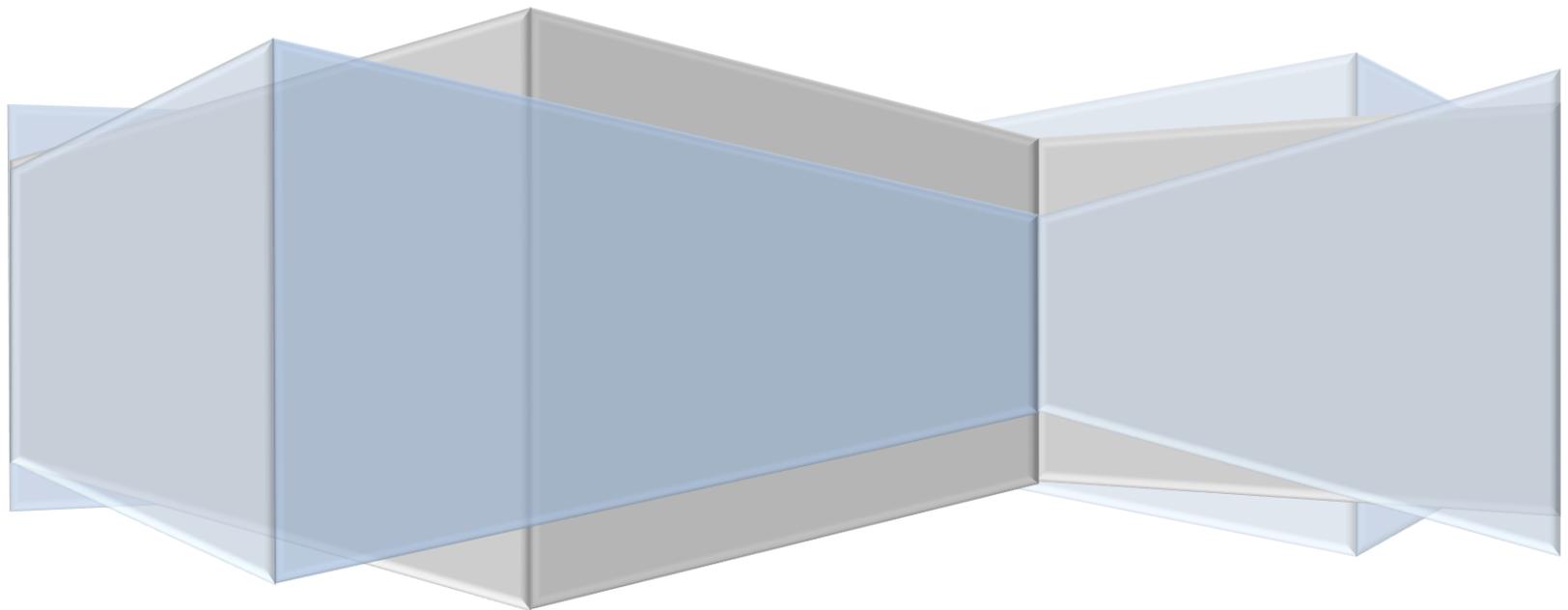


**Austin Human Rights Commission**

# **Welcoming Report**

**Building a Strong and Prosperous Community**

**July 17, 2017**



# Welcoming Report – Executive Summary

---

## Goal

Austin desires to be a “Welcoming Community” where *all* residents feel respected and have equal access to resources and opportunities. The purpose of this report is to identify what Austin is currently doing well *and* what barriers exist to Austin becoming a truly “Welcoming Community”.

