

AGENDA

ACCESS, ADVOCACY, EQUITY, & ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

May 12, 2026

Hybrid Meeting In-person and via Zoom



Accessibility

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Any person engaging in conduct that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting including but not limited to:

1. Unduly repetitive or irrelevant remarks;
2. Use of intimidating, threatening, or abusive language;
3. disobedience of an order to be seated or to discontinue further comments;
4. and/or engaging in violent behavior,

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will be deemed out of order and may be removed from the meeting and/or have his or her virtual microphone muted.

CITY OF ELLENSBURG
ACCESS, ADVOCACY, EQUITY, & ENGAGEMENT
COMMISSION AGENDA Council Chambers
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via [Zoom webinar](#)
Zoom Webinar ID: 860 4488 5223
Zoom passcode: 960657
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
3:00 PM - Regular Meeting

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- 2. Approval of Agenda** (No Public Comment)
- 3. Public Comment** PUBLIC COMMENT RULES FOR ALL MEETING PARTICIPANTS
1. Each speaker's comments are to be limited to 3 MINUTES and must state their name and city of residence. 2. Speakers are cautioned not to engage in conduct that disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the AAEE Commission meeting. 3. Comments must be related to the commission's business or over which the Commission has control. 4. Speakers may not identify themselves as candidates for elective public office or make any statements which assist or discuss the campaign of a candidate for elective office or discuss or campaign for or against a ballot proposition.
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
 - 4.A Approve Minutes from April 14, 2026 AAEE Commission Meeting
- 5. New Business**
 - 5.A Ellensburg School District Update (~10 minutes)
 - 5.B Comprehensive Plan Update On Chapter 9 (Public Comment Opportunity)
 - 5.C Work Plan Discussion
- 6. Liaison Reports** Dr. Elvin Delgado and Ruben Cardenas - CWU; and Rhonda Schmidt - Ellensburg School District
- 7. Subcommittee Reports**
- 8. Commission Representative Reports**
- 9. Staff Report**
 - 9.A Staff Report
- 10. Adjournment** Next Meeting: June 9, 2026



For more information on the Access, Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement Commission contact Public Information Officer Nicole Klauss at 509-925-8657.

CITY OF ELLENSBURG
Date of Meeting
Time of Meeting
Place of Meeting

**Minutes of Access, Advocacy, Equity, &
Engagement Commission Meeting**
April 14, 2026
3:00 PM
Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Nancy Goodloe called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call Present: Phil Backlund, Kandee Cleary, Amber Darting, Nancy Goodloe, Judd Grey, Amber Hoefler, Cody Natland, and M. Eliatamby-O'Brien.

Also present: Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the AAEE Commission; Stacey Henderson, Planning Manager; Lily Frey, Housing Program Manager; Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager; Eliann Carr, Crime & Intelligence Analyst at EPD; Kelle Vandenberg, Arts & Economic Development Manager; Rhonda Schmidt, Ellensburg School District liaison; Elvin Delgado, Interim Associate Vice President for Faculty Success at Central Washington University; Ramona Bryant, League of Women Voters of Kittitas County; and 7 members of the public.

Chair Goodloe allowed applicants Kathryn Martell and Matthew Stalder to provide an introduction.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Judd Grey moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Kandee Cleary seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 7-0.**

3. Public Comment

Chair Goodloe called for public comment. There was no public comment.

4. Approval of Commission Minutes from March 10, 2026 Meeting

Commissioner Phil Backlund moved to approve the meeting minutes from the March 10, 2026 DEI Commission meeting. Commissioner Cody Natland seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 7-0.**

5. New Business

A. Arts & Economic Development Manager Kelle Vandenberg presented on the Kittitas County America 250 Celebration and provided a funding request. Commissioner Phil Backlund made a motion to spend \$1,500 on the America 250 event and develop a plan for the Commission's remaining \$8,500. Commissioner Natland seconded the motion. During discussion, commission members commented on the challenge of budgeting the money for the event without knowing the work plan for the year. **Motion failed 5-2.**

B. Housing Program Manager Lily Frey reported on the Racially Disparate Impacts memo that is part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. William Coleman provided public comment.

C. Eliann Carr and Heidi Behrends Cerniwey reported on the Community Survey that is in development and listened to feedback from the commission.

D. Staff reported on the Commission name change.

6. Liaison Reports

Due to time, Rhonda Schmidt's school district update will be moved to May. CWU did not have any updates.

7. Subcommittee Reports

Staff provided a report on responsibility of the Proclamation Subcommittee.

8. Commission Member Reports

There were no commission member reports.

9. Staff Report

Staff reported on City activities including Arbor Day free tree program, Comprehensive Plan mini polls, voting for the Community Selected Historic Preservation Award, National Poetry Month, Bike Month events, and Recycling Event.

10. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

Drafted by Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the AAEE Commission

Drafted: 4/15/26

Approved:

Ellensburg School District DOJ Settlement Agreement Update

APRIL 14, 2026

PRESENTED BY: RHONDA SCHMIDT

1

Why We Entered the Agreement

- ▶ In 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice investigated concerns related to:
 - ▶ Student-on-student and staff-on-student harassment
- ▶ Findings:
 - ▶ District systems and responses needed to be strengthened
- ▶ We entered a voluntary agreement to:
 - ▶ Improve systems
 - ▶ Ensure safe, equitable learning environments for all students

2

What the Agreement Requires

Four focus areas:

- ▶ Strong reporting and tracking systems
- ▶ Clear procedures and accountability
- ▶ Training and prevention for staff and students
- ▶ Ongoing climate assessment and community engagement

3

What We Have Put in Place

- ▶ Centralized harassment reporting system
- ▶ Standardized investigation and response procedures
- ▶ Enhanced training for staff
- ▶ Partnership with ESD 105 consultant
- ▶ Climate surveys (students, staff, families)
- ▶ Listening sessions (March 31)
- ▶ Staffing
 - ▶ Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator
 - ▶ Latino Family Liaison

4

What the Data Shows – Reporting

- ▶ We now have consistent documentation of incidents across the district
- ▶ Increased reporting reflects:
 - ▶ Improved awareness
 - ▶ Clearer expectations

5

What the Data Shows – Climate

Across students, staff, and families:

- ▶ **Strengths**
 - ▶ Increased awareness of how to report concerns
 - ▶ Staff confidence in identifying issues is improving
- ▶ **Areas for growth**
 - ▶ Perception of consistency in how incidents are handled
 - ▶ Confidence that reporting leads to meaningful follow-through

6

What We Are Learning

- ▶ Systems in place, but consistency is still developing
- ▶ Communication with students and families can improve
- ▶ Some environments remain higher risk
 - ▶ Hallways
 - ▶ Bathrooms
 - ▶ Unstructured times
- ▶ Student experience does not always match adult perception

7

Listening Sessions (March 31)

- ▶ Students, staff, and community participated
- ▶ Facilitated by ESD 105
- ▶ Final report pending

Preliminary themes

- ▶ Need for:
 - ▶ Consistent adult response
 - ▶ Clear follow-through
 - ▶ Increased trust in reporting systems

8

Where We Are Now

- ▶ We are meeting structural requirements of the agreement
- ▶ We have robust baseline data due to standardization
- ▶ We have started to identify clear areas for improvement

9

What We Are Doing Next

Short term

- ▶ Analyze listening session results
- ▶ Strengthen consistency in investigations and responses
- ▶ Improve communication with families

Next school year

- ▶ Annual climate surveys and reporting cycle
- ▶ Expanded student programming
- ▶ Ongoing staff training focused on response, not just reporting

10



Technical Memo

To: Stacey Henderson – City of Ellensburg
From: Laura Barker, Spencer Easton, and Gavin Scouten – SCJ Alliance
Date: April 27, 2026
Project: City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan Update
Subject: Findings and Recommendations: Chapter 9 (Access, Engagement & Belonging)

Introduction/Purpose

The City of Ellensburg is currently evaluating the role and structure of Chapter 9 (Access, Engagement & Belonging) within the Comprehensive Plan. As part of this effort, the City directed SCJ to conduct an expanded policy review to better understand how concepts related to equity, inclusion, accessibility, engagement, and belonging are currently addressed across the plan, and to identify opportunities for improvement or consolidation.

This memo summarizes the findings of that analysis, including results from recent community engagement and a detailed policy audit and crosswalk of the existing Chapter 9 goals, policies, and programs, which were most recently updated in 2025. The crosswalk evaluates the extent to which these concepts are already incorporated into other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, identifies areas of overlap and redundancy, and highlights gaps where additional policy direction may be warranted.

The purpose of this memo is to inform City decision-making regarding the future of Chapter 9 by presenting two potential approaches:

- 1) Revising the chapter to better reflect community input and align with the overall plan framework; or
- 2) Incorporating the content of Chapter 9 throughout the Comprehensive Plan elements and removing the standalone chapter.

Based on the findings of the policy audit and crosswalk analysis, this memo also provides recommendations for how equity- and belonging-related policies can be most effectively incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan to improve clarity and overall implementation.

1 Summary of Mini-Poll Results

In order to inform the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Ellensburg and SCJ Alliance conducted three mini-polls related to key planning topics, including a poll focused on access, belonging, and engagement (“Community Voices”). The poll was offered in both Spanish and English; it launched on March 16, 2026 and will run through April 30, 2026. This memo section summarizes preliminary poll results based on 119 responses received at the time of analysis.

Key early poll results include:

- 48% of respondents reported feeling “very welcome” in Ellensburg, with another 30% saying they feel “somewhat welcome.” Only 4% of respondents indicated they do not feel very welcome in Ellensburg.
- When asked what helps Ellensburg feel welcoming and inclusive, over 50% of respondents selected “friendly people” and “community events and festivals” (see Figure 1).
- When asked what barriers make it harder for people to participate in City meetings, events, or decision-making, the top three results were “not aware of opportunities,” “meeting times or schedules,” and “meetings feel unwelcoming or difficult to participate in” (see Figure 2).
- When asked what would make it easier to participate in City decisions or community discussions, the top result (selected by over 60% of respondents) was “Better communication about topics and events” (see Figure 3).

