

HRC Strategic Priorities: Summary of Strategic Planning Meeting of 5.10.18 (2-13-19)

As a result of our strategic planning exercise, the Northfield HRC identified the following three priorities for their activities over the next 2-3 years.

Strategic Priority #1. To better reflect and include all of Northfield in city policy and planning, we should increase Diversity of Northfield Boards and Commissions.

Target Outcome: By 2020, to have the minority membership of Northfield's boards and commissions reflect the minority demographics in Northfield's population (11.2% total).

We are mindful that the small sizes of most boards and commissions may not make this possible or practicable for every board and commission, but we note that increased minority membership on several boards and commissions in particular some areas such as Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), Library Board, Arts and Culture Commission, Economic Development Authority (EDA) would be desirable.

As a secondary strategy, the City Council should strive to build bridges to Northfield's minority communities by appointing members who can serve as liaisons, whether through their knowledge of and/or connections to certain communities, linguistic abilities, and other connections.

Strategic Priority #2: To make a more welcoming community, we should increase bilingual staff at City Hall, Safety Center, and School District.

Target Outcome: To have at least one bilingual (Spanish-English) staff member in every major office/department/building, with specific targets/priorities set in consultation with appropriate staff/officials in each area.

As a secondary strategy, evaluate alternative options such as "language line" for City services, interpreters or other strategies to offer bilingual and sign language alternatives for communication for the public.

Strategic Priority #3: To build a long-term foundation for cultural inclusion, work to increase and sustain the participation minority youth in Northfield's many athletic, art, and cultural extra-curricular programs and activities.

Target Outcome: Similar to that of Northfield's boards and commissions given above, increase both (a) youth participation (especially among younger children) and (b) parent involvement/board membership according to demographically appropriate targets/amounts.

As a means of working toward this goal, the HRC should systematically invite representatives from Northfield's various athletic clubs, arts organizations, and other groups to attend HRC meetings where we can share both information about as well as strategies for inclusion.

Other topics discussed/To be given future consideration

- To increase the "cultural competence" of majority residents in Northfield, which might involve additional public awareness events and programs (e.g., Northfield Reads; MLK Celebration), establishing a "Sister City" relationship with a suitable city in a different country/cultural context
- Continued work (especially by Youth members of the HRC) with the Northfield school district on a broad range of human rights issues as they impact the curriculum, school policy, and the "campus climate" at all schools/school levels.
- Equitable housing—including not only the cost of housing, but also sustainability and environmental issues—is also a concern of the HRC, but as noted, this is also the primary concern of HRA, and these concerns may be best served/addressed by increasing the diversity of the HRA.
- Greater prominence of youth members of the HRC: suggested that youth members take responsibility for managing a specific event. (Day of Peace).