## Findings

- Austin’s social and economic future will depend on attracting and retaining a diverse talent base
- Austin has a strong head start in building a Welcoming Community
  - Diversity exists here as the face of Austin has changed substantially in the past 30 years
  - Key stakeholders embrace diversity
- 5 major barriers still exist to turn the vision of welcoming into reality
  1. Lack of interaction between immigrants, refugees, and long-time Austin residents
    - Too few opportunities for cross-cultural understanding & sharing
    - Each group is waiting for the other to approach them
  2. Lack of communication between groups
    - Language barriers preclude groups from easily communicating with each other
    - Informal communication networks don’t intersect
  3. Leadership development in the immigrant and refugee communities
    - Small number of people are relied on for everything, leading to burnout
    - Don’t see leaders from their community in visible positions of power
  4. Lack of available transportation
    - Austin is primarily designed for car travel and is hard to access without one
  5. Lack of available housing
    - Apartment & rental housing is scarce (especially for large families)

## Recommendations

1. City of Austin should create a Strategic Welcoming Plan by the end of 2018
  - Mayor should appoint a 7 person working group with representatives from the Human Rights Commission, City of Austin, and key community stakeholders
  - Purpose will be to establish clear success goals, strategies for achieving those goals, and metrics to track progress that will be reported annually starting in 2019
2. Build leadership capacity of multicultural community by proactively increasing the diversity of City commissions, boards, and taskforces
  - City should appoint at least 5 new qualified multicultural leaders by end of 2018
  - City should actively promote openings and offer training for interested candidates
3. Human Rights Commission should work with key stakeholders to increase exposure between cultures in Austin
  - HRC should present findings to at least 10 community groups by end of 2017
  - HRC should enhance existing and new efforts to lower barriers identified in this report

## Background

We need communities now more than ever. In a 21st century world, the strongest communities will be ones where all people can take part in economic, civic, and social life. These places show it is possible to go beyond fear and even tolerance for a bright future for all. (Welcoming America, 2017) Austin, with our large immigrant and refugee populations can be one of those communities.

**Our community has changed substantially over the past 30 years.** The non-white population has increased from 2% in 1990 to 23% in 2015 (US Census Bureau, 2016). There are now 47 different languages spoken at Austin Public Schools, and more than 50% of the Kindergarten class has been non-white for several years, suggesting that this change will continue (Austin Public Schools, 2017). This increased diversity has helped Austin be a shining growth star in Greater Minnesota, *increasing* our overall population by 4.1% since 2000 (US Census Bureau, 2016).

**Austin community leaders want Austin to be a Welcoming Community for all residents.** Many key stakeholders have embraced diversity, including city government, schools, churches, employers, and non-profits. Apex Austin was formed in 1999 to welcome immigrants and refugees and still meets to offer a place to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion issues in our community. In addition, the Austin City Council approved a resolution in the summer of 2016 to make Austin one of the first two cities in Minnesota to join the Welcome America network of inclusive cities.

**To turn the vision of being a Welcoming Community into reality, we need to understand both what is working *and* the barriers that still exist.** The Austin Human Rights Commission undertook this project to further the understanding of both of those areas. We conducted interviews and focus groups with a variety of stakeholders that reflected the diverse cultures present in Austin. These included both newcomers *and* long-time residents of Austin. We also held a community conversation that was open to the public to gain input into our findings and help shape our final recommendations.

## Definition of a Welcoming Community

A Welcoming Community is “guided by the principles of inclusion and creating communities that prosper because everyone feels welcome”. (Welcome America, 2017) This means that a Welcoming Community seeks to make everyone in the community feel welcome, whether they are a newcomer to Austin or have lived here their entire life.

## Why a Welcoming Community?

Communities are stronger and more prosperous when *all* residents are able to contribute to their maximum potential. Newcomers drive population growth, generate taxes, support the local economy, provide a much needed workforce, and start new businesses.

