

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

**Wednesday, October 29, 2025
4:00 PM**

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission is to promote a community of harmony and respect for the rights and dignity of all.

CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof, the Human Rights Commission will hold a regular meeting on Wednesday, October 29th, 2025, at 4:00pm in City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

ROLL CALL:

PUBLIC INPUT (if anyone wishes to address the Commission):

SETTING THE AGENDA: (This is an opportunity to approve the regular agenda as presented or add/delete an Agenda item by a majority vote of the Commission members present.)

PRESENTATION:

- [1.](#) Jaci David, Verweven Strategies, LLC

APPROVE MINUTES:

- [2.](#) Approve September 24th, 2025, Minutes

FINANCIALS:

- [3.](#) Review October Financials - No Change

BUSINESS:

- [4.](#) Review Bylaws & City Ordinances
- [5.](#) Workplan
6. Review 2026 Workplan Worksession
- [7.](#) Discuss Green Voices/Story Stitch & Braver Angels Workshop
- [8.](#) Itasca Housing Resource Team IHRT/Hunger & Homeless Awareness Week

UPDATES:

9. Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration

- [10.](#) CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson
Ordinance WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
Interfaith WG: Commissioner Grossman

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

ADJOURN:

Verweven Strategies proposes this work with the Human Rights Commission of the City of Grand Rapids, MN. Each project is a unique body of work and can be contracted accordingly.

Refreshed mission/purpose documents to guide Commission's work.

The City of Grand Rapids established the Human Rights Commission in 2004 to aid and advise the City Council in ensuring all citizens equal opportunity in those areas protected by law.

The mission and purpose for the commission have not been updated in recent memory. The context for the work of the Human Rights Commission is constantly evolving in response to forces within the Grand Rapids community and forces across the globe.

We propose supporting the development of a shorter term, practical vision grounded in what the Commission hopes to accomplish in the next 3-5 years. We will engage the commission in an discussion that does the following:

- Ensure the commission remains relevant, ensuring all citizens equal opportunity under the law.
- Unites and energizes commissioners behind a shared and renewed sense of purpose.
- Provides principles to guide commissioners in decisions about resources.
- Establishes foundation for work plan by addressing the question: What do we hope will be different in Grand Rapids in 3 years because we do this work?

Budget – \$1500 (10 hours @\$150 (discounted from \$175), 3 hours donated)

Planning – 5 hours

Meeting – 4 hours (includes set up and take down)

Notes – 4 hours (includes time for language revision if needed)

Support development of a framework for analyzing issues brought before the commission

The mission of the Human Rights Commission is broad. The commission seeks to better focus their work, given their limited capacity. The commission currently lacks a processes that allow them to focus their work and clearly articulate priorities.

Verweven Strategies proposes supporting the Commission chair in the development of processes for determining when and how to engage on specific Human Rights issues facing the City of Grand Rapids. The processes will include clear and transparent decision-making

procedures and a framework for planning to achieve objectives. When the processes are implemented, the residents of Grand Rapids will more clearly understand the commission's work and priorities.

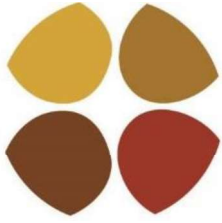
The completed process will allow the commission to rate specific issues brought before them on a scale of "monitor, support, advocate, or lead". This process provides a way for the commission to consider issues of urgency and capacity when engaging in their work.

Budget – 10 hours of Pro Bono work completed in the fall of 2025.

Support implementation of Framework

In 2026, Verweven Strategies will support the work of the commission in implementing the developed framework through a series of work sessions and community meetings.

We anticipate this to be 20 hours of work. 10 hours at my discounted rate of \$150 per hour and 10 hours pro-bono.



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 24, 2025
4:00 PM

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission is to promote a community of harmony and respect for the rights and dignity of all.

CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof, the Human Rights Commission will hold a regular meeting on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 4:00pm in City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order at 4pm by Commission Chair Erickson.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

Commissioner Angella Erickson
Commissioner Doug Learmont
Commissioner Amy Blomquist
Commissioner Ronald Grossman
Commissioner Julee Jackson
Council Representative Molly MacGregor
Commissioner Janet Miller
City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle

ABSENT

Commissioner Dokken
Commissioner Meittunen

PUBLIC INPUT (if anyone wishes to address the Commission):

Reverend Sally Cummings of the Christ Episcopal Church addressed the Commission regarding the vandalism of Pride banners and flags around the city of Grand Rapids. There have been three other churches that have had this type of vandalism. There is an open investigation with the Grand Rapids Police Dept.