Figure 1. What Helps Ellensburg Feel Welcoming and Inclusive

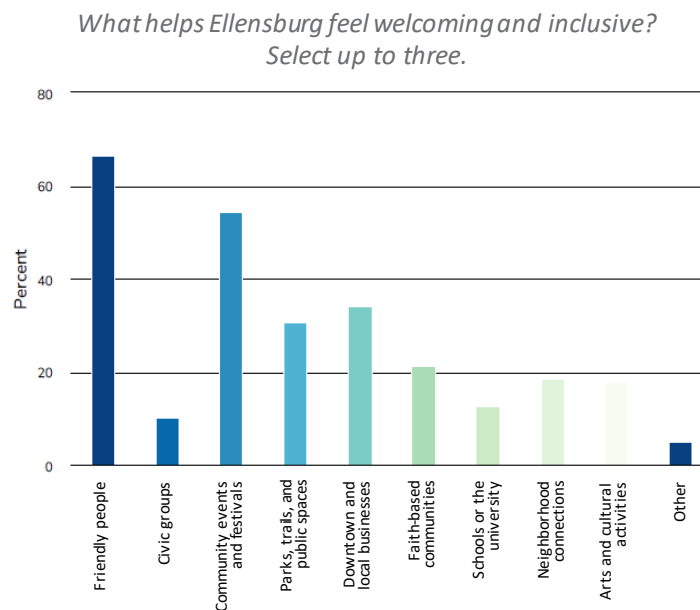


Figure 2. What Barriers Make it Hard to Participate

What barriers make it harder for people to participate in City meetings, events, or decision-making? Select up to three.

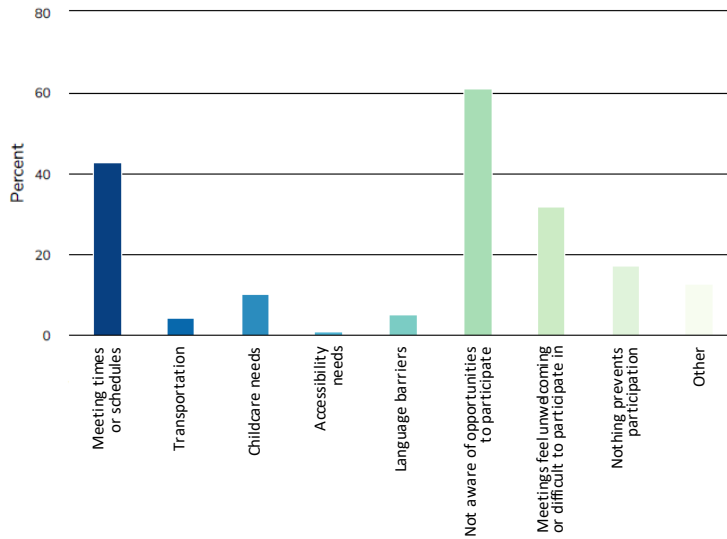
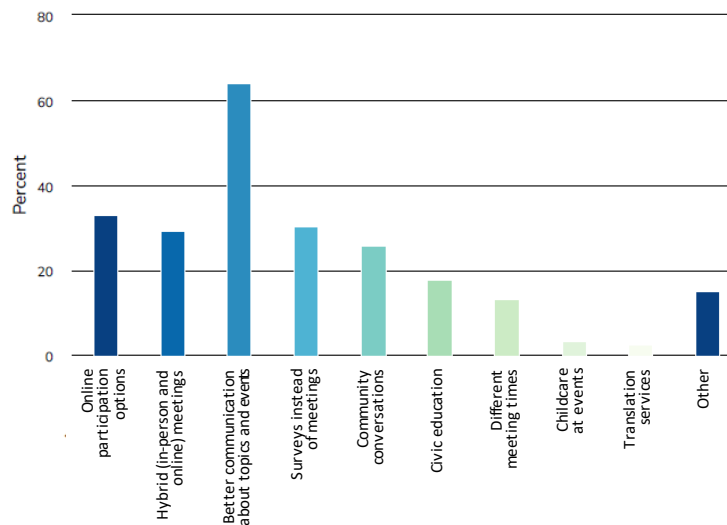


Figure 3. What Would Make it Easier to Participate

What would make it easier for you to participate in City decisions or community discussions? Select up to three.



These results underscore the importance of improving communication, reducing barriers to participation, and cultivating inclusive and welcoming community spaces. These themes are reflected in the recommendations that follow in Section 3.

2 Summary of Policy Crosswalk

SCJ Alliance conducted a policy crosswalk to evaluate the goals, policies, and programs included in Chapter 9 of the existing Comprehensive Plan and their relationship to other plan elements. This review looked at where similar policies already exist, where overlap or redundancy occurs, and where there are opportunities to consolidate or better integrate equity- and belonging-related concepts throughout the plan.

Overall, the analysis found that many of the topics addressed in Chapter 9 are already reflected, at least in part, within other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. In many cases, these policies can be more effectively implemented when located in the elements most responsible for carrying them out (e.g., Housing, Transportation, Capital Facilities and Utilities, or Parks and Recreation). This suggests that a standalone chapter may not be necessary to achieve the City's goals related to access, equity, and belonging.

