



November 14, 2019

The Honorable Andy Schor  
Mayor's Office – City of Lansing  
124 W. Michigan Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Mayor Andy Schor,

The Mayor's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council is respectfully submitting the following recommendations for your review and response. Please feel free to contact the Chair of MDAC, Melissa Jeffries if you have any questions or would like additional dialogue for clarification.

1. Create a Diversity Officer position for the City of Lansing to oversee our efforts, monitor and track inclusive trainings and provide diverse demographic information on current city employees.
2. Create a training or awareness campaign for transgender victims.
3. Increased promotion of culturally diverse events within the tri-county area.
4. Review of all festivals to ensure equality with budgets, supports, permits and offer free or reduced admittance for city residents.
5. Offer opportunities for our council members to participate through volunteer efforts for city events.
6. Address landlords in maintaining properties (outdated windows, gutters, broken doors or water pipes, etc.).
7. Create more programs in the city for youth development and training.
8. Assess city employment training to include unconscious bias, prohibited harassment, de-escalation and conflict resolution.
9. Request all employees sign an attestation that they fully understand the employee handbook, policies/procedures and will adhere to employment standards.

**10. City Employee Handbook recommendations:**

- Mayors Letter:
  - Suggestion to update to include “An atmosphere that creates a healthy, inclusive, and diversified work culture begins with you.”
  - Change “your team” to “our team”.
- Place the City’s Mission statement in the handbook.
- Page 1-5: ‘Diversity’ EEO, Sexual Harassment and Non-Discrimination, Complaint procedure and Reasonable Accommodation. Diversity should speak to the Mayors expectation and support of diversity and inclusion.
- Page 1: Change heading to “Diversity and Inclusion”. The city can be diversified but not inclusive so it’s important to use both words to set the expectation.
- The Sexual Harassment policy is tied to Non-Discrimination and the Complaint Procedure as one heading. Suggestion to have the Non-Discrimination and Complaint to be noted as its own heading.
- Provide visual examples and written instructions on how to request a Reasonable Accommodation to ensure it is easily accessible to employees.
- Page 7: There are work rule violations that are so serious they warrant immediate suspension or discharge of the employee (assault, destruction of City property, theft, etc.). Recommend including prohibited harassment.
- Page 9: Include a GR for prohibited harassment and discrimination.
- Ethics Manuel – Has ordinance and Board of Ethics. Recommend diversity and inclusion be included. There is no mention of the ethical piece to diversity and inclusion. There are also frequently asked questions that could be highlighted for diversity and inclusion in a Q & A format. Reference page 15 as the example.
- Incorporate a reminder: It is the City's responsibility to provide a safe working environment for all employees by maintaining a "Zero-Tolerance" to Workplace Violence Policy.
- Page 76: Picture of Accident Report form. Suggestion to include other pictures of forms your staffs are required to use.
- Safety: Note workplace accommodations (refer to pages 4-5).
- ‘Zero Tolerance’ Policy:
  - Suggest acts of discrimination based on culture, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

- Diversity and inclusion could have its own explanation in this area.
- Time frame for resolution so that the staff feel safe. Keeps city accountable to resolve concern in a timely manner.
- Safety Suggestion form:
  - Update this form to include areas to note safety or diversity and inclusion improvements etc.
- Pages 107 - 109, 111, 117, 126, and 128 has information typed in the color red. Red is difficult for people to read when they have visual disability. Change all font of the handbook to black.

Please contact our Chairperson, Melissa Jeffries with any questions and/or concerns.

Respectfully,

The Mayor's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council

## **Mayor Schor's Response to MIDAC Proposal submitted 6/8/2020**

Randy, Feliz, and Clara,

Below are the responses to your questions. I apologize for the delay in the response. I really thought I sent it months ago. I have reviewed and updated, and below are my responses. Please let me know if you need any further information.

Andy

1. Create a Diversity Officer position for the City of Lansing to oversee our efforts, monitor and track inclusive trainings and provide diverse demographic information on current city employees.

I would like to have a Diversity Officer for the City and planned to look at creation of a Diversity Officer at the beginning of the year. This could mean transforming or updating an existing position, or creation of a new position. Due to transition in the HRCS department, then a significant budget shortfall that lead to the City having to greatly reduce budget reserves, hiring of any new positions was not feasible. Now, with the results of COVID-19 on the economy and the reduction of the City budget by \$12.5 million in three months, any new hiring is frozen. The City of Lansing currently has a position that handles Equal Opportunity (Guadalupe Ayala) in the HRCS Department. Director Kim Coleman is reviewing the structure of the department and recommending changes. I plan to review job duties of the current EOC position with HRCS Director Director Kim Coleman to see if that can be augmented into a Diversity Officer position as well.