SETTING THE AGENDA: (This is an opportunity to approve the regular agenda as presented or add/delete an Agenda item by a majority vote of the Commission members present.)

Motion made by Commissioner Blomquist, Seconded by Council Representative MacGregor to add an item under the Workplan (#4) to discuss a Worksession for the 2026 Workplan. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller.

PRESENTATION:

None scheduled.

APPROVE MINUTES:

1. Approve Minutes from August 27, 2025

Motion made by Commissioner Grossman, Seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the August 27, 2025 Minutes. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller

FINANCIALS:

2. Approve the September 2025 Financials

No approval needed as per City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle.

BUSINESS:

3. Review Bylaws & City Ordinance Documents

City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle started the discussion by giving some background. The By-Laws are now 20 years old and that he would like some input to any changes/deletions or modifications that the Human Rights Commission would like to see. He asked that Commissioners to review the documents. Once the Commission has reviewed and decided on any modifications, he will push to the City Council.

Some examples of suggested modifications mentioned by the Commissioners so far were:

- Consistent language, City Ordinance matching the State's,
- Attendance - add excused absences,
- Add Training & Development to Article 10,

The Commission decided to set up an Ordinance Work Group consisting of City Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Learmont and Commission Chair Erickson.

4. Workplan

The Commission discussed using a professional service, a consultant to assist with their vision, purpose and community engagement for the 2026 Workplan, Councilmember MacGregor will make an inquiry.

4A. The Commission also decided to check for availability to use the Council Chambers for a Worksession for the 2026 Workplan on Wednesday, Oct 22nd, 2025, from 4-6pm. One item to add to the 2026 Workplan and earmark \$1,500 in funds for the 2026 Housing Panel. The Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority who just had a meeting said that November is National Hunger and Awareness Month. Councilmember MacGregor will contact Diane

Larson, Executive Director at the Itasca County HRA about the Housing Panel in 2026.

UPDATES:

5. Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration

One item that was suggested to add to the 2026 Workplan and earmark \$1,500 in funds is the 2026 Housing Panel. The Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority who just had a meeting said that November is National Hunger and Awareness Month. Councilmember MacGregor will contact Diane Larson, Executive Director at the Itasca County HRA about the Housing Panel in 2026.

6. League of MN Cities-Braver Angels Workshop & Annual Conference

Councilmember MacGregor said that it was good to do the LMC meeting, there were many suburbs of the metro area there. She also suggests that this Commission should still do a Braver Angels workshop in 2026.

7. CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
 ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
 Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
 City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson

CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
 Draft of the Community Needs Assessment Survey Report was shown to the Commission.

ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
 City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle, suggests that the ADA document that this work group did, go to the City Council in December.

City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle excused himself at 5:35pm.

Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
 At this time, the Anishinaabe Education did not confirm a need for support for the Indigenous People's Day Event at MN North. The Commission still intends on supporting this Event in the future but would need to know needs for the event prior to it for a budgeted reimbursement.

City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson
 Commissioner Jackson reviewed the changes and it is ready to go.

Motion made by Commissioner Miller, Seconded by Commissioner Blomquist to send out the Survey. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller

8. Community Events

Commissioner Blomquist stated that there is a Kootasca Event tomorrow at the Cohaus, and that to pre-register, they can check their website for information.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

BUSINESS:

3. Review Bylaws & City Ordinances
4. Workplan
5. Review 2026 Workplan Worksession

UPDATES:

6. Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration
7. Work Groups
 - CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
 - ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
 - Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
 - City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson
 - Ordinance WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Erickson & Learmont
 - Interfaith WG: Commissioner Grossman

ADJOURN:

Motion made by Commissioner Jackson, Seconded by Council Representative MacGregor to adjourn at 5:45pm. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JULY 31, 2025