The crosswalk also identified the following overall themes among the existing Chapter 9 goals, policies, and actions:

- A number of Chapter 9 policies address topics that are already covered, at least partially, in other elements, including access to services, housing affordability, transportation access, and community programming. In these cases, there is an opportunity to consolidate or strengthen these policies within existing elements rather than duplicating them in a standalone chapter.
- Many policies are well-suited for integration into specific elements, where they can be tied to implementation tools or capital planning. This approach improves clarity and ensures that policies are actionable.
- Some policies are broader in scope and apply across multiple elements, particularly those related to community engagement, accessibility, and belonging. These policies do not fit neatly within a single element and are better suited to be reframed as plan-wide guiding principles.
- A small number of policies relate to internal City operations (such as staff training or City-wide proclamations) and are not well-suited for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. These items would be more appropriately addressed through the City's Strategic Plan or internal policies.
- While most topics are already addressed within the plan, the crosswalk also highlighted opportunities to strengthen policy language and better address identified community priorities, including reducing barriers to participation, improving communication, and supporting a welcoming and inclusive community.

The detailed policy crosswalk matrix is included at the end of this memo in **Appendix A**.

3 Recommendations

While Chapter 9 could be revised and retained as a standalone chapter, the policy audit indicates that many of its goals and policies may be more effectively implemented when integrated across the Comprehensive Plan elements. The policy crosswalk analysis found that many of these concepts are already partially addressed in existing elements, with opportunities to strengthen, consolidate, and clarify implementation.

Overall, the goals, policies, and programs from Chapter 9 can be integrated effectively across the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Incorporating these goals and policies throughout other elements will better integrate access, equity, and belonging into every aspect of the way the City of Ellensburg grows over the next 20 years. Instead of containing equity-focused policies in their own chapter, equity can inform every chapter.

We recommend:

- **Placing specific, measurable actions in existing elements**

Goals, policies, and programs from Chapter 9 are recommended to be distributed across the Comprehensive Plan elements to better align with GMA requirements and improve implementation.

- Most items are recommended for reassignment to the elements most closely tied to their subject matter:
 - Land Use – siting of public spaces, equitable development patterns
 - Housing – affordability, housing access, proximity to services
 - Transportation – equitable mobility, access to services and destinations
 - Capital Facilities and Utilities – equitable service delivery, accessibility, language access, ADA considerations
 - Parks and Recreation – inclusive programming, cultural events, equitable access to recreation
 - Economic Development – support for diverse businesses, workforce access and opportunity
 - Environment – environmental justice, climate impacts
- In a few cases, policies are recommended to be split between elements to ensure all of their components are addressed in the most appropriate context.

- **Consolidating high-level values and direction into a new Guiding Principles section**

A few of the Chapter 9 policies are more cross-cutting and apply across multiple elements of the Comprehensive Plan. These are recommended to be reframed as plan-wide guiding principles focused on engagement, access, and belonging.

- A new “Guiding Principles” section is recommended, located in the Community Voices chapter.
- Cross-cutting policies related to community engagement, access, and belonging would be consolidated into this section.
- This section would provide a consistent, plan-wide framework to guide policy development and implementation across all elements.
- Additional considerations based on outreach Ellensburg has done over the past year (including the mini-poll summarized in Section 1 and work Ellensburg has conducted with Better Angels) can be incorporated into the Guiding Principles section, including:
 - Reducing/removing barriers to participation (including physical, financial, cultural, language barriers)
 - Creating a welcoming and inclusive community that provides a sense of belonging
 - Supporting perceived safety and comfort in civic spaces

- **Removing or relocating internal/administrative actions**

Finally, a small number of the Chapter 9 policies relate to internal City operations (e.g., staff training, proclamations). These items are not well-suited for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan and are recommended instead to be addressed through the City’s Strategic Plan or internal policies.

- The underlying intent of these policies can be retained and integrated into the Guiding Principles, as described in the policy crosswalk (see **Appendix A** for the full policy crosswalk matrix).

The recommended approach integrates access, equity, and belonging throughout the Comprehensive Plan in a way that is more actionable, while also remaining aligned with community input and GMA requirements. This structure allows these concepts to inform all elements of the plan, rather than being addressed in a standalone chapter.