2. Create a training or awareness campaign for transgender victims.

I am happy to work with any LGBTQ+ groups to create training and awareness for LGBTQ+ victims. I have visited the Salus Center in downtown Lansing and have discussed issues of LGBTQ+ needs with those in the community. The City of Lansing issues \$1.5-\$1.7 million each year from our general fund towards social services, which includes dollars for victims. We have many agencies in the City of Lansing that receive Lansing taxpayer funding. MIDAC can discuss with Director Kim Coleman which victims agencies are supported, and how LGBTQ+ agencies can apply and be considered for these dollars to provide training and awareness services for LGBTQ+ victims.

3. Increased promotion of culturally diverse events within the tri-county area.

The City of Lansing will certainly continue to promote culturally diverse events in the City of Lansing, and work with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and others to promote these events throughout the region. This can be done in printed materials and other promotional items.

4. Review of all festivals to ensure equality with budgets, supports, permits and offer free or reduced admittance for city residents.

This is a great idea. We have concerts in the park every year. And the Mayor's riverwalk, and #lovelansing, and the senior fair, and a few other things through the Parks Department. But we also support and promote a number of other free events, such as Juneteenth, Margaritafest, Harmony, and others. And we work with artists every year for arts events (ArtPATH, Mural festival, etc). We have previously supported Common Ground, but that has moved to be self-sufficient at the stadium. But the City certainly plays a part as we support LEPFA, who puts on Common Ground. We also have monthly Mobile Food Pantries, if you want to include that. I think it is an excellent idea for the MIDAC to review festivals that happen in the city to ensure equality with budgets and supports. The Parks and HRCS and Neighborhoods departments can provide information needed for a review. And I assume the individuals who put on the private festivals can provide the budgets if they are willing. The list of festivals on city property can be provided by the Parks Department as well (through the SIPA form). Information for festivals at the stadium, including Common Ground, can be provided by LEPFA.

5. Offer opportunities for our council members to participate through volunteer efforts for city events.

This a great idea to have the MIDAC members assist with volunteering throughout the city. We have the SERVE Lansing program where we ask people to sign up for volunteer opportunities. I hope all members will sign up at [servelansing.com](http://servelansing.com). We also have a Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement regular email and newsletter where people can sign up for neighborhood information. There are often neighborhood street and park cleanups and other volunteer opportunities. Members of MIDAC can sign up at <https://neighborhoods.lansingmi.gov/>. You can also discuss this with Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement Director Andi Crawford.

6. Address landlords in maintaining properties (outdated windows, gutters, broken doors or water pipes, etc.).

Code Compliance in the City of Lansing does this daily and regularly. They address hundreds of issues every year with both landlords and homeowners. Our Code Compliance inspection staff ensure rental properties are up to code regularly when doing rental inspections, and our premise inspectors ensure all properties are well maintained. Because of the many issues, they focus on complaints first. But we also have a corridor inspector who addresses property maintenance with our commercial

properties on our business corridors. You can invite Brian McGrain (Director of the Economic Development and Planning Department) to any future MIDAC meeting to discuss these important issues.

7. Create more programs in the city for youth development and training.

This is a good idea and we have tried to do that in the past. We work with many outside agencies for youth development and training. Again, we have dollars through the Basic Human Needs fund where we fund agencies doing this work. We have also worked with student councils at each of the high schools. We work closely with the Capital Area Michigan Works! Agency. We have financial work that we do with city youth to ensure they are prepared for the future. Our Fire Department has CPR Certified 85 students at Sexton High School, and had scheduled CPR certification for 45 Students at Eastern High School on as well as CPR certification for 185 Students at Everett High School before COVID-19 shut downtown the schools. They also participated in a career fair at the Hanna Community Center for Minorities in February, and are working with the Lansing School District to have a Fire I and II certified class in the Lansing School District. MIDAC can discuss any of these programs with city staff. Andi Crawford leads our Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement Department. Amber Paxton leads our Office of Financial Empowerment. Chief Michael Mackey is our Fire Chief. Kim Coleman is our HRCS director. Each of these people can address with MIDAC their programs. We also have many youth development programs through our Parks Department. I invite you to review our Lansing Living guide at <https://lansingmi.gov/1630/Lansing-Living>. If there are questions about this programming, Brett Kaschinske (our Parks Director) can address them.

8. Assess city employment training to include unconscious bias, prohibited harassment, de-escalation and conflict resolution.