SUBSIDIARY	ACCOUNT	NUMBER	ENTITY	DATE	MEMO	AMOUNT
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Government Budget #61		1/1/2025		\$ 7,500.00
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #280092	V04393 TREASURE BAY PRINTING	2/4/2025	NAMEPLATES BLOOM/MEITTUNEN	\$ 43.00
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #2025 MM/JG EVENT	V00073 JUDY GARLAND CHILDRENS MUSEUM	4/30/2025	BRONZE EVENT SPONSORSHIP	\$ 500.00
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #050125	V04318 KOOTASCA COMMUNITY ACTION INC	5/1/2025	JUNETEENTH FREEDOM WALK/PICNIC	\$ 500.00
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #202504	V00072 ITASCA PRIDE	5/8/2025	ITASCA PRIDE SPONSORSHIP 6-22	\$ 1,000.00
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #73091.00	V00090 ASSOCIATION OF MN COUNTIES	5/14/2025	25 5-14 JJACKSON HRC TRAINING	\$ 30.00
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #73092.00	V00090 ASSOCIATION OF MN COUNTIES	5/14/2025	25 5-14 SWEITTUNEN HRC TRAININ	\$ 30.00
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #062225	V00092 ANGELLA ERICKSON	6/22/2025	STX PAID	\$ 5.33
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #062225	V00092 ANGELLA ERICKSON	6/22/2025	6-22-25 5661 PRIDE BRKFST ICE	\$ 4.98
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #062225	V00092 ANGELLA ERICKSON	6/22/2025	6-22-25 2648 PRIDE BRKFST ICE	\$ 4.98
City of Grand Rapids	003225 003225 - Human Rights Commission	Bill #062225	V00092 ANGELLA ERICKSON	6/22/2025	6-20-25 #04565 PRIDE BREAKFAST	\$ 191.15
BUDGET BALANCE REMAINING						\$ 5,190.56

Subtract \$21.50 for Treasure Bay from 8-27-25,
which makes the Budget Balance \$5,169.06 at the
end of August.

GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

AMENDED BYLAWS OF

ARTICLE ONE

The office of the Commission shall be located in the City Hall, City of Grand Rapids, County of Itasca, State of Minnesota.

ARTICLE TWO

The Commission shall meet monthly at such time and place as agreed upon by a majority of the Commission. Meetings shall be rescheduled when they conflict with major holidays. The chair or any two commissioners together may call special meetings of the Commission as deemed appropriate, on 72 hours written notice to all members of the Commission. No business shall be conducted at a special meeting that was not state in the written notice of the special meeting. All notices of meetings shall comply with the Minnesota's open meeting law.

ARTICLE THREE

The Commission has nine commissioners, there were originally seven commissioners but that number was modified by the City Council on August 8th, 2005. Each commissioner shall have been appointed by the Grand Rapids City Council and the normal term of office shall be three years, with each of three classes of three commissioners each having staggered terms. Commissioners who are appointed to the Commission to fill an unexpired term shall be appointed to the unexpired portion of the previous commissioner's term.

ARTICLE FOUR

Each commissioner present shall be entitled to one vote in the actions and decisions of the Commission. A quorum is necessary in all voting by the Commission. A majority of commissioners shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Commission. Any action taken or decision made must be by a majority vote of commissioners present.

ARTICLE FIVE

The elective officers of the Commission shall be a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary and a treasurer. The election of officers shall take place annually at the time and place of the March meeting of the Commission. A candidate for office must be nominated by a commissioner, seconded by at least one other commissioner, and the officer nominee must

agree to hold such position. Any commissioner shall be eligible for office, but only commissioners who are present shall be entitled to vote. Candidates who receive a majority of votes so cast shall be elected.

ARTICLE SIX

The chair shall be the chief officer of the Commission. The chair shall perform or delegate to the vice-chair all duties necessarily incident to the office including but not limited to, organizing meetings, meeting with outside community organizations or persons, and providing overall leadership for the Commission. In the event the chair is absent from a meeting or unable to attend to a duty, the vice-chair shall fill in for the chair. In the event both the chair and vice-chair are unable to attend a meeting, a temporary chair shall be elected by a majority of commissioners present. The chair shall have the authority to appoint commissioners to task-focused committees. Said committees shall follow the requirements on Minnesota's Open Meeting law.

ARTICLE SEVEN

The vice-chair shall perform the duties of the chair in the absence or at the request of the chair. The vice-chair shall assist the chair in planning, administering and conducting Commission business.

ARTICLE EIGHT

A city-designated administrative assistant shall be responsible for recording meetings of the commission and maintaining a roll of commission members, however, in the absence of a city administrative assistant, the secretary shall keep a complete record of all proceedings of the Commission and the roll of the members of the Commission. The secretary shall also perform all other duties usually pertaining to the position of secretary, and shall include responsibility for commission communications including writing applications for grants or cooperative activities for special projects or activities, including working with the treasurer on the related financial aspects thereof. In the event the secretary is absent from a meeting, the chair shall appoint a secretary pro tempore to record the proceedings of the Commission meeting. Minutes of each meeting shall be submitted to the City Council, City Administrator and City Clerk by the administrative assistant will be mailed or e-mailed to all commission members by the administrative assistant to all Commission members one week before the next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE NINE

A city-designated administrative assistant shall be responsible for routine treasury functions and financial reporting, however, in the absence of a city administrative assistant, the treasurer shall have access to and report all financial transactions of the Commission and shall submit a report of all disbursements and other commitments of the Commission. The report is to be mailed or e-mailed out with the minutes one week before each meeting

and shall be reviewed at each monthly meeting. The treasurer shall work with the secretary to develop the financial aspects when developing grant requests or commission programs and projects.