Appendix A: Policy Crosswalk Matrix

This policy crosswalk matrix summarizes each of the Chapter 9 goals, policies, and programs, along with recommended actions, potential placement within other plan elements, and notes on revision or consolidation.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	Recommended Element	Specific Location	Notes
Goal	1	Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs, and Events.	Move + Revise	Capital Facilities & Utilities	Goal CFU-1 (provision of services)	Strengthen language to focus on equitable service delivery, infrastructure, ADA compliance and add "equitable access for all residents."
Policy	A	Support policies and programs that increase accessibility to City services for all, guided by an awareness of varied community needs and potential barriers.	Move + Revise/Split	Capital Facilities & Utilities + Community Voices	Policy CFU-1A; new Guiding Principles section	Revise to add clarity around measurable actions for language access, ADA, service standards. Split between: - Capital Facilities and Utilities: Policy addressing implementation of accessible City services - Community Voices: New high-level guiding principle supporting equitable/inclusive access to City services, programs, events, and other community opportunities
Program	1	<i>Provide increased access to government documents in multiple languages and easily accessible assistance for those who may need additional support.</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Capital Facilities & Utilities + Community Voices	Policy CFU-4A (tech/communication); new Guiding Principles section	Split between: - Capital Facilities and Utilities: Policy addressing language access and assistance as part of service delivery - Community Voices: New high-level guiding principle supporting accessible communication, equitable access to information, reducing language and communication barriers (potentially combined with principle suggested in Goal 1, Policy A above)
Program	2	<i>Identify areas of City government where greater physical accessibility and accommodations are needed to increase access to all members of the public.</i>	Move	Capital Facilities & Utilities	Policy CFU-1A	Strong Capital Facilities fit - tie to facility planning and upgrades.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	Recommended Element	Specific Location	Notes
Policy	B	Promote and encourage community engagement and outreach to all.	Move + Revise	Community Voices	New Guiding Principles section	Strengthen language to align with GMA public participation requirements, but reframe as a guiding principle that cuts across all plan elements - e.g. "The City will promote inclusive and accessible community engagement and outreach to all members of the community."
Program	1	<i>Actively encourage participation from the public for community projects, events, and recreational activities, through a wide variety of media and information distribution methods.</i>	Move + Revise	Community Voices	New Guiding Principles section	Revise as a guiding principle focused on inclusive engagement. Shift from specific outreach methods to providing a range of accessible participation opportunities.
Program	2	<i>Provide City staff and elected officials with tools and regular training to understand and lead actions that deepen their understanding of community needs and to lead efforts that reduce barriers to participation.</i>	Remove from Comp Plan (Move to Strategic Plan or Internal Training Framework)	None	Potential to reframe and fold into New Guiding Principles section (in Community Voices chapter)	This item addresses internal operations rather than a comprehensive plan policy. It would be more appropriately addressed in a Strategic Plan or internal HR training/framework. Note: The underlying intent (supporting inclusive and equitable service delivery) is still relevant - it can be retained in the comp plan as a high-level guiding principle if the focus is shifted from <i>internal training</i> to <i>public-facing outcomes</i> . For example: "The City will support practices that promote inclusive and equitable service delivery." This can likely be folded into the principle created from Goal 1, Policy A above.
Program	3	<i>Establish an ongoing review process of the costs for City-sponsored recreation and leisure activities to ensure that all members of the public have access to these services.</i>	Move	Parks & Recreation	Goal PR-2 (recreation facilities and programs)	Recreation affordability review - ties directly into equitable access and LOS standards for Parks & Recreation.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	Recommended Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	4	<i>Support civic education programs that actively engage community members from many backgrounds, and encourage diverse representation among local leadership, organizations, and agencies.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Policy ED-3 (grow and sustain the workforce)	Fits in with Economic Development as it relates to workforce/leadership pipelines.
Goal	2	Foster Understanding, Cultural Awareness, and Belonging within the Community.	Move + Revise	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 2.1 (citywide programs and services)	Vague as-is; could be reworded for goal intent - reframe around inclusive community spaces and programming + cultural awareness.
Policy	A	Encourage cultural sharing.	Move + Revise	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 3.3 (cultural arts programs and resources)	Would be a strong fit with arts programming. Add more specific language and tie to events, programming, and public space design.
Program	1	<i>Regularly support events and celebrations that highlight the variety of cultural traditions within the community.</i>	Move + Revise	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 3.3 (cultural arts programs and resources)	Fits existing Parks & Recreation programming structure; revise/strengthen to clarify the "how" (measurable actions).
Program	2	<i>Encourage the creation of spaces where cultural foods and traditions can be shared among all members of the community, as well as the creation of public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all.</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Parks & Recreation + Land Use	Policy PR 2.2 (recreational facilities); Policy LU-1B (complements Program 4, placemaking)	Split between Parks & Recreation and Land Use goals/policies: - Parks & Recreation: Programming and gathering - Land Use: Siting/design of public spaces

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	Recommended Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	3	<i>Encourage increased communication and collaboration between the City government, Central Washington University, businesses, and education and social service sectors, through shared events, projects, and outreach, to help residents feel more comfortable visiting campus, and non-resident students feel more comfortable within the community.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships)	Strong school/community relationship focus fits into Economic Development policies; strong tie to city partnerships.
Policy	B	Encourage local leadership to address ongoing issues that create barriers for participation.	Move + Revise	Community Voices	New Guiding Principles section	Too broad as-is - as a policy, lacks clear enforcement. Reframe as a plan-wide guiding principle.
Program	1	<i>Encourage City leadership to demonstrate support of groups that experience additional social barriers or a sense of exclusion through a variety of proclamations, and publicly speak to local actions that affect the diverse members of the community.</i>	Remove from Comp Plan (Move to Strategic Plan or Internal Training Framework)	None	Potential to reframe and include in new Guiding Principles section (in Community Voices chapter)	This is a governance action rather than a Comp Plan policy. As with Goal 1, Policy B, Program 2 above, this would typically belong in a Strategic Plan or HR training/framework and should move there if it exists. Note: The underlying intent (visible, public support for inclusion and belonging) is valid and can be retained if reframed as a high-level guiding principle (in the new Community Voices section). For example: "The City will support practices that promote inclusion, respect, and belonging for all members of the community." Potential to combine with Goal 2, Policy B above.
Program	2	<i>Support the development of a framework to identify and address areas where individuals experience barriers within our local institutions</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Capital Facilities & Utilities + Environment	Goal CFU-1 (provision of services); Goal E-1 (address impacts of climate change to public)	Recommend splitting between: - Capital Facilities & Utilities: Equitable service delivery (implementation) - Environment: Tie directly to Environmental Justice requirements (GMA/Commerce checklist); strengthen language consistent with GMA requirements