- **Drive Growth:** Our local population base would be declining without immigrants and refugees. Indeed, domestic migration has been negative in Minnesota for many years, meaning that

international migration is critical to maintaining and increasing our population base (Minnesota State Demographer, 2017)

- **Generate Taxes:** Immigrants and refugees pay \$283 million in taxes annually in Southern Minnesota alone, and \$3.3 billion statewide (Partnership for New American Economy, 2014)
- **Support the Local Economy:** Immigrants and refugees spend \$771 million annually in Southern Minnesota alone, and \$8.9 billion statewide (Partnership for New American Economy, 2014)
- **Provide a Much Needed Workforce:** Minnesota has more available jobs than workers to fill them, a gap this is projected to increase in future years (Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, 2015)
- **Start New Businesses:** Immigrants and refugees bring an entrepreneurial spirit, starting 16,000 new businesses that generate \$289 million in sales. 39% of the Fortune 500 companies in Minnesota were started by immigrants or their children, today providing 264,000 jobs and generating over \$100 billion in sales (Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, 2017)

Clearly, Austin's social and economic future will largely depend on being a Welcoming Community that can attract and retain a diverse and talented base of residents from all walks of life.

## Welcoming Model

There is a general model for becoming a truly Welcoming Community.

Ignorance > Acceptance > Exposure > Inclusion > Welcoming

Our findings are that Austin is in transition from the Acceptance phase to the Exposure phase.

## Key Findings – What's Working?

Austin has a head start in building a Welcoming Community for two major reasons:

**First, diversity already exists here.** The substantial change in Austin's level of diversity over the past 30 years has given our community an opportunity to start understanding and adjusting to the changing face of who makes up that community. It also helps newcomers feel more welcome (at least within their own communities) because there are existing populations of diverse communities already in town. For example, an Anyuak refugee who comes to America from Africa knows that they will be able to find other Anyuaks in Austin.

**Second, key stakeholders are embracing diversity.** Major stakeholders like city government, schools, employers, and non-profits have both expressed support for building a Welcoming Community and taken positive actions to make that vision a reality. Examples include the Austin Public Schools' Success Coach program, the creation of the Welcome Center, and the work of the Austin Police Department to engage with an increasingly diverse community.

## Key Findings – Barriers to Building a Welcoming Community

We identified 5 key barriers that need to be eliminated for Austin to truly become a Welcoming Community.

### **Barrier #1 – Lack of Interaction between Groups**

What we found is that Austin is made up of several different communities that interact either not at all or on a mostly superficial level when they do. Long-time white residents exist within their own micro-communities, Anyuaks interact primarily with Anyuaks, Dinkas primarily with Dinkas, Hispanics primarily with Hispanics, and so on. This disconnect has more to do with unspoken expectations than it does with outright alienation. What we did find was a lack of opportunity to meaningfully interact *between* the different cultures as well as a knowledge gap about cultural differences.

**Through conversations we found that many residents of Austin are willing to welcome newcomers, but have a “...come to me if you need something” mindset.** There is an expectation that immigrants and refugees will bring needs and concerns to them. This is what they believe they would do if they immigrated to another country and therefore this is the reasonable expectation of newcomers to Austin.

This is not an unreasonable expectation, but it highlights a knowledge gap of the immigrant and refugee experience. An Immigrant is an individual who leaves one’s country to settle in another, whereas refugees are defined as persons, who move out of one’s country due to restriction or danger to their lives. An immigrant is someone from a foreign country who relocates to live in another country. Immigrants are usually driven by economic factors, or they want to be close to family. Immigrants can usually find a home in their new country.

Refugees move out of fear or necessity. For example, to flee persecution, or because their homes have been destroyed in a natural disaster. Refugees are forced to relocate for reasons such as fear of persecution due to war, religion or political opinion. Refugees come from refugee camps to a third country. They usually cannot return to their own country. **What is consistent in both groups is natural distrust of groups or individuals in power. This contributes to a reluctance to reach out for help.**

**From the Austin community perspective, many longtime residents expressed a knowledge gap about immigrants and refugees.** They don’t know why Austin is a destination or how to interact with them, and have minimal knowledge about the customs and cultures of newcomers. The difference between immigrant needs and refugee needs was also often misunderstood. Common questions we heard included “where are they from?”, “what draws them to Austin?”, “why do they do X”? Most of these questions reflected a genuine sincerity, with only minimal pockets of hostility. This knowledge gap, however, makes it difficult to easily call up common interests that could provide fertile ground on which to build a relationship.

