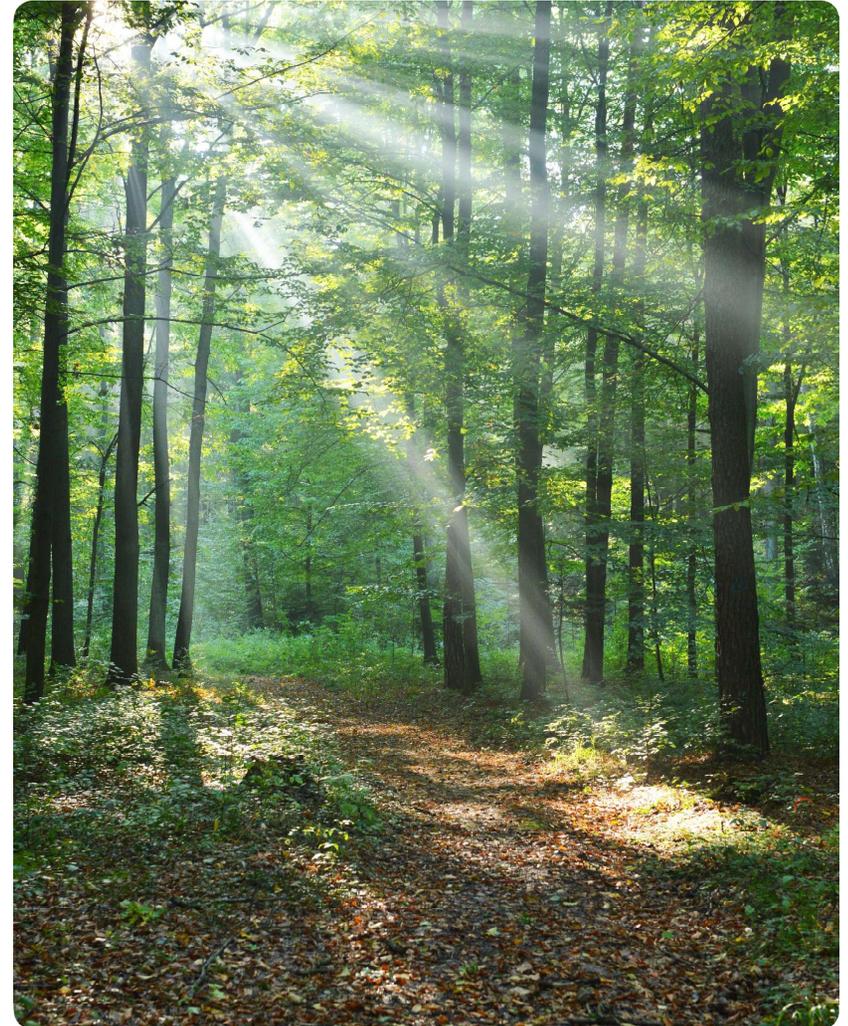


# Human Rights at Home:

THE ROLE OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION





# Human Rights Matter Here

- Human rights are everywhere – they show up in housing, schools, jobs, public spaces, and daily interactions.
- Minnesota has one of the strongest Human Rights Acts in the country - EVERY PERSON is covered and protected
- Our city ordinance mirrors that law because rights only matter if they are known, understood, and accessible locally.
- A Human Rights Commission exists to help bring visibility, accessibility, and meaning to law in every day community life.



# Our Legal Foundation

- Established May 24, 2004 under City Code Division 2-V-6.
- One of 5 local City commissions north of the metro
- We are a 9-member Commission
  - All-volunteer
  - Appointed by City Council.
  - Three-year terms, renewable
- Role is education, awareness, listening, and advising
- Not an enforcement or investigative body

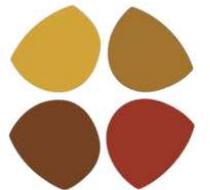
**Our mission is to promote a community of harmony and respect for the rights and dignity of all**





# Our Purpose

- Recognize and prevent discrimination and inequalities in the daily life of the community
- Design or support educational programs
- Assist in the implementation of the ordinance
- Provide leadership
- Serve as an advisory body to the City





# Who is “protected”?

It is illegal to discriminate on the basis of:

- Race
- Color
- Creed
- Religion
- National Origin
- Sex
- Marital Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Status with regard to public assistance
- Disability
- Age

The Minnesota Human Rights Act (363) prohibits discrimination in:

- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Public Accommodations
- Public Services
- Credit Services



# Actions & Support Highlights

- School and youth engagement through presentations coordinated with the GRHS and Civics Class
- Event support: Juneteenth, Indigenous Peoples Day, Pride
- Presentations and outside speakers
- Disability and accessibility advocacy
- Community conversations



# 2026 Vision: Guiding Themes

- Community Awareness
- Education & Outreach
- Our Role (clarity & consistency)
- Collaboration
- Listening to Community





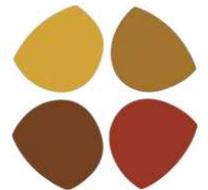
# 2026 Priority Activities

- **Community presentations (schools, service clubs, faith groups, businesses)**
- **Community dialogue opportunities (Story Stitch or Braver Angels)**
- **Fair housing education**
- **Visibility at Pride, Indigenous Peoples Day, Soup on the Street, Stomp on Stigma**
- **Ongoing ordinance and role clarity work**



# Funding Reality

- Historically, the City has provided modest but meaningful support (e.g., \$7,500 in recent years).
- 2026 is the first year in recent memory with no allocated funding, due to fiscal constraints and the goal of a 0% levy following federal cuts.
- The work continues – but partnership, collaboration, and community support matter more than ever.



# How You Can Be A Part of the Work

- Attend our meetings
- Invite us to present
- Partner on events
- Share concerns or experiences
- Apply to serve as a commissioner
- Help connect people to resources
- Help amplify voices that are often unheard



# We're Here to Listen

## **Join our meeting**

Held every last Wednesday of the month  
Held at City Hall in the City Council Chambers  
420 N. Pokegama Ave | Grand Rapids, MN 55744

## **Call us**

(218) 326-7646

## **View our Commission Page**

Snap the QR code or visit:  
<https://cityofgrandrapidsmn.com/bc-hrc>

