



# Human Rights Commission

## 2026 Work Plan



# Background

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## Purpose

The Human Rights Commission was formed in 1968, shortly after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The HRC will fulfill its mission and purpose of aiding and advising the City Council in ensuring equal opportunity in the areas of human rights protected by law and the social standards of the city for all community members in the city of Bloomington. We will do this by identifying work plan goals, along with broader human rights issues, that align with the overall strategic plan of the City of Bloomington. The HRC will work to align the Commission's work plan with the goals and strategies of the Bloomington Tomorrow Together Strategic Plan (BTT) and work to ensure accountability to the Core Values of the plan. The HRC will work to ensure that the City Council's strategic plan does not have adverse effects on the human rights of Bloomington community members. The HRC will partner with other city commissions to ensure our work has the broadest impact. Success or failure of the HRC's work plan goals will be measured against the mission, core values, and strategic objectives of the BTT.

## Duties

According to City Code Section 2.83.01, the Human Rights Commission shall:

- (a) Study and review programs and policies and aid the City Council on enlisting the cooperation of agencies, organizations, and individuals in the city in an active program directed to create equal opportunity and eliminate discrimination and inequalities;
- (b) Advise the City Council on implementing such recommendations as may be appropriate to the city, including, but not limited to, such things as:
  - (1) Specific programs of public information regarding the statutory requirements of the Minnesota Human Rights Act (M.S. Chapter 363A;
  - (2) Comprehensive studies and surveys of practices in the community;
  - (3) Programs of affirmative action to be developed with employers, the housing industry, the educational institutions and governmental agencies;
  - (4) Programs of review to give and gain information regarding compliance with state requirements concerning equal opportunity;
  - (5) Programs designed to alleviate community tension; and
  - (6) Programs designed to create a genuine climate of community readiness to accept orderly and demonstrable change in eliminating barriers of equal opportunity.
- (c) Refer all grievances received involving discrimination occurring within the city to the appropriate state or federal enforcement departments or agencies and make all appropriate reports to the City Council;
- (d) Advise the Bloomington Independent School District No. 271 on matters relating to human rights, in accordance with the resolution of the City Council adopted May 4, 1970;

- (e) Establish committees, as the Commission finds it to be necessary, in the following areas:
  - (1) The various areas of concern under the Minnesota Human Rights Act;
  - (2) Public information;
  - (3) Legislation; and
  - (4) Liaison with other organizations including other city commissions and agencies.
- (f) Perform such other functions concerning human rights as the City Council may from time to time direct.

## 2026 Work Plan

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### Process

The Human Rights Commission developed this work plan during its monthly meetings from October – December 2025. It was approved by City Council on Monday, January 26, 2026.

### Guiding Principles

- Connected to the City’s strategies
- Impact on current policies
- Visible
- Impact on people’s lives
- Success that can be measured

### 2026 Work Plan Focus Areas

Below are the focus areas for the Human Rights Commission in 2026. Work Plan focus areas are aligned with the City’s strategic plan, *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.*, notably the priority for “A Connected, Welcoming Community.”

#### I. Annual Initiatives:

##### A. Proclamations

- Proclamations
  - a) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (January 19, 2026)
  - b) Black History Month (February 2026)
  - c) International Transgender Day of Visibility (March 31, 2026)
  - d) Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (May 2026)
  - e) Pride Month (June 2026)
  - f) International Day of Peace (September 21, 2026)
  - g) Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 – October 15, 2026)
  - h) Native American Heritage Month (November 2026)
  - i) International Human Rights Day (December 10, 2026)
  - j) Additional proclamations may be added throughout the year
- Plans for 2026

- a) Include new proclamation for International Transgender Day of Visibility for March 31, 2026
  - b) Grow publicity of proclamations (explore mediums for promotion)
  - c) Explore criteria and guidance for adding/removing proclamations
  - d) Provide commissioners with list of recent HRC and City proclamations
- B. Omar Bonderud Human Rights Award
  - Plans for 2026
    - a) Begin work in spring to incorporate process improvements
    - b) Improve guidance to submitters
    - c) Provide guidance to reviewers
- C. HRC Correspondence – Document, review, and respond, as appropriate, to all HRC correspondence.
  - Continue existing process in 2026
- D. Boards & Commission – Connect on Board & Commission Connect & collaborative initiatives.
  - Plans for 2026
    - a) Meet expectations of Board & Commission Connect meetings
    - b) All HRC members invited to twice-annual Board & Commission Connect events; goal to have Chair and/or Vice-Chair present
- E. Municipal Equality Index
  - Plans for 2026
    - a) Remain informed of annual assessment

## II. Workgroup Initiatives:


- A. Understand Purpose
  - Plans for 2026
    - a) Provide regular education, which can include speakers at meetings, other educational resource sharing, and packet or library of educational resources for commissioners
    - b) Enhance onboarding and commissioner experience, ensuring new members understand rules and roles; include staff liaison check-in with members
- B. Connect and Engage with the Community
  - Plans for 2026
    - a) Brainstorm with commissioners on how to connect with and be present in community
    - b) Maintain and improve resources for tabling at events, including resources in more languages and more interactive/participatory offerings
- C. Improve Outreach and Communications
  - Plans for 2026
    - a) Promote proclamations more broadly (see: work plan item I.A.)
    - b) Promote HRC and other commissions (e.g. explore communication mediums and content ideas)
- D. Foster Inclusive Community and Cultural Events

- Plans for 2026
  - a) Host Indigenous Film Fest Series with public schools and Parks & Rec
  - b) Explore young adult commissioner project
  - c) Continue Disability Employment Awareness Month education/event
  - d) Consider partnerships with other community organizations and residents
- E. Special opportunities
  - Plans for 2026
    - a) Explore opportunity for policy development or encouragement
    - b) Consider prospect of a themed-year

## Appendix

### Minnesota Human Rights Act

The Minnesota Human Rights Act protects all Minnesotans from discrimination based on protected class and area of protection.



PROTECTED CLASSES	AREAS OF PROTECTION						
	Employment	Housing	Public Places	Government Services	Education	Credit	Business
Race	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Color	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Creed	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Religion	●	●	●	●	●	●	
National Origin	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sex	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Marital Status	●	●	●		●	●	
Disability	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Public Assistance	●	●		●	●	●	
Age	●				●		
Sexual Orientation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Gender Identity	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Familial Status	●	●				●	
Local Human Rights Commission Activity	●						

## Other Prohibited Practices

**Aiding/Abetting and Obstruction:** The Act prohibits a person from aiding in a violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA), coercing a person to violate the law, obstructing a person's compliance with the Act, or interfering with the department's performance of its duties.

**Retaliation:** The Act prohibits retaliation because a person opposed a practice forbidden by the MHRA, filed a charge or participated in a matter brought under the Act; or because a person associated with a person or group of persons who are disabled or of a different race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin.

## 2026 Human Rights Commission Meeting Dates

Below are the approved meeting days for the Human Rights Commission in 2025. Some members of the Human Rights Commission and presenters may participate electronically as permitted by law, Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.021.

Date	Location
January 20, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
February 17, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
March 17, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
April 21, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
May 19, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
June 16, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
July 21, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
August 18, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
September 15, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
October 20, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
November 17, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza
December 15, 2026	Haeg Conference Room, Civic Plaza

*Approved by the Bloomington Human Rights Commission on **December 16, 2025***

*Approved by the Bloomington City Council on \_\_\_\_\_, **2026***