**We found that rather than being antagonistic toward newcomers, longtime Austin residents are more unsure of how to welcome these cultures that are so different into the greater Austin community while preserving what make Austin special to them.** Many Austinites struggle with how to connect

better to these newcomers or more importantly why connecting better is important. What is in it for them? Why is being a Welcoming Community in their best interest?

**This lack of interaction between groups also exists within different groups of newcomers.** There are many different pockets of newcomers, and most groups have little to no interaction with even each other. Anyuaks have minimal interaction with Hispanics, Karens have minimal interaction with Dinkas, and so on. The same challenge of a lack of shared common experiences and interests (combined with some historical political baggage) exists in these relationships, which makes it difficult for even communities facing similar challenges to work together. This is not a new challenge. For example, in the early United States it was unlikely to see Germans working with Irish, Swedes with Poles, etc.

**Finding ways to create positive interactions and common experiences appears critical to solving this barrier.** Experiences create beliefs, and beliefs drive actions and ultimately results. It is therefore necessary to create new experiences that are highly positive in order to start changing long-held beliefs for both longtime residents and newcomers. Doing so will help change the actions that each group takes, which will ultimately impact the key result of making Austin a more inclusive community.

## **Barrier #2 - Communication**

Increasing interaction between groups is going to require improving communication between those groups. Our research found that communication gaps create a barrier to inclusion in several ways.

**Language is a barrier because it precludes communications.** Communication is essential to understanding and understanding is a prerequisite for trust. The main problem with language is we do not have enough people who speak the languages of newcomers. As a means of communicating values, beliefs and customs, language has an **important** social function and fosters feelings of group identity and solidarity. It is the means by which **culture** and its traditions and shared values may be conveyed and preserved. "**Language** is fundamental to **cultural** identity. (Renate Latimer, 2017) "**If you talk to a man in a language he understands**, that goes to his head. **If you talk** to him in his **language**, that goes to his heart." - Nelson Mandela.

Our expectation seems to be that newcomers will learn to speak English, but we also need people who speak their language. Many newcomers are able to use younger generations to help partially overcome the language challenge, but that doesn't solve the fundamental challenge of individuals being able to communicate with each other without relying on a third party.

**Another communication challenge is that informal networks of communication often don't intersect.** We heard a lot of comments like "people assume that everyone knows", because a lot of communication in a town of Austin's size is done through informal networks. The challenge is that not everyone is part of the same network, and there isn't a good central location for people to get important information. This has become even more challenging with the explosion in the ways to get information in the past 15 years. For example, it used to be easy to get a message to most people in

town by making an announcement in the *Austin Daily Herald* and getting covered by the local TV and radio station. The way that people get their information today, however, is substantially different and that complexity is only multiplied when cultural dimensions are added on. Some people use newspapers, some use TV, some use social media, some use announcements at church, and others use informal networks of friends and acquaintances. We found that a major challenge is that many messages are only communicated across a small number of outlets, which makes it very difficult to get information to people if they are using a different outlet to gain information.

**Cultural and economic considerations also require that communication needs to be done at a time & place that work for everyone.** Events and meetings are often held at the same time that they traditionally have been, on a specific night, at a specific time, at a specific location. The challenge is that this can unintentionally exclude key members of our community. For example, consider an event that is being held on a Tuesday at 7pm on the outskirts of town. This will inherently (and likely unintentionally) exclude anyone who has to work at night or who lacks easy transportation or childcare. One potential solution to this challenge is to mirror the example of Austin Public Schools. They not only now offer parent/teacher conferences during multiple days and times, but have actually shifted away from parent/teacher conferences entirely for Early Childhood Education because they've found it's more effective to go directly to the homes of students instead of asking families to come to them.

### **Barrier #3 – Leadership Development**

The inability to develop a deep talent pool of potential leaders in newcomer communities is a major challenge that needs to be solved for.