ARTICLE TEN

A yearly budget shall be prepared and established by the treasurer in accordance with the regular city budgeting process subject to the agreement of the commission at a regular or special commission meeting for City Council consideration and be subject to City Council approval. Budgeted funds may be used for the following:

1. Workshops for commissioners;
2. Public Relations;
3. Educational purposes;
4. Grants for services with the purpose of promoting Human Rights issues;
5. Participation in organizational events;
6. Enrichments and awards;
7. Memberships in organizations;
8. Per diems for commissioners;
9. Other items deemed appropriate and in conformance with the municipal code.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

At the monthly meetings of the Commission, the order of business shall in general be as follows:

1. Call to order;
2. Welcome guests;
3. Approval of or amendments to meeting agenda;
4. Minutes of preceding meeting and action thereon;
5. Treasurer's report;
6. Correspondence;
7. Public Comments;
8. Old business;
9. New business;
10. Reports on calls and inquiries;
11. Pending complaints;
12. Adjournment.

The sequential order of business may be adjusted or revised by the commission near the beginning of each meeting during agenda approval.

ARTICLE TWELVE

Every member of the Commission shall be required to attend at least seventy five percent of all meetings each calendar year. Commission members who are unable to meet the attendance requirement will be deemed to have resigned from the Commission. Any member of the Commission may voluntarily terminate membership by submitting a written resignation to the chair and the City Council.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

These Bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the commissioners, at any regular meeting of the Commission, provided notice of such amendment or amendments and the nature thereof shall have been given to the members at least one month prior to the date of the meeting at which said amendment or amendments are to be presented for consideration. The proposed amendment(s) must meet with the approval of the Grand Rapids City Council.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

If any provisions of these Bylaws with respect to the objectives or activities of the Commission as established by Ordinance No. 04-05-09 dated May 24, 2004 establishing the Commission, or with Grand Rapids Municipal Code DIVISION 6 – HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION Sections 2-301, 2-302, 2-304, then the provisions of the city ordinance and municipal code shall prevail unless and until such city ordinance and municipal code have been duly amended.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

The foregoing constitute the Bylaws of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission as amended at the regular meeting of the commissioners, duly held on September 26, 2018.

ADOPTED AND PASSED BY THE City Council of the City of Grand Rapids on the 22nd day of October, 2018.

Dale Adams, Mayor

Attest:

Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk

Councilor Zeige introduced the following Ordinance and moved for its adoption:

ORDINANCE NO. 18-10-08

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING GRAND RAPIDS MINNESOTA MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 2,
ARTICLE V. – BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, DIVISION 6 - HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Section 1. Grand Rapids City Code is hereby created by adding the following Section 1 entitled 'Human Rights Commission':

"SEC. 1. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.

Subd. 1. Establishment and Composition. A Human Rights Commission, composed of seven (7) members, is hereby established for the purpose of securing for all citizens freedom from discrimination:

- (1) In employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age;
- (2) In housing and real property because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and familial status;
- (3) In public accommodations because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, and disability;
- (4) In public services because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, and status with regard to public assistance; and
- (5) In education because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age. Such discrimination threatens the rights and privileges of the inhabitants of this state and menaces the institutions and foundations of democracy.

It is also the purpose of the Human Rights Commission to protect all persons from wholly unfounded charges of discrimination. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as restricting the implementation of positive action programs to combat discrimination.

It is also the purpose of the Human Rights Commission to secure for all citizens full participation in the affairs of the City by assisting the Minnesota Department of Human Rights in implementing State laws against discrimination and by advising the Council in long-range programs to improve community relations in the City of Grand Rapids.

Members shall be appointed by the Grand Rapids City Council for indefinite terms. An Administrative Assistant who is a permanent City staff person shall, and the City Attorney may, function as ex officio members of the Commission. It is desirable that Commission members be representative of the broad spectrum of the citizens of the City. Commission members should be willing to attend training sessions for the purpose of facilitating the discharge of their duties. Members shall serve without compensation.

Subd. 2. Meetings. Regular meetings shall be scheduled on a quarterly basis to handle regular Commission business and further efforts of information dissemination. Special meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson. Such business meetings shall be open for public attendance. Minutes shall be kept of all Commission proceedings. The Administrative Assistant shall be responsible for all minute and record-keeping duties. The Commission shall adopt its own bylaws after approval by the City Council.

