

## **BACKGROUND**

The Tualatin Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Advisory Committee was established by Ordinance 1473-23, adopted by Tualatin City Council on April 10, 2023, and incorporated into the Tualatin Municipal Code as Chapter 11-11. The enabling ordinance requires the IDEA Committee to file an annual report with the Council including a summary of the committee’s activities during the preceding year and other matters and recommendations the committee deems appropriate.

Current members of the IDEA Committee are Sunni Armstrong, Destini Barajas, Angelica Butler, Kolini Fusitu’a, Winnie Lo, Rebekah Morgan, BJ Park (co-chair), Chris Paul (co-chair), Gerry Preston, and Erinn Stimson. Former members included Valerie Holt and Jasmine Wilder, who resigned during the year. Christen Sacco serves as the City Council Liaison, and staff support is provided by Jerianne Thompson, Library Director and Equity & Inclusion Officer, and Betsy Rodriguez Ruff, Community Engagement Coordinator, with additional support from consultant Paradigm Public Affairs.

## **ROLES OF THE COMMITTEE**

*per Tualatin Municipal Code, Chapter 11-11:*

1. Provide advice to the City Council by conducting research, including engaging with a range of community members and groups, to identify areas of opportunity to increase equity, inclusion, diversity, access, and belonging in Tualatin.
2. Recommend goals, objectives, and methods for the City to use to measure progress towards achieving greater equity, inclusion, diversity, access, and belonging in Tualatin.
3. Review practices and procedures to make recommendations on how to remove or lessen barriers to public participation in City government.
4. Recommend policies and procedures for the City to further empower people to connect with City elected and appointed officials and staff.
5. Make recommendations to the City Council regarding issues of equity, inclusion, diversity, access, and belonging.

## **ACTIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The IDEA Advisory Committee began meeting in December 2023. During the past year, the IDEA Committee undertook the intense yet invigorating work of forming as a City committee and learning about each other’s varied perspectives. Committee members learned the processes for conducting committee business, the role of advisory committees in City governance, and about organizational strategic planning and goal setting. The Committee recognizes the Equity Committee Planning Group (which met in 2023 to develop recommendations for forming the IDEA Committee) for their accomplishments in setting the stage for this Committee’s work.

To guide their work, the Committee developed mission and vision statements.

*Mission:* We engage with the community by promoting inclusion, celebrating diversity, pursuing equity, and championing access.

*Vision:* Every community member is empowered, heard and valued, with equitable access to opportunities and resources, within a vibrant and diverse Tualatin, today and for future generations.

The Committee also developed a list of Community Agreements, which aim to create a respectful and inclusive environment for productive discussions:

- Treat everyone with kindness; appreciate people’s shared lived experiences
- Listen with an open mind & be curious
- Be open to different ideas
- Take turns speaking, and use your name tent to signal your desire to speak
- Step up and step back
- Speak up and take a chance, even if you disagree with the majority
- Give the benefit of doubt and be willing to grow
- Call someone in... not out. Leave room for error and seek better understanding
- It’s ok to have fun!
- Remember conflict is okay. Strive for understanding, not complete agreement
- Be mindful of people’s boundaries
- Try not to make assumptions

City staff and consultants provided several learning opportunities for the Committee, to enhance their awareness of key issues and support their work as a Committee, including:

- Tualatin’s demographic profile and the results of the 2023 National Community Survey, measuring Tualatin’s livability.
- Allyship (how to support and lift-up underrepresented voices), the distinction between equity and equality, and how perceived power dynamics can influence public participation.
- The whys and hows of City Council proclamations, which led to the Committee recommending Council adoption of three proclamations presented by Committee members.
  - Tonga Day, August 17, 2024 – presented by Kolini Fusitu’a
  - Dystonia Awareness Month, September 2024 – presented by Erinn Stimson
  - Affordable Housing and Child Care Day, October 10, 2024 – presented by Rebekah Morgan
- The City’s community engagement efforts, opportunities for public participation in project planning, and accessibility improvements made in the City.
  - Committee member Rebekah Morgan participated on the Barriers & Solutions to Housing panel conversation, held on September 30, 2024.
  - Councilor Sacco and City staff provided updates about engagement with the Las Casitas neighborhood, accessibility improvements to City facilities and parks, Outside Agency Grant recipients, community events, and opportunities for participation in public engagement.

The Committee also reviewed the Equity Committee Planning Group’s final report, as well as the City Council 2030 Vision and Council’s 2024 priorities. In discussion, the Committee identified examples of what a “caring and inclusive community” would look like if realized:

- All areas of the community have equitable access to opportunities such as recreation and community events, as well as retail and dining establishments.

- At community events and in shared community spaces, people of different ages and backgrounds mingle together and interact.
- Community garden spaces and accessible leisure and recreational spaces for different sensory needs support connection and community-building.
- Members of the immigrant and refugee communities attend and speak at City Council meetings and are engaged in community discussions.
- All types of Tualatin residents, including renters, are included in community engagement efforts (such as the community survey).
- Information about community needs, projects, and resources is easy to find and share.
- Finding a way for the housing planned within the Basalt Creek Planning Area to be part of the Tigard-Tualatin School District instead of the Sherwood School District, given the proximity to Tualatin High School.

### **ACTION PLAN FOR 2025**

The IDEA Committee is developing a workplan for the upcoming two years. The following themes and topics have been identified as priorities:

- Culture & Identity – supporting Council’s vision of safe & vibrant gathering places throughout the city that build and celebrate our whole community.
  - Food carts
  - Urban renewal
  - Gathering places
- Community Engagement – supporting Council’s vision of a connected, informed, and civically engaged community that embraces our city’s diversity.
  - Community groups
  - Public participation
- Housing & Public Safety – supporting Council’s vision of safe, desirable, welcoming, and sustainable neighborhoods with housing that is available to all.
  - Housing
  - Policing

The Committee is currently learning about the current local landscape for these topics and will set outcomes to guide their work, within the Committee’s roles as set out in the Municipal Code.

The Committee also plans to address emerging topics, as they arise. The first topic planned for consideration is a native land and people acknowledgement. City Council formed a committee to investigate this issue in 2021. That committee developed a draft statement and protocols for use, which Council set aside until the IDEA Committee was formed and could provide recommendations.