**A small number of leaders are relied on for nearly everything within newcomer communities.** There are many outstanding leaders in newcomer communities. The challenge is that these leaders tend to get stretched incredibly thin because they are one of a small number of people who can easily interact in both the traditional Austin community and their own community of newcomers. They end up tasked with an overwhelming burden of helping others while also trying to run their own individual lives, which can create the very natural consequence of burnout. Being able to develop a deeper bench of leaders within the newcomer communities would not only help ease the burden on these current leaders, but would also help increase and strengthen relationships with these communities.

**A challenge to creating this deeper bench is that potential leaders often don't see anyone who looks like them in positions of community leadership.** Role modeling can be a powerful force in helping someone visualize themselves in a position of power. There are, however, very few visible role models within the normal channels of community power that accurately reflect the true population of Austin. The Austin City Council, School Board, and Mower County Commissioners are all 100% white. The vast majority of City Commissions and Boards are white. Most city employees are white. Most teachers are white. This is the natural consequence of Austin being a mostly white community for most of our history and will likely evolve over future generations. However, a truly inclusive community is not content to

simply use the advancement of time as an answer and needs to proactively work to make city institutions more reflective of the overall population.

**Finding ways to proactively build a deep and diverse bench of community leaders is critical to building an inclusive and successful community.** The chances of success are higher when a community closely reflects the population it serves. Leadership diversity creates better understanding and ideas by harnessing multiple viewpoints to create solutions. There are many outstanding newcomers who are hungry to play a positive role in helping Austin maximize its full potential. Proactively identifying and training these emerging leaders will not only build a more inclusive community, it will also improve the ultimate success of our community as a whole.

#### **Barrier #4 - Transportation**

Transportation is another institutional separation area. Americans are increasingly mobile and ever more reliant on automobiles for meeting their travel needs, largely due to transportation policies adopted after World War II that emphasized highway development over public transportation. These and other transportation policies have had inequitable effects on minority and low-income populations, often restricting their ability to access social and economic opportunities, including job opportunities, education, health care services, places of worship, and other places such as grocery stores. Transportation policies limit access to opportunities through direct effects, such as inequitable costs, and indirect effects, such as residential segregation. (Thomas W. Sanchez, 2003)

**Transportation is a challenge in Austin because it is primarily designed for car travel.** It is easy to get around town if you own a car, with ample parking and minimal traffic. The challenge is that someone who doesn't have a car (either because of affordability, experience, or ability) can find it very challenging to get around the community. For example, if a family only has one car and the primary driver is at work it will be very difficult for other members of the family to get to a game or meeting that they can't easily walk or bike to. This is even more difficult in the winter, when even walking or biking may not be available options. Options like the SMART (Southern Minnesota Area Rural Transit) bus do a nice job helping to lower this barrier, but are not complete solutions.

#### **Barrier #5 - Housing**

Housing has been identified by several groups as a bottleneck on Austin's future growth, and our research echoes that finding a solution to this challenge is crucial to build a Welcoming Community.

**Apartment and rental housing is scarce.** Housing is relatively affordable in Austin...but only if someone has the economic means to purchase a home (e.g. economic resources for a substantial down payment, established credit history, etc.) The median home value in Austin is \$97,400 compared to \$186,200 statewide (US Census Bureau, 2015). The issue with housing is not that there isn't enough of it, but that there is not sufficient variety to meet the unique needs of our community. One of the most pronounced

needs of newcomers is for units that can support larger families. Many newcomer families are larger in size than the historic Austin families that most current housing was built for. They consist of extended families; a nuclear family plus parents, brothers, sisters and other close family members. Most of our existing housing is based on a smaller family size model. We heard over and over that it is difficult to feel that a community is inclusive if someone can't find a place to live that fits their family situation, and many lack the immediate economic means to customize available housing to do so.

**This scarcity also creates additional challenges.** These include making it difficult to complain about unsafe housing conditions because families don't have any other place to go and/or limiting the diffusion of newcomers into a small number of housing locations (that further fuels the lack of interaction between groups that was identified in Barrier #1).

