

Draft Resolution
Renewing & Updating Pittsburgh’s Human Rights City Proclamation of 2011

WHEREAS, a Human Rights City is one whose residents and local authorities, through ongoing discussions and creative exchanges of ideas, come to understand that human rights, when widely known as a way of life, can influence meaningful, positive economic and social change;

WHEREAS, every human being is entitled to enjoy the full range of human rights;

WHEREAS, developing Human Rights Cities is an attempt to build infrastructure for human security, violence prevention, and sustainable development and to create a place for active civic engagement at the local, national, and global levels;

NOTING that the Human Rights Cities movement is part of a global movement for rights in cities that was launched by the People’s Decade for Human Rights Education (PDHRE) following the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna;

ALSO NOTING that the Human Rights Cities initiative aims to mobilize people in communities to pursue community-wide dialogues and to launch actions to improve the life and security of women, men and children based on human rights norms and standards;

WHEREAS, Human Rights Cities intentionally center the needs, voices, and leadership of historically oppressed groups, putting those furthest behind first and taking care to leave no one behind;

WHEREAS, the City of Pittsburgh became the [fifth Human Rights City in the United States in 2011](#), committing our City to using human rights to orient policy and to “[providing] leadership and advocacy to secure, protect, and promote human rights for all people”;

WHEREAS, in 2016, the City of Pittsburgh became the sixth city in the United States to adopt the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);

IN RECOGNITION of the [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Task Force Recommendations](#) issued in April 2019;

IN FURTHER RECOGNITION of the Pittsburgh Gender Equity Commission’s analysis, [Pittsburgh’s Inequality across Gender and Race](#), which, together with the [Black Femmes response](#), was a wake-up call to city leaders to take meaningful steps to address our city’s deep and long-standing racial and gender disparities;

AWARE that, in January 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic, the City Council declared racism a public health crisis, yet our region’s Black population has continued to suffer disproportionate health impacts;

FURTHER AWARE that, in July 2020, Pittsburgh City Council adopted [All-In Pittsburgh's Ten Commitments To Racial Equity](#), committing itself to deliberately and systematically applying a racial equity lens in all of its decision-making, implementing best practices advocated by proponents of racial justice, the elimination of race-based disparities, and furthering racial equity in all of the City's municipal authorities and special-purpose government agencies, and promoting racial equity to the larger Pittsburgh community;

WHEREAS, in June 2021 the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights issued the "[Agenda towards transformative change for racial justice and equality](#)," calling on governments at all levels to stop denying and start "accelerating the pace of action" to transform systemic racism;

CONCERNED THAT, despite tremendous historical and contemporary efforts, Pittsburgh faces ongoing challenges related to systemic racism, healthcare, housing, environmental justice, and basic human dignities;

RECOGNIZING that Mayor Gainey began his administration with extensive community input that produced the [Transition Report 2022](#) as part of a process of shaping a new, more inclusive vision for the city;

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh's Human Rights City Alliance and its many community partners have led work to build [a national network of human rights cities](#) to share lessons and good practices and otherwise support human rights leadership across U.S. cities;

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh's leadership in the national and global human rights movements is reflected in its hosting visits by UN human rights leaders, including Leilani Farha, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Adequate Housing and Justin Hansford, elected delegate to the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent;

AFFIRMING that the extension of equitable civil rights is inextricably linked to the enforcement of human rights;

FURTHER AFFIRMING that human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated;

NOTING that human rights are continually being developed through the engagement and struggles of people whose needs have been marginalized from dominant institutions;

FURTHER NOTING that Human Rights Cities grow from the understanding that actualizing human rights requires vigilant, organized, empowered, and engaged communities whose members monitor, defend, and support individual and collective rights;

WHEREAS, Human Rights Cities aim to recognize how the history of oppression has shaped dominant institutions and how it reproduces violence and discrimination;

WHEREAS, building Human Rights Cities requires historical truth-telling, reconciliation, and healing for individuals and communities;

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh is home to a robust community of multi-racial, intergenerational and multi-cultural civil and human rights organizations;

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh supports international human rights principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and subsequent international human rights treaties which promote the humanity of all persons, and enable all peoples to meet their basic needs;

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh commits to ensuring economic and social rights, as well as civil, and political rights, including expression, association, and assembly;

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh commits to protect the rights of all peoples to live their lives free from bias, discrimination, disparate treatment or targeting because of their identity, including but not limited to faith, race, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, carceral status, and immigration status;

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh supports human rights accountability for all governments around the world, and urges the United States to more fully and effectively implement its international and regional human rights commitments, and constructively participate in activities that foster accountability for those commitments; and

WHEREAS, collaborative community input and leadership processes are key to Pittsburgh embodying the spirit of international law requiring the extension of human rights to all;

CONCLUDING THAT, in order to fulfill its potential, this Resolution will need to be operationalized, and;

ANTICIPATING consideration of an Ordinance to specify actions necessary to its implementation and the creation of a permanent monitoring body to establish targets, evaluate progress, and consider complaints;

LET IT THEREFORE BE RESOLVED that the Pittsburgh City Council, in meeting assembled, *re-affirms* its commitment to make the City of Pittsburgh a Human Rights City and *renews* its determination to take meaningful steps improve human rights protections for all residents on DATE, effective immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council encourages the administration to create an advisory task force comprising relevant City officials, community leaders representing historically minoritized residents, and others versed in human rights to work with Council leaders to develop an Ordinance to specify methods for establishing targets and monitoring and evaluating progress, based on models such as those specified by [United Cities and Local Governments](#), and to

recommend steps to reform City governance and all relevant agencies to better respect, protect, and fulfil human rights in the City of Pittsburgh.