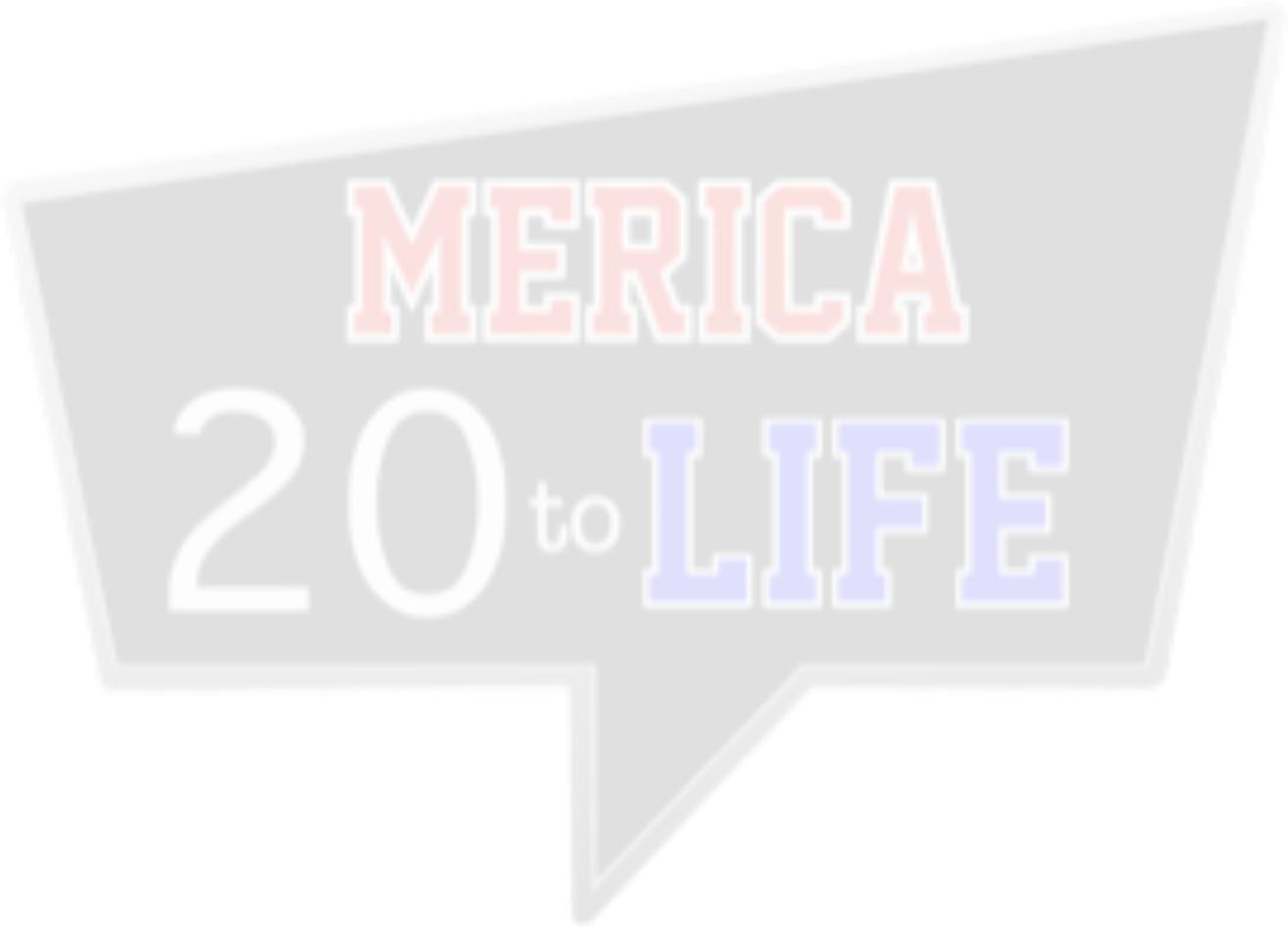
HR Director Linda Sanchez-Gazella can share with MIDAC the policies that we have in the city and review with you the trainings that we have. Once that is done, she is certainly open to recommendations for other trainings. You can also discuss this with Police Chief Daryl Green, as racial bias in policing is a prominent national issue and the Lansing police department has engaged in many of these trainings (implicit bias, etc) with our officers. The Lansing Police Department officers have received training regarding Humane Policing (Police and Youth Interactions), Implicit Bias, De-escalation, and Crisis Intervention Training. The department receives annual legal updates and diversity centered topic training and use of force scenario-based trainings that are centered around de-escalation with knowledge of mental illness. The department's use of force policy (response to resistance 600-7) requires the duty to intervene when excessive force is observed, bans chokeholds and strangle holds, requires de-escalation, requires a verbal warning when possible before shooting, all use of force incidents are reported, and police complaints are posted on our open data portal. Police officers wear body worn cameras and the department has maintained and analyzed traffic stop data concerning racial profiling since 2001.

9. Request all employees sign an attestation that they fully understand the employee handbook, policies/procedures and will adhere to employment standards.

Employees currently are required to sign that they have received and reviewed the employee handbook, as well as policies and procedures of the city, when the hire in to the city. I recommend that MIDAC invite her to a meeting and have discussions with her about the employee handbook and policies/procedures.

10. City Employee Handbook recommendations:

It was my understanding that these recommendations have been forwarded to HR Director Linda Sanchez-Gazella. If conversations have not yet happened, then I highly recommend an invitation to her to attend a MIDAC meeting. Director Sanchez-Gazella has done a lot of work to update the HR department and make it more efficient and effective. If review of the handbook has not happened, I expect it will happen soon. And these recommendations are good recommendations to be reviewed and considered.



MERICA  
20 to LIFE