## **Analysis of Key Findings**

We found that there are few opportunities to create cultural awareness with our immigrant and refugee communities. What interaction there is tends to be on a superficial level. We know that newcomers are here but we do not know what they can add to our community. Immigrants and refugees maintain minimal contact with the white Austin population. On the surface, there does not appear to be any overt bias against these newcomers. Underneath the surface however, the lack of understanding of cultural differences, a belief that they should assimilate much faster combined with a knowledge gap of why they are here in the first place, makes full cultural integration difficult.

Lack of understanding of cultural differences is a major inhibitor of creating a Welcoming Community. Oftentimes we believe we should treat everyone the **same** in an attempt to treat everyone **equally**. Since each culture has its own experiences, fears and needs, they each require a solution that is unique to that culture. The same applies to people. One size does not fit all. When you treat very different people exactly the same, you deny their uniqueness, which often alienates them. Alienation is the antithesis of welcoming.

**The one common thread that we should aspire to is to become welcoming as a community. To do this we must go to the newcomer and show them they are welcome. The welcome wagon is a great analogy. You did not go to the welcome wagon; the welcome wagon came to you.**

Another condition we found was the belief that newcomers should assimilate faster. There is much debate within the academic community around the benefits or harm that assimilation plays for today's immigrant and refugee communities, but what is fairly universally accepted is that full assimilation of newcomers is a three generation process. Considering we are still in generations 1 or 2, it is unrealistic to assume that considerably more progress can be made relying solely on assimilation.

One final finding that bears examining. Many of our older, white residents seem quite curious as to why we have so many immigrants and refugees in our community. Questions like "why here?", "where are they from?", and "why do they stay?" appear (with some exceptions) to reflect a genuine knowledge gap more than hostility. It does highlight that for many residents they do not readily see a benefit to having so many immigrants and refugees in their community. They are not "unwelcoming" as much as

indifferent. This indifference reflects a lack of understanding of Austin’s vision for a Welcoming Community, why that vision is important, and how each individual can help in making that vision a reality.

## Recommendations

We offer 3 formal recommendations for making Austin a more Welcoming Community. (There are also “Welcoming Thought Starters” in the appendix)

### **Recommendation #1 – City of Austin should create a Strategic Welcoming Plan by the end of 2018**

- Mayor should appoint a 7 person working group made up of representatives from the Human Rights Commission, City of Austin, and key community stakeholders (e.g. Welcome Center, Schools, etc.)
- There will be 3 goals of this working group:
  1. Establish clear success goals for making the community of Austin a Welcoming Community
  2. Create strategies for achieving those goals
  3. Establish metrics for measuring progress towards those goals
- Strategic Plan should be approved by the City Council and the success metrics and measures should be publicly reported annually starting in 2019

There is an old adage that what gets measured gets managed. To truly turn the vision of a Welcoming Community into reality, it is critical to establish clear success metrics and ways to measure progress against those metrics. We recommend that this strategic plan be written by a specific working group, rather than only the Human Rights Commission, because it is critical to leverage the substantial expertise and experiences of multiple community stakeholders to create real and meaningful change. Building a Welcoming Community is a community wide effort, and the community plan should therefore be created with a community wide perspective.

### **Recommendation #2 – Build leadership capacity of multicultural community by proactively increasing the diversity of City commissions, boards, and taskforces**

- City should proactively identify and recruit at least 5 new multicultural leaders to serve on City commissions, boards, and taskforces by the end of 2018 (e.g. Planning Commission, Park & Rec Board, Sustainability Taskforce, etc.)
- Openings should be actively promoted within multicultural communities so that they know these opportunities exist
- City should hold training sessions for any qualified and interested candidates to help them learn more about the processes and procedures for serving in these roles

It is critical to involve the multicultural community in the process of making Austin a Welcoming Community, and City commissions, boards, and taskforces are an outstanding way to do that while also building a deeper leadership bench. These commissions, boards, and taskforces allow residents to learn the intricacies of local government and have a voice in the running of our city. In many cases they can serve as a stepping stone to larger involvement in city affairs. Indeed, many past and current members of the City Council served on these commissions, boards, and taskforces before they were elected.