Subd. 3. Quorum. No meeting shall be conducted by the Commission without a quorum, being a majority of all members, being present. The concurring vote of a majority of the Commissioners present shall be necessary for any action.

Subd. 4. Purpose and Duties of the Commission. The Human Rights Commission shall have the following purpose and duties:

- A. To initiate, implement, and administer the policies and regulations of the City with respect to preventing and prohibiting all unfair discriminatory practices based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, and disability status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age.
- B. To assess the human relations and civil rights needs of the community and to advise the administration and the City Council of the results of these assessments.
- C. To cooperate with other groups and governmental agencies concerned with human rights.
- D. The Human Rights Commission will not participate in the investigation, nor opinion rendering of human rights violation complaints. They will simply refer such matters to the Minnesota Department of Human Service.
- E. To take positive measures to disseminate the nondiscriminatory policies of the City with respect to all unfair discriminatory practices by conducting public information meetings.
- F. To initiate data collection and evaluation activities that will identify minority and low-income concentrations within the City, and to prepare recommendations for submission to the planning Commission and Council that will contribute to lessening such concentrations, strengthen the fair housing policies of the City, and eliminate discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, sex national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age.
- G. The commission shall have the power to seek outside funding sources in addition to any resources supplied by the City to assist in its mission. All outside monies or grants received by the commission are subject to the City's Ordinance provisions, as well as within the discretion of the City Council to accept or reject.

Subd. 5. Duties of the Administrative Assistant. The duties of the City staff person designated as Administrative Assistant to the Commission by the Mayor shall be:

- A. To act as the authorized liaison representative of the Commission, both with complainants and the public in general for dissemination of non-discriminatory policies.
- B. In consultation and cooperative with the City Attorney, to interview and evaluate complainant charges of discriminatory acts, advise the complainant of his/her rights, procedures for redress, responsibilities of the Commission and disposition alternatives in the case.
- C. To take minutes and keep official records of all Commission proceedings, and to function as correspondent for such communications with Federal and State agencies as are directed by the Commission.
- D. To conduct, or arrange to have conducted, such socio-economic research as is authorized by the Commission to enable the Commissioners to function affirmatively and effectively in implementing the non-discriminatory policies of the City.

Subd. 6 Budget. The Human Rights Commission must establish a yearly budget for Grand Rapids City Council's consideration and approval. This budget must be submitted in accordance with the regular Grand Rapids City budgeting process on a yearly basis and it is to cover all expenses including but not limited to legal services, staffing, and all expenses related to publication or promotion of the commissions activities.

Section 2. After adoption, signing and attestation, this ordinance shall be published once in the official newspaper of the City and shall be in effect on and after the date following such publication.

ADOPTED AND PASSED BY THE City Council of the City of Grand Rapids on the 22 day of October, 2018.


Dale Adams, Mayor

Attest:


Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk

Councilor Connelly seconded the foregoing ordinance and the following voted in favor thereof: Christy, Connelly, Zeige, Adams; Opposed: None, whereby the ordinance was declared duly passed and adopted.

DIVISION 6. - HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Sec. 2-301. - Establishment and composition.

- (a) A human rights commission is hereby established for the purpose of securing for all citizens freedom from discrimination:
 - (1) In employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age;
 - (2) In housing and real property because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and familial status;
 - (3) In public accommodations because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, and disability;
 - (4) In public services because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, and status with regard to public assistance; and
 - (5) In education because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age. Such discrimination threatens the rights and privileges of the inhabitants of this state and menaces the institutions and foundations of democracy.
- (b) It is also the purpose of the human rights commission to protect all persons from wholly unfounded charges of discrimination. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as restricting the implementation of positive action programs to combat discrimination.
- (c) It is also the purpose of the human rights commission to secure for all citizens full participation in the affairs of the city by assisting the Minnesota Department of Human Rights in implementing state laws against discrimination and by advising the council in long-range programs to improve community relations in the city.
- (d) Members shall be appointed by the city council for three (3) terms. An administrative assistant who is a permanent city staff person shall, and the city attorney may, function as ex officio members of the commission. It is desirable that commission members be representative of the broad spectrum of the citizens of the city. Commission members should be willing to attend training sessions for the purpose of facilitating the discharge of their duties. Members shall serve without compensation.

(Ord. No. 04-05-09, § 1(1), 5-24-2004; Ord. No. 05-08-13, 8-8-2005)

Sec. 2-302. - Meetings.