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	Recommended Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	3	<i>Collaborate with local organizations to help local businesses support a broad spectrum of community members from different backgrounds and cultures.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships)	Align with small business support strategies - already partially exists in Policy ED-1A, Program 4 (potential to merge).
Goal	3	Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.	Merge with Goal 1	-	-	Redundant - combine w/ Goal 1 into one access-focused goal.
Policy	A	Ensure that high quality service programs are available, accessible, and utilized by all in order to support resident's basic needs.	Move	Capital Facilities & Utilities	Goal CFU-1 (provision of services)	Avoid duplication of Goal 1 policies; potential to merge with Goal 1, Policy A. Tie to service provision standards.
Program	1	<i>Partner with local health and social services to identify strategies for making their services accessible by all means of transportation.</i>	Move + Revise	Transportation	Goal T-3 (transportation network providing connections to key destinations)	Strong multimodal access policy. Expand to add "access to essential services."
Program	2	<i>Advocate for low income, residential care facilities, and other housing for aging people to be located close to services and amenities.</i>	Move	Housing	Goal H-2 (variety of housing types/densities to meet community needs)	Strong fit with existing housing goals addressing GMA housing + land use integration. Consider strengthening language to more clearly define how the City will support or advance this objective.
Program	3	<i>Encourage and support programs that seek to provide residents with access to health care providers with varied expertise and backgrounds who can respond to varying cultural and medical needs.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships)	The focus on providers/services fits well into Economic Development.
Policy	B	Encourage healthy activity and lifestyle by making recreational resources and opportunities accessible and welcoming to all residents.	Move	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 2.1 (citywide programs and services)	Fits well into Parks & Recreation goals. There is a related GMA/Commerce checklist requirement for consideration of EJ and avoiding worsening environmental health disparities - could directly address this requirement by strengthening policy language to add affordability and inclusivity.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	Recommended Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	1	<i>Provide opportunities for healthy activity in safe and accessible public spaces for all residents.</i>	Move	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 2.3 (design and access standards)	Fits well into Parks & Recreation goals.
Program	2	<i>Encourage communication between local businesses, organizations, and schools, to coordinate food pantries and local food distribution.</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships); Policy LU-1B (complements Program 3 - healthy food purveyors)	Split between Economic Development and Land Use: - Economic Development: Food systems/businesses (strengthen language beyond “encourage” - consider partnerships, infrastructure) - Land Use: Food access as it relates to EJ + health (good partner to Program 3 under Policy LU-1B)

ORDINANCE NO. 4982

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ELLENSBURG, WASHINGTON, AMENDING CHAPTER 1.88 DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMISSION OF THE ELLENSBURG CITY CODE.

WHEREAS, City Council created the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion ("DEI") Commission in March 2021, codified in ECC Chapter 1.88.

WHEREAS, through community conversations and public testimony around the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update activities, focused around Chapter 9, there emerged differing opinions and misunderstandings of the role, duties, actions, and responsibility of the DEI Commission.

WHEREAS, since January 2025, the new federal administration has provided policy direction for DEI programs, and the legal landscape around DEI is continuing to change at the state and federal levels.

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2026, Council and the DEI Commission held a joint study session to discuss and provide direction on the purpose, duties, activities, and priorities of the DEI Commission found in Chapter 1.88 of Ellensburg City Code.

WHEREAS, on February 17, 2026, Council provided direction to staff to draft an ordinance containing revisions to Chapter 1.88 of the Ellensburg City Code, regarding the name, purpose, duties, activities, and priorities of the DEI Commission, for consideration at a future Council meeting.

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2026, Council conducted first reading of Ordinance No. 4982, and directed staff to revise the draft ordinance to reflect the new name of the commission, which is the "Access, Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement Commission."

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Ellensburg, Washington do hereby ordain as follows:

Section 1. Section 1.88.010 of the Ellensburg City Code, as last amended by Section 1 of Ordinance 4916, is hereby amended to read as follows:

1.88.010 - Creation and purpose.

There is created the access, advocacy, equity and engagement commission consisting of nine members, one of whom shall be a city council member serving as chairperson and a nonvoting member except in the case of a tie.