The City should set a goal of adding at least 5 new leaders from the multicultural community by the end of next year, with the goal of eventually having these commissions, boards, and taskforces more accurately reflect the community they serve. This will allow enough time for positions to open up naturally, and to identify and recruit qualified leaders to fill these roles.

This will require increasing the diversity of the qualified applicant pool, which will only be possible by promoting openings and training people in how to take advantage of them. This report identified that a major barrier to multicultural leadership participation was a lack of understanding of the processes and opportunities to be involved in the solution. Overcoming this barrier will require a change in approach by doing things like “going to where they are” to make sure that people know about openings and how they can apply to fill them. The City should also hold a small number of training sessions at times and places that are convenient for multicultural communities on an annual basis to help interested parties understand basic elements of participation such as Roberts Rules of Orders, meeting minutes, etc. that can be intimidating barriers to building confidence in someone’s ability to participate. The ultimate result will ultimately be a deeper and more talented bench of community leaders from across the cultural spectrum.

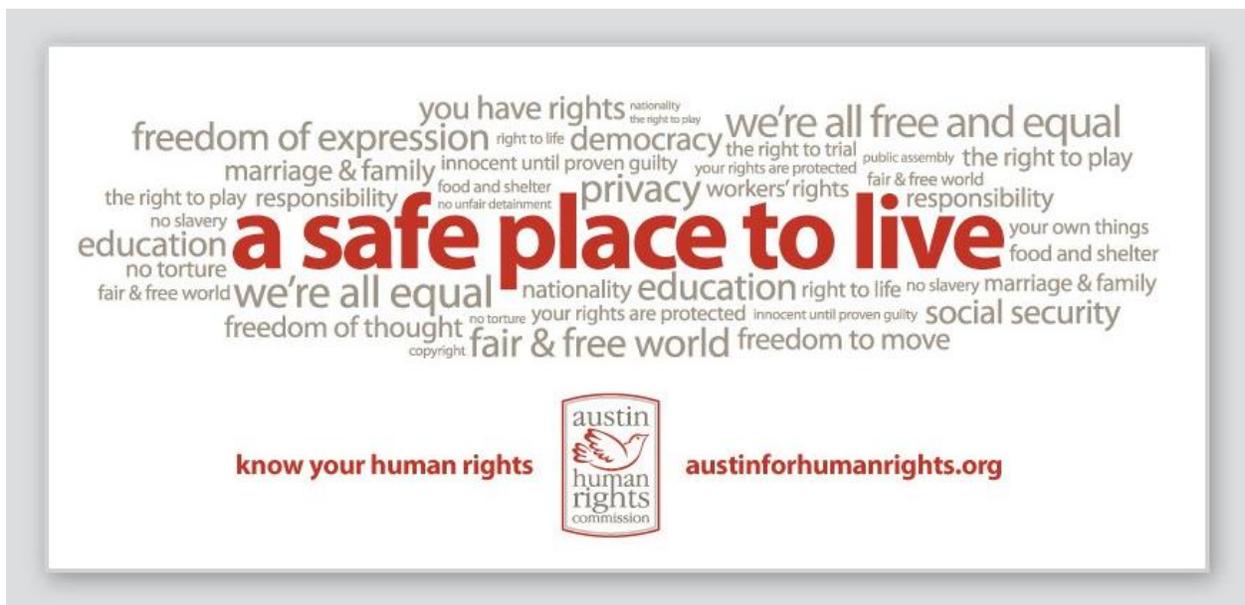
**Recommendation #3 – Human Rights Commission should work with key community stakeholders to increase exposure between cultures in Austin**

- HRC should present findings of Welcome Report to at least 10 community groups by the end of 2017
- HRC will seek to enhance existing and new efforts to increase exposure between cultures and lower the barriers to welcoming that were identified in this report

Creating a more Welcoming Community is not something that can be done by city government alone. There are many key stakeholders in the community already doing outstanding work in this area, and this report can help support and enhance those efforts by providing a clearer understanding of the major barriers that need to be lowered. The Human Rights Commission should proactively share the findings of this report with as many stakeholders as possible, and use our findings to help enhance efforts to lower the barriers identified in this report.