- (a) Regular meetings of the human rights commission shall be scheduled on a monthly basis to handle regular commission business and further efforts of information dissemination. Special meetings shall be held at the call of the chair. Such business meetings shall be open for public attendance. Minutes shall be kept of all commission proceedings. The administrative assistant shall be responsible for all minute and record-keeping duties. The commission shall adopt its own bylaws after approval by the city council.
- (b) No meeting shall be conducted by the commission without a quorum, being a majority of all members, being present. The concurring vote of a majority of the commissioners present shall be necessary for any action.

(Ord. No. 04-05-09, § 1(2, 3), 5-24-2004)

Sec. 2-303. - Purpose and duties.

The human rights commission shall have the following purpose and duties and shall comply with the following:

- (1) To initiate, implement, and administer the policies and regulations of the city with respect to preventing and prohibiting all unfair discriminatory practices based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, and disability status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age.
- (2) To assess the human relations and civil rights needs of the community and to advise the administration and the city council of the results of these assessments.
- (3) To cooperate with other groups and governmental agencies concerned with human rights.
- (4) The human rights commission will not participate in the investigation, nor opinion rendering of human rights violation complaints. It will simply refer such matters to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.
- (5) To take positive measures to disseminate the nondiscriminatory policies of the city with respect to all unfair discriminatory practices by conducting public information meetings.
- (6) To initiate data collection and evaluation activities that will identify minority and low-income concentrations within the city, and to prepare recommendations for submission to the planning commission and council that will contribute to lessening such concentrations, strengthen the fair housing policies of the city, and eliminate discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age.
- (7) The commission shall have the power to seek outside funding sources in addition to any resources supplied by the city to assist in its mission. All outside monies or grants received by the commission are subject to ordinance, as well as within the discretion of the city council to accept or reject.

(Ord. No. 04-05-09, § 1(4), 5-24-2004)

Sec. 2-304. - Duties of the administrative assistant.

The duties of the city staff person designated as administrative assistant to the human rights commission by the mayor shall be:

- (1) To act as the authorized liaison representative of the commission, both with complainants and the public in general for dissemination of nondiscriminatory policies.
- (2) In consultation and cooperative with the city attorney, to interview and evaluate complainant charges of discriminatory acts, advise the complainant of his/her rights, procedures for redress, responsibilities of the commission and disposition alternatives in the case.
- (3) To take minutes and keep official records of all commission proceedings, and to function as correspondent for such communications with federal and state agencies as are directed by the commission.
- (4) To conduct, or arrange to have conducted, such socio-economic research as is authorized by the commission to enable the commissioners to function affirmatively and effectively in implementing the nondiscriminatory policies of the city.

(Ord. No. 04-05-09, § 1(5), 5-24-2004)

Sec. 2-305. - Budget.

The human rights commission must establish a yearly budget for the city council's consideration and approval. This budget must be submitted in accordance with the regular city budgeting process on a yearly basis and it is to cover all expenses including but not limited to legal services, staffing, and all expenses related to publication or promotion of the commission's activities.

(Ord. No. 04-05-09, § 1(6), 5-24-2004)

Secs. 2-306—2-320. - Reserved.



Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission Calendar Year 2025 Work Plan

Prepared in accordance with Commission By-laws, Article 10

2025 QUARTER	GOAL OR ACTIVITY (refer to goal or activity description page for more detail)	ORDINANCE	ACTION TAKEN	EST. COST (See Notes)	ACTUAL
Q1 Jan – March <i>Possible events/ recognitions: International Women’s Day – Black History Month -</i>	Community Needs Work Group Established Work group will review relevant resources and data to recommend actions to the HRC around priority issues.	2-303 (b)(f)	<i>Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist, City staff Pierzina, and Councilor MacGregor</i>		
	Indigenous People’s Day Work group to be established	2-303 ©	<i>Work group established to begin this and Juneteenth work. Had initial meeting in June.</i>		
	Review of Data: - All Commissioners are asked to review the following resources: ALICE – United Way - You can download the 2024 report from this , as well as view area specific details - HRA-PIT Report – <i>To be released</i> - MN Community Civil Rights – <i>To be released</i> KOOTASCA Grand Itasca Community Health Needs Assessment Report	2-303 (a)(b)(f)	<i>Community needs assessment group established</i>		
Quarter Total					
Q2 April – June <i>Possible events/ recognitions: Stomp the Stigma – Mental</i>	Story Stitch Event Connecting Community...		Did not pan out – MacGregor and Erickson tried to engage, not good timing	\$1,500	\$0
	Support Juneteenth Day Event Recognize <i>Freedom Day</i>, including human rights, civil rights, and freedom of discrimination in our community by assisting in public awareness and celebration events	2-303 ©	<i>Work group established to begin this and Juneteenth work</i>	\$500	\$500

