burbank Police Department and Family Service Agency of Burbank to track hate crimes and incidents and offers assistance to victims. BHRC also works with Burbank Unified School District and the City of Burbank and the community to investigate and moderate intergroup conflict.

BHRC's goals are: 1) To create an attitude and environment that is open and accepting of every person without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or age, 2) To promote understanding and cooperation among diverse groups that compose the community, and 3) To study and seek ways to moderate or eliminate intergroup tension.

#### City of Pasadena Human Relations Commission

The City of Pasadena Human Relations Commission's purpose is to aid the City in achieving better human relations in City government, and to provide assistance to private persons and groups in promoting good will and better relations among all people. The Commission consists of 9 members which are nominated by 7 council members and the Mayor. The remaining one at-large member can be appointed by any council member or the Mayor. Commission terms are for three years, limited to two consecutive terms and all nominations are subject to ratification by the full City Council.

Commission objectives are to advise and engage City Council, inform and engage the public, collaborate with private persons and groups and improve effectiveness of the Human Relations Commission. The Commission meets once a month and has a staff representative and a recording secretary to assist with the commission meetings.

One of the Commission's initiatives is the "Pasadena United Against Hate" campaign that takes place each November. This campaign resulted from Pasadena's collaboration with LA vs. Hate. It is intended to be a community-driven approach to empower people to unite against, report, and resist hate.

#### Department of Justice, Community Relations Service (CRS)

Established by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and expanded in 2009 by the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service (CRS) acts as "America's Peacemaker" for communities facing tension based on differences. CRS services aim to empower local communities to independently prevent and resolve conflicts through problem solving, increased knowledge, and improved communication.

CRS offers facilitation, mediation, training, and consultation services to enhance community problem-solving abilities, build capacity to address conflict, tension, and hate crimes. Programs strengthen community-law enforcement partnerships and improve conflict resolution among student leaders. CRS aims to foster understanding, share resources and best practices, and support communities in implementing solutions. The programs offered by CRS are included in Exhibit 6.

A summary table listing the different organizational structures of the surrounding agencies is shown in Exhibit 7.

### **Part III: Options for Glendale**

Council may consider one of the following six options:

- A. Launch a public outreach campaign aimed at bringing the community together without forming a Coalition or commission.
- B. Create an all-volunteer based Coalition comprised of community members with no city staff/liaison (similar to Burbank)
- C. Create a formal Coalition with a specified scope and a designated timeframe (similar to the Blue Ribbon Pension Review Coalition)
- D. Create a formal Commission/Coalition with members appointed by the City Council and subject to the Brown Act with a dedicated City staff (similar to the City's existing Boards/Commissions)
- E. Same as option D with additional seats available for community stakeholders such as the Glendale Unified School District, Glendale Community College, nonprofit and social service agencies.
- F. Add Human Relations scope to an existing City Board/Commission. Options include the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission or the Commission on the Status of Women.

#### **STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH**

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Staff contacted the following agencies for information: County of Los Angeles, City of Los Angeles, City of Burbank, City of Pasadena, Department of Justice and the YMCA of Glendale, given their specific interest in this topic.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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There is no cost associated with this report. If Council desires to launch a campaign or form a Coalition or commission with dedicated staff support, then fiscal impacts will be realized and will be presented to Council at that time.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA/NEPA)**

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N/A

#### **CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE**

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This item is exempt from campaign disclosure requirements.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

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Alternative 1: Note and file this report.

Alternative 2: Direct staff to conduct additional research and/or outreach.

Alternative 3: Direct staff on the preferred option as listed above in the "Part III, Options for Glendale" Section.

Alternative 4: Council may choose another alternative not proposed by staff.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION**

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**Approved by:**

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., City Manager

## **EXHIBITS/ATTACHMENTS**

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- Exhibit 1: History of Glendale's Human Relations Efforts
- Exhibit 2: Glendale News Press articles, "Council aims to nix tensions" - 7/5/2008 and "Drayman changes course on relations" - 11/1/2008
- Exhibit 3: Timeline of Glendale Human Relations Efforts, 1963 to 2023
- Exhibit 4: LA vs. Hate – Opportunities for Local Government to Get Involved
- Exhibit 5: City of Los Angeles Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department Programs
- Exhibit 6: US Department of Justice – Community Relations Service Programs
- Exhibit 7: Human Relations Efforts of Surrounding Agencies Summary Table