The purpose of the access, advocacy, equity, and engagement commission is to advise and assist the city council in promoting meaningful community participation, equitable access to city

government services, and opportunities that support multicultural understanding, and a sense of belonging within the city of Ellensburg through action, advocacy, education, and guidance. Through its advisory role, the commission will seek to support Ellensburg in fostering a community that welcomes and is supportive to all residents and visitors because doing so enriches each individual's life and the community's well-being, safety, and vitality.

(Ord. No. 4916, § 1, 5-15-2023; Ord. 4883 § 37, 2022; Ord. 4871 § 1, 2021)

Section 2. Section 1.88.020 of the Ellensburg City Code, as last amended by Section 38 of Ordinance 4883, is hereby amended to read as follows:

1.88.020 - Term—Composition.

A. Members of the access, advocacy, equity and engagement commission shall serve without compensation for a three-year term. At least five members must reside within the city limits of the city of Ellensburg.

B. Each replacement member of the commission will be appointed to a full three-year term by city council.

C. The city council shall appoint commission members who bring knowledge of community needs, familiarity with barriers that may affect participation in civic life or access to services, and a demonstrated interest in promoting community engagement and access to city services. In making appointments, the city council will seek to attract members who represent business, nonprofit, community organizations, or education sectors, and who have skills or experience in analytics, translation, marketing, technology, human resources, or other areas relevant to the commission's work. Commission members should demonstrate the ability to engage with individuals with differing viewpoints, collaborate constructively, and contribute to thoughtful discussions of issues impacting community participation.

(Ord. 4883 § 38, 2022; Ord. 4871 § 1, 2021)

Section 3. Section 1.88.040 of the Ellensburg City Code, as last amended by Section 40 of Ordinance 4883, is hereby amended to read as follows:

1.88.040 - Subcommittees.

The commission may create subcommittees that include members of the public to address certain community engagement topics, issues affecting access or barriers to services or civic participation, or assist with specific initiatives. The subcommittee chair must be a member of the access, advocacy, equity and engagement commission, and must be appointed by a majority of the commission membership.

(Ord. 4883 § 40, 2022; Ord. 4871 § 1, 2021)

Section 4. Section 1.88.050 of the Ellensburg City Code, as last amended by Section 1 of Ordinance 4871, is hereby amended to read as follows:

1.88.050 - Communication with city council.

The commission shall forward communications which require city council action to city council through separate memoranda, including all rationale, which shall be scheduled as council agenda items. The commission may designate a representative(s) to present recommendations or provide clarification to the council during council meetings when matters related to the commission are being considered. Memoranda requesting council authority for programs or projects that require funding must be received by June 30 of each year in order to be considered for inclusion in the biennial budget or annual budget amendment process. Commission recommendations not incorporated in the preliminary budget shall be forwarded to the city council for consideration with the preliminary budget.

(Ord. 4871 § 1, 2021)

Section 5. Section 1.88.060 of the Ellensburg City Code, as last amended by Section 1 of Ordinance 4871, is hereby amended to read as follows:

1.88.060 - Duties and responsibilities.

The powers and duties of the commission shall be as follows:

A. Advise city council on actions, strategies, processes, and services needed to sustain and improve community engagement, improve access to city government services, and support opportunities for residents to participate in civic life in Ellensburg;

B. Identify and provide recommendations regarding barriers that may affect residents' ability to participate in community life or access city services and programs;

C. Recommend for council adoption an annual commission plan that may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Developing activities such as forums, community gatherings, neighborhood programs, and events to promote mutual understanding and that encourage residents to connect with one another;
2. Identifying partner groups or organizations to sponsor regular multicultural activities and community conversations on relevant policy issues;
3. Advising the city on communication plans, strategies, and culturally appropriate outreach to distribute information to residents who may experience barriers to participation, including language access, disability access, or other accessibility needs;

4. Advising the city on outreach strategies for improving awareness of barriers and access to city services;
5. Advising the city council regarding the impact of policy and budgetary decisions on residents who may experience additional barriers to participation or access to city government services;
6. Developing relevant metrics and assessments for measuring progress and/or success of the commission's work (including, but not limited to, grant funded events); and
7. Submitting a report to council that references the work plan and includes recommendations to the city council on how to achieve the duties and responsibilities outlined in this section. Reports to the city council may be made as progress occurs, but no less than annually.

D. Advise city council on questions and issues the council sends to the commission for review.

(Ord. 4871 § 1, 2021)

Section 6. Severability. If any portion of this ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion(s) of this ordinance.

Section 7. Corrections. Upon the approval of the City Attorney, the City Clerk and the codifiers of this ordinance are authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener's/clerical errors, references, ordinance numbering, section/subsection numbers and any references thereto.

Section 8. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force five (5) days after its passage, approval and publication.

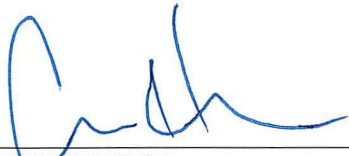
The foregoing ordinance was passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council on the 6th day of April, 2026.


MAYOR

ATTEST:


CITY CLERK

Approved as to form:



CITY ATTORNEY

Publish: 4-9-26

I, Beth Leader, City Clerk of said City, do hereby certify that Ordinance No. 4982 is a true and correct copy of said Ordinance of like number as the same was passed by said Council, and that Ordinance No. 4982 was published as required by law.



