

Hello Mr. Mayor,

As a newly formed committee, we first want to acknowledge that the Equity, Access & Rights Advisory Board is still in the process of building cohesion among members from diverse backgrounds by fostering mutual understanding of the different perspectives represented on the committee. In this regard, we are prioritizing defining our scope of work and establishing equitable procedures that are both impactful and accessible. Emphasizing equity, access, and rights, the board seeks to ensure that our practices and procedures embody these values. This includes creating shared agreements within the committee, ensuring accessibility in agendas and meetings, and developing procedures to effectively address member comments. While we continue with this foundational work, we are proposing specific actions for inclusion in the city's comprehensive plan update.

Using the EAR Charter (Resolution 23-027) as the guideline for our proposed focus areas, we specifically recommend:

****SECTION 2. SCOPE OF WORK AND TASK DESCRIPTIONS****

2. Serve as the resident advisory board regarding the following:

a. Access to staff and the City Council for community members to raise concerns about equity and rights.

b. Outreach and collaboration with the community, community organizations, and other jurisdictions, including maintaining a list of outside resources to assist community members.

5. Propose to City Council, and when directed, convene public listening sessions on difficult community issues and recommend equitable and effective actions.

Proposal: Conduct community landscape analysis of equity, access, & rights efforts and projects. Collaborate with existing organizations and community members who are already working on relevant issues. This includes engaging with the comprehensive planning process and conducting community-informed listening sessions to understand community needs better. Additionally, this involves making surveys and future engagement events more accessible by promoting them through diverse channels and networks. Hosting these engagement and listening sessions will also help inform the development of an outside resource list to assist community members.

f. Barriers identification and possible solutions for participation in City government and programs.

Proposal: Identify barriers through community engagement, surveys, and listening sessions, and develop solutions to ensure meetings are accessible physically, digitally, and through translation services. This includes providing captions for Zoom meetings, translators for ESL (English as a Second Language) speakers, and sign language interpreters. Addressing these barriers will facilitate greater participation in government processes by diverse community members.

4. Formulate recommendations to City Council, staff, and other advisory boards regarding equity, access, and rights education, training, and resources.

Proposal: Implement a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) organizational assessment to evaluate the current EAR landscape within city operations and identify areas for improvement. This includes DEI training for city council members, advisory board members, and city employees to foster a more inclusive environment. The assessment will help identify overlooked issues (blind spots) and inform EAR board recommendations for subsequent training and education opportunities.

We kindly request that these proposals be considered for integration into the city's comprehensive plan update. Please let us know if you require any additional information or clarification.

Regards,

Cameron Jones (He/Him)
Equity, Access & Rights Advisory Board
Co-Chair

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Equity, Access & Rights Advisory Board
Co-Chair