



BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Salt Lake City **Human Rights Commission** *Annual Report 2025*

A Message from the Chair and Vice-Chair

As we reflect on this past year, we do so amid global and national struggles for human rights that remind us how fragile dignity and justice can be, and how essential local action remains. While these moments can feel overwhelming, lasting change begins close to home, through the everyday work of neighbors committed to one another. This year, the Commission focused on issues that directly shape daily life in Salt Lake City, including convening a westside community forum that centered students' and parents' voices in envisioning a new school in a historically underrepresented area, advocating for affordable housing as a core priority in the Fleet Block redevelopment, and helping launch the Historical Landmarks Pilot Program to honor untold stories and preserve the histories of underrepresented communities.

The Commission also conducted research on Indigenous-style symbols used on city streetlamps, identifying misrepresentations and laying the groundwork for future recommendations to ensure public symbols accurately reflect Indigenous heritage. We are grateful to Mayor Erin Mendenhall and the Salt Lake City Council for their continued support and advocacy for human rights. Finally, we closed the year by gathering at the Utah State Capitol for Human Rights Day to honor community leaders advancing justice and equality. As new challenges emerge, including those related to our priorities, we remain committed to showing up for one another and affirming dignity, safety, and opportunity for every resident of Salt Lake City.

On behalf of the Human Rights Commission with gratitude and commitment to our City,

David Leta, Chair

Will Terry, Vice Chair

Board/Commission Members

David Leta, Chair, District 6
Will Terry, Vice Chair, District 4
Lisia Satini, District 1, REPC
Channae Haller, District 2 (Ending Sep. 25)
Olivia Jaramillo, District 3

Jennifer Mayer-Glenn, District 5
Emily Khan, District 7
Everette Bacon, At-Large, ADC
Pamela Silberman, At-Large

2025 Overview

Over the past 12 months, the Human Rights Commission focused on advancing human rights-centered approaches within City operations by strengthening its alignment with departmental initiatives and elevating community-identified concerns. The Commission reviewed and refined its priorities to better address emerging human rights issues, including access to City services, discrimination, and equitable delivery across systems impacting residents. Key contributions included engaging with select City departments and community partners to provide guidance on integrating human rights considerations into policies and related initiatives, participating in public meetings, and supporting community dialogue to surface lived experiences and areas of concern. The Commission also worked toward developing clearer processes for providing input on City initiatives, increasing transparency, and clarifying its advisory role to both internal and external stakeholders. Collectively, these efforts helped lay the foundation for more consistent, actionable human rights review and accountability in the year ahead.

COMPLETE:

- Advise policy update and work with necessary departments involved with historical markers project
- Work with Policy Advisor for Refugees and New Americans to finalize and publish Community Resource Guide.
- Provide a Commission perspective on Fleet Block RFQ Selection Committee.
- Conduct research on meaning behind Indigenous-style symbols on various street lamp posts across Salt Lake City.

IN PROGRESS/ ONGOING:

- Develop lines of communication and understanding between service providers, unsheltered communities, relevant policy makers, local housed residents and other impacted communities to create policy-related recommendations on homelessness and immigration.
- Maintain ongoing communication with and assist the City's departments in developing or reviewing policies that address a human rights perspective or impact.
- Engage and create connections/relationships with Indigenous organizations and identify City officials and/or departments for community collaboration on the human rights of Indigenous individuals.
- Review Salt Lake City's ordinances and policies for compliance with City goals, applicable Utah state law and applicable federal requirements to better ensure public safety, security and human rights.
- Review ways within Salt Lake City to celebrate cultural diversity, belonging and individual identity.

INCOMPLETE:

- Review and assess Salt Lake City's housing attainability plans for the next five years and provide recommendations where necessary and appropriate.

Annual Work Plan: 2026 Goals & Priorities

- I. Reconvene participants from past community forums in focus groups to debrief meaningful proposals on policy-related recommendations on specific priority areas, including current human rights concerns or priorities.
- II. Create a formal checkbox review process that allows the Mayor and City Council to request that specific transmittals be shared with the Commission for review/feedback.
- III. Draft a written recommendation to Mayor and City Council to allocate ongoing funds for the Historical Markers Program to expand visibility and representation of Salt Lake City's minority and historically under-told communities.
- IV. Draft a written recommendation to Mayor and City Council to approve and adopt a citywide Land Acknowledgement to be used for formal City events.
- V. Systematically review current and proposed Salt Lake City ordinances, policies, and initiatives through a human rights lens, and make relevant recommendations.

Appendix:

HRC Website

(<https://www.slc.gov/boards/boards-commissions/human-rights-commission-new/>)

HRC Ordinance

(https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/saltlakecityut/latest/saltlakecity_ut/o-o-o-51190)

HRC Meeting Information ([Minutes and Agendas](#))

CEDAW Ordinance

(<https://webdme.slcgov.com/AdoptedLegislation/DocView.aspx?id=4693772&dbid=0&repo=SLC&cr=1>)

2022 HRC Annual Report (https://www.slc.gov/boards/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2024/04/2022-HRC-Annual-Report-FINAL_.pdf)

2023 HRC Annual Report (<https://www.slc.gov/boards/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2024/04/HRC-Annual-Report-2023.pdf>)

2024 HRC Annual Report (<https://www.slc.gov/boards/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2025/08/HRC-Annual-Report-2024.pdf>)

Commission Insights on City Projects:

- Community Resource Guide (<https://www.slc.gov/access-belonging/slcnewamericans/slc-community-resource-guide/>)
- Historical Markers Pilot Program (<https://www.slc.gov/access-belonging/salt-lake-city-historical-markers-pilot-program/>)
- Fleet Block Mixed Use Development (<https://www.slc.gov/fleetblock/>)
- Public Safety Plan (<https://www.slc.gov/publicsafetyplan/>)