BETH LEADER

Access Advocacy Equity & Engagement Commission (AAEE) Work Plan Options - DRAFT

- Community Conversations on City Policy Topics
- Proclamations/Days of Recognition
- Review Commission Roles - Update interview questions for membership
- Guidance on targeted outreach
- Translation and Interpretation Resources –develop and retain a list of local interpreters and translation services to aid City staff and refer other agencies as well
- Consult on workshops/event planning and outreach strategies
- Cultivate access points to distribute information to marginalized and micro-communities
- Develop workshops to educate staff on access/trust building for all groups in community (all services)

Budget & Grants

- Accessibility
- Translation
- Equipment – purchase headsets?
- Survey – measurement, paid ads, etc.
- Grants – need policy – sustainable funding – alignment with other City programs – and metrics for impact

Policy Reviews – Staff Initiated

- Fees, rate increases
- Housing app. Awareness
- City grant applications
- Plan reviews
- Comp Plan Climate Element (May/June)
- Chapter 9 Update
- Comp Plan open house this summer
- Aquatic facility planning

- Review Comms plans, community surveys, and outreach strategies for all City-wide plans
- Consider role in facilitating engagement activities with staff/consultant guidance/support
- Guidelines toolbox – accessibility
- Civic education – Ellensburg Academy? Civic Engagement in Kittitas County America 250 event?

Events

- Juneteenth
- America 250
- Bike Month
- Ellensburg Academy (March)

Measure Impact

- Qualitative and Quantitative
- Survey – Social Scientists
- Barriers Identified / Removed
- Demographics tracking

AAEE Commission 2026 Work Plan Summarized

For the remainder of 2026, the AAEE Commission will focus on:

- Develop Spending Plan for 2026 (Requires Council Approval)
- Develop 2027 funding and policy for ongoing AAEE grants to establish a sustainable funding source and align timelines with other City grant programs. Forward to Council for consideration. (Urgent)
- Review and participate in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (Chapter 9 and others) – Open House in July 2026
- Develop guidance on reaching marginalized groups for outreach for City-sponsored community events (to incorporate in AAEE grants)
- Support and participate in City-sponsored community events that are meant to bring the community together
- Participate in civic education opportunities
- Develop metrics and other standards to measure impact of committee work over time (Subcommittee/Staff)

Action Item	Responsible Party	Due Date
AAEE Spending Plan	Commission or Subcommittee/Staff Support	June 2026
Grant Policy	Subcommittee/Staff Support	June/July 2026
Comp Plan Chapter 9; Housing; Economic Development, etc. -Open House -Community Conversation	Commission or Subcommittee/Staff Support	July 2026 – Open House December 2026 - Complete
Outreach Guidance	Subcommittee/Staff	December 2026
Community Events -Juneteenth -Fourth of July/Independence Day/America 250 -Others	Commission or Subcommittee/Staff Support	September 2026
Build Metrics and Tools to measure Impact of	Subcommittee and Staff	December 2026

Commission and Grant Activities		
Access to Civic Education (Prepare item for Constitution Day or Ellensburg Academy)	Subcommittee	March 2027

Draft 2026 Staff Recommended Spending Plan

Juneteenth - \$1,300 (this is what their grant was for last year). *They have not submitted one yet for 2026.*

America 250 - \$2,000 (\$1,800 bands + \$200 Spanish translation)

Interpretation Headsets – one time purchase: \$3,000 for Language Mini 72MHz Interpretation System that includes 1 Transmitter, 1 Headworn Microphone, 20 Receivers, 20 Headphones, 1 Large Soft-Sided Carry case, and 1 24-Unit Drop-In Charging Tray. Similar to what the City has borrowed before.

Translation – Budget \$1,000 for translation of City flyers into Spanish. This could be available to all City departments, but the Commission would approve requests. (Average cost for 1 event flyer is ~\$100 (dependent on word count and base price)).



Meeting Date: May 12, 2026
City of Ellensburg
Access, Advocacy, Equity, & Engagement Commission
Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Staff Report
Submitted by:
Department: City Manager

Suggested Motion/Action:
Listen to staff updates.

Background/Summary:
Informational only:

- The Ellensburg Public Library is hosting a Humanities Washington public talk "Together: The Promise of Democracy" at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13 at the Hal Holmes Community Center.
- The Landmarks and Design Commission is hosting a free scavenger hunt this month called the Ellensburg History Quest. More info at www.ellensburgwa.gov/scavengerhunt
- Save the date for the Ellensburg Bike Month Event from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 30 at Unity Park. Throughout the month there will be a ride raffle contest and a photo contest. Additional information at www.ellensburgwa.gov/bikemonth
- Coffee With City Council at the Bike Month event at Unity Park from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on May 30.
- Coffee With City Council at First Friday Art Walk at Unity Park from 5-7 p.m. on June 5.
- Touch A Truck is set for 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17 at Rotary Park, 1200 W. 5th Ave. Kids can see, touch, climb on, and learn about public agency vehicles and equipment in a safe environment.

Previous Council Action:
N/A

Analysis:
N/A

Financial Impact:
N/A

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

None