ROSEVILLE

# REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Date: January 26, 2009
Item No.: 13.c

Department Approval | City Manager Approval

Item Description: Discuss a Neighborhood and Diversity Commission

## BACKGROUND

The Imagine Roseville 2025 visioning process produced numerous goals and strategies for the community, and there were also some common themes identified by the Steering Committee as noted in their presentation of the Final Report to the City Council. Two of those themes were Diversity (people, ideas, development, revenue) and Sense of Community (neighborhoods, engagement opportunities, facilities and gathering places, open and responsive government).

Of the 15 goals that were adopted in the final report, the first five goals clearly identify with enhancing neighborhoods and embracing our community's diversity. These goals include:

- Roseville is a welcoming community that appreciates differences and fosters diversity
- Roseville is a desirable place to live, work and play
- Roseville has a strong and inclusive sense of community
- Roseville residents are invested in their community
- Roseville is a safe community

Some of the Imagine Roseville 2025 goals and strategies statements that relate even more specifically to the themes of diversity and community are:

- Educate community members on diversity issues and provide means to repair damage caused by prejudice; convey a clear message that intolerance is not welcome in our community.
- Promote ethnic celebrations and festivals
- Foster collaboration between city and community-based organizations, groups, and nonprofits
- Encourage development of neighborhood groups, organizations, and forums in order to provide residents with a sense of belonging.

One of the challenges the community faces is the implementation of the Imagine Roseville 2025 strategies. To that end, staff has developed a concept that we believe will help further the Imagine Roseville 2025 goals related to Diversity and Sense of Community.

## DISCUSSION

Making Roseville a more welcoming community requires leadership from our residents. At the recent Human Rights Commission sponsored community forum, nearly 100 attendees shared many ideas about this topic. It is important that we tap this resource, get those (and other) citizens engaged and increase our efforts to build neighborhoods around our common interest and goals.

With the completed Imagine Roseville 2025 strategies, staff believes that the energies of the Human Rights Commission members could be used more effectively with a change in focus to Neighborhood outreach and communication and furthering the community awareness of our growing diversity as well as our shared values.

Utilizing the existing Human Rights Commission as a reconstituted "Neighborhood and Community Diversity Commission" could provide the community focus and effort needed to further the Imagine Roseville 2025 goals in these areas.

The Roseville Human Rights Commission was established in 1968 to secure equal opportunity for all citizens by assisting the state department of human rights. Over the years of its existence, the Human Rights Commission has been an important component of the Roseville government, advocating for human rights issues and addressing specific conditions or situations.

The Commission has not been directly involved in human rights complaints since the state Human Rights Department discontinued referring complaints to cities in the early 1990s.

A Neighborhood and Community Diversity Commission would expand the Human Rights Commission's mission and give the City a greater opportunity to achieve these goals. It would support greater diversity awareness and cultural competence and help the City fully engage all of our residents to feel a vital part of our community. From sponsoring and facilitating community activities, helping to residents to identify and establish neighborhoods and communications networks to hosting cultural fairs to celebrate our diversity, this new commission can be a catalyst of change needed for our community.

Recent demographic statistics indicate a growing diversity in Roseville's population. The US Census Bureau report based on statistics from 2005-2007:

- 10% of Roseville residents were foreign born.
- 12% spoke a language other than English at home. The most commonly spoken language was Spanish.
- 27% of residents reported that they did not speak English "very well."

The 2000 Census, reported that 10.5% of residents were some other race than white.
In 2005, it is estimated that 14.7% of residents are some other race than white.

At its January meeting the Human Rights Commission discussed the restructuring of the Commission as a part of their strategic plan and goals, and consensually endorsed the concept.

With the upcoming advisory commission appointments coming before the City Council, staff felt it was a good time to bring this forward to the Council, so that if the Council supports the concept that applicants may be aware of this change and submit applications for the new commission. An ordinance effectuating the change has been drafted for the City Councils consideration.

## POLICY OBJECTIVE

To further the community goals and strategies related to neighborhoods and diversity.

## FINANCIAL IMPACTS

No additional financial impacts from existing advisory commission structure.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council direct staff to prepare the appropriate Ordinance creating a Neighborhood and Diversity Commission.

## REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION

That the City Council direct staff to prepare the appropriate Ordinance creating a Neighborhood and Community Diversity Commission.

**Prepared by: Bill Malinen, City Manager**