## Conclusion

Welcoming is defined by the Free Dictionary as “to greet, receive, or entertain (another or others) cordially or hospitably.” Webster defines it as “to accept with pleasure the occurrence or presence of.” It implies that you must do something. The simple act of not being disagreeable does not make you welcoming. The perception of Austin as being welcoming is determined more by what we do, than by what we say. Austin has the opportunity to be a shining star. Taking action to turn the vision of a being a Welcoming Community into reality is the right path to take because it will make us a stronger and more vibrant community.



## Appendix

---

## Welcoming Thought Starters

These are ideas that were generated as potential solutions to lower the barriers that were identified through this study. These are meant to serve as thought starters for community organizations and individuals.

### **Barrier #1 – Lack of Interaction between Groups**

- Food & kids are the 2 best ways to create interaction
  - Hold events at neighborhood parks
  - Expand Taste of Nations
  - Offer cooking classes to help people experience foods from different local cultures
- Invite groups to visit local businesses to understand what services they provide
- Leverage the new Rec Center to create a community area where people of different cultures can gather at
- Sports are also a great way to bring people together
  - Find ways to increase the diversity of fan sections (potentially removing or lowering the cost barrier to attending games)
  - Celebrate the success of multi-cultural sports teams that are working together
- Leverage social media to talk about cultural events & share information about different cultures
- Billboard campaign to educate about different local cultures (potentially in multiple languages)

### **Barrier #2 – Communication**

- Ensure that information is shared on multiple different outlets (social media, TV, newspaper, fliers, etc.)
  - Ideally using multiple languages
- Proactively GO to the places where people are already gathering
  - Example: If a group already meets at a church ask to connect with them at their church, rather than asking them to come to you
- Hold events at multiple times if possible
  - Example: Austin Public Schools does conferences both at night and during the day so that parents who work at night are able to attend
- Hold events at locations that are easily accessible to someone without a car (or provide transportation)
  - Examples: Neighborhood parks, downtown Austin, etc.
- Hold more seminars to educate newcomers on local laws & customs (potentially at the Community Learning Center)

### **Barrier #3 – Leadership Development**

- Take existing leaders to immigrant & refugee activities, events, & church services to develop relationships
- Mentorship program that pairs emerging leaders with existing leaders
- Work with Blandin and Leadership Austin to further enhance diversity of their cohorts
  - May need to identify and solve barriers to increased diversity such as cost, time off of work, etc.
- Schedules meetings at times that work for various schedules
  - Example: Just because a meeting has always been at 6pm on Tuesday doesn't mean it couldn't move to 10am on Wednesday if that works better for most people
- Provide childcare at meetings
- Hold practice meetings at places where immigrants & refugees are already at
  - Example: Hold mock meetings at their local church
- Invite people in 2s or 3s...not just 1 person
- Ask people to attend things more than once
- Invite potential leaders to be your guest at a meeting or event
- Help connect existing organizations to emerging leaders
  - Example: Help service organizations who are looking for members connect with people who have expressed a desire to play a larger role in the community

#### **Barrier #4 – Transportation**

- Get employers more involved in transportation
  - Educate employees about the services that are available to them
  - Help create solutions for how to get their employees to and from work
    - Example: In Silicon Valley employers offer transportation services to get their employees to work
- Continue making community easier to bike and walk
  - Example: Make sure that snow is cleared from major sidewalks during winter storms
- Expand the Red Bike program

#### **Barrier #5 – Housing**

- Build more affordable rental housing
- Create more rental housing & apartments that fit larger & multi-generational families
- Require inspections for all rental properties before renting (to ensure that all current ordinances are being followed)
- Increase Habitat for Humanity
- Mentor people who want to rehab a house (teach Do-It-Yourself skills)