<i>Health Awareness Month – Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month – LGBTQ+ Pride Month</i>	- Banner request to city!				
	Support Pride Day Event/s Awareness - Look for opportunities to be involved in and/or support community events, outreach, or publication	2-303 ©	Itasca Pride presented 3/26. Requested funds as well as volunteer hours for community engagement (Pancake bfast provided)	\$1,000	\$1,201.11
	Partner / Community Connection - Review opportunities to cooperate with other groups/governmental agencies concerned with Human Rights	2-303 ©	Partnered with Mobility Mania and Judy Garland for the Guinness World Book attempt – publicity was aimed at bringin awareness to the difficulties in transportation and mobility for those who use wheelchairs/limited mobility Drafted an informational letter and recommendation to be provided to city council.		\$500.00
	Housing - Develop a work group to review possible panel in November - Review / attend HRA event in March	2-303 ©	Diane Larson attended – MacGregor & Erickson meeting w/ in October Diane presented to commission in July, felt we should connect later in the year to look for something this spring		
	Onboarding - Schedule training/speakers/presentations following updated terms and commissioners (March)	Article 10 (1)	Jackson & Meittunen attended braver angels workshop	\$750	\$60
Quarter Total				\$3,750	\$2,261.11

Item 5.

Q3 July – Sept <i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> ADA / Disability Pride month – Hispanic Heritage Month	Commissioner Survey - Develop and deploy survey for the Human Rights Commissioners that could be offered to other City commissions and boards to better understand the diversity of City groups.	Article 10 (1)(3); 2-301©; 2-303(b)(f)	Completed by Jackson & Erickson and passed by commission in August. Needs to be distributed.		
	Interfaith Opportunities - Review and explore possible opportunities with various interfaith groups	2-303 ©	Grossman looking into – established September meeting	\$750	
	Indigenous People's Day	2-303 ©			
	Quarter Total			\$750	\$0.00
Q4 Oct – Dec <i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> (Nov) Native American Heritage Month – International Day of Persons with Disabilities – Human Rights Day	Indigenous People's Day Cosponsor activities or publications to further human rights purposes with regard to indigenous people in the city - Don't forget banner request to City!	2-303 ©	Anishinabe Ed moving to support activities throughout November for Native American Heritage Month. Want to do a festival of nations event NEXT year (just ran out of time this year)	\$1,500	
	2026 Planning & Budgeting - Include presentation to city council		Scheduled for 10/22/2025		
	Housing Panel - Host or support panel on housing/homelessness in November	2-303 ©		\$1,500	
	Quarter Total			\$3,000	\$0.00
	2025 Commission Budget	\$7,500			
	Budgeted Expenditures	\$7,500			
	Additional expenses (costs for printing; nameplates; etc.)	\$69.83			
	TOTAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	\$2,330.94			
	TOTAL BUDGET LEFT AS OF 10/22/2025	\$5,169.06			

Cynthia Lyman

From: Molly MacGregor
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2025 12:22 PM
To: Cynthia Lyman
Cc: Angella Erickson
Subject: links to purchase story stitch partnership

Hi Cindy: Here is the link to membership in Green Voices/Story Stitch:
<https://www.greencardvoices.org/membership/>

The one-year \$99 partnership would get us into the group with support.

As far as I can tell, there is no cost to using Braver Angels, except they would like a \$12 donation. I have signed up for that.

Can we schedule this for discussion Wednesday?

Thanks, Molly

Molly MacGregor | City Councilor

City of Grand Rapids
mmacgregor@grandrapidsmn.gov
cityofgrandrapidsmn.com
Office: 218-326-7600 • Fax: 218-326-7608

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Itasca Housing Resource Team IHRT

Item 8.

***Mission:** Ensure that everyone has a safe and affordable place to live through the development of informed, community-wide, comprehensive response.*

October 21st, 2025

Dear Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission,

We are the Itasca Housing Resource Team. This group consists of local housing providers that help create a housing response system in Itasca County. These organizations include KOOTASCA, AEOA, Northland Counseling Center, Grace House, The Salvation Army, Itasca County HRA, and others. We are writing to you because November is National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Month. During this month, various awareness activities are planned to help increase awareness that hunger and housing instability are present in the Grand Rapids community and across Itasca County. These include readings of the proclamation, the Soup on the Street event at Central School, and encouraging the community to participate in our at-home kindness challenge.

The Itasca County Housing Resource team is seeking financial support to obtain a standing banner and hanging banner for National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Month. All members of IHRT are volunteers and the team has no funding/budget for purchases. All awareness events rely on donations. IHRT is writing to the commission to seek support in obtaining new banners. We were seeking up to \$300 for both banners. We would be asking to reimburse Grace House, as they will purchase the banner on behalf of IHRT.

Thank you for considering supporting this important awareness event.

Sincerely,

Itasca Housing Resource Team

21ST HUNGER AND HOMELESS AWARENESS EVENT

ITASCA COUNTY



National Hunger & Homeless Awareness Week

November 16 – Nov 22, 2025

Hosted by Itasca Housing Resource Team (IHRT)

Wednesday November 19th Central School Grounds

Soup on the Streets

3:00 pm Gathering at Central School Grounds

Reading of Proclamation * Awareness Stand Along the Sidewalk/Hwy 2

Donations Accepted of New Winter Hats, Mittens & Scarves-ALL ages

VARIETIES OF SOUP AND WATER PROVIDED

ALL COMMUNITIES WELCOME

**AT HOME CHALLENGE: Random Acts of Kindness, Share a Meal, Smile or Say Hello,
Donate to the local food shelves. BE KIND**

Community Needs Assessment Summary Report

Prepared for the
GR Human Rights
Comission

Author: Stephanie Meittunen, LGSW, LADC

HOUSING
is a
HUMAN
RIGHT

OVERVIEW

This report summarizes findings from three major community needs assessments conducted in 2023–2024 in Northern Minnesota.

These assessments provide vital insights into the economic, social, and health disparities affecting residents in rural and semi-rural communities, with a particular focus on low-income and marginalized populations.

THEMES

Key issues that emerged across reports



Poverty and Economic Insecurity:

The reports show a significant portion of the population living below the financial threshold needed to meet basic needs.

Mental Health Needs:

Stress and untreated mental health conditions are widespread, particularly in KOOTASCA's report.

Equity Concerns:

Each report highlights racial disparities, with particular concern Native American communities.

Barriers to Healthcare and Resources:

Common barriers include complex systems, lack of trust, and resource navigation.

GICH COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

ALICE REPORT 2024

Item 10.

Completed by: Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital

Method: Surveys, virtual community conversations, and advisory committees. Supplemented with demographic and health equity data.

Priority issues: navigating health resources, addressing structural racism, and building trust and healing.

- 30.2% of the population lives below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line.
- Higher than average food insecurity and unemployment.
- Significant disparities faced by American Indian populations (3.4% of local population vs. 1.2% state average).

Conducted by: United for ALICE, United Way of Minnesota

Method: Utilized census data, labor statistics, and financial modeling to identify households living below the ALICE threshold (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed).

Key Findings:

- 36% of Minnesota households live below the ALICE threshold.
- Rural counties show higher rates of financial hardship.
- Childcare, housing, and healthcare are the top financial burdens.

KOOTASCA COMMUNITY NEEDS

Conducted by: Kootasca Community Action

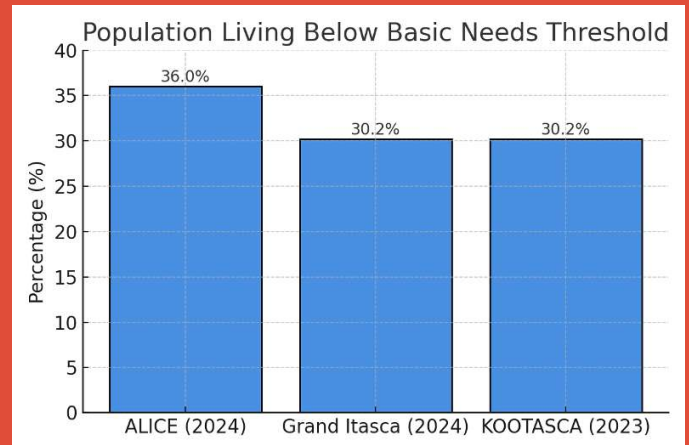
Method: 128 one-on-one interviews with low-income residents, staff surveys, agency data, and U.S. Census review.

Key findings:

- 32% of residents live 200% below the Federal Poverty Line.
- Native American and BIPOC households reported higher rates of bullying, discrimination, and barriers to housing.

Top Issues:

- stress (74%)
- mental health (68%)
- financial instability (65%)



All reports indicate that a significant portion of our area residents are living below the financial threshold needed to meet basic needs.

SOURCES

- 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment: GICH
- KOOTASCA Community Needs Assessment
- ALICE in Minnesota: 2024 Report