



Inclusive Cities Community Feedback Results

March 3, 2018
Herrick District Library

Q1: What does an inclusive city feel and look like?

INCLUSIVE

We can't fear change

Everyone is heard

You feel heard and (action) you are heard

Diversity of people and ideas

We invite everyone's ideas during process

Civil discourse-respect for all

Love motivating action, not fear

Welcoming

Sense of "I belong here"

Welcoming downtown

It feels like home for everyone

Feels welcoming

Welcome beyond tolerance

We all move from "guests" to "hosts"

Inclusive means all people and their views are just as included and ever one else's view.

We are all one human family. No strangers!

Inclusion has no exception at all.

Begin with Holland as inclusive as opposed to being adversarial.

Any person that visits Holland should not come because their ideas are preferred but that any person can come and feel welcome.

COMMUNICATIONS

Feedback is welcome

Feedback is asked for

We solicit diverse perspectives

Feedback is received and put into action

Different ideas represented

Dialogue happens, not monologues

One that uses language and promotes activities that make all types of individuals and families feel included, welcomed, and celebrated.

Listening skills.

Open to listen and not reply.

Media promoting unity rather than dividing diversity. Making a point of highlighting this unity.

VALUES

Every resident feels valued

No one left out or marginalized

We seek understanding of differences

Less judgement

We honor and respect all people, race religion, experience, economic status

Acceptance of other faiths

We do not assume everyone in the community is a Christian – maintain separation of church and state

We celebrate diversity in all venues

It feels fair

Treat others as we would want to be treated and consider others better than ourselves.

People do unto others as they would have others do unto them. Golden Rule.

Show compassion, acceptance, understanding, empathy, love.

People are sensitive to others from different backgrounds, working to show acceptance and validation of them in whatever the setting.

Honor everyone. Respect everyone. Value everyone.

People are friendly, kind, encouraging and gracious, understanding of different value systems. See others as valuable human beings.

Break down the bridge.

Collaboration of diverse perspectives

Remove assumptions about P. Treat the person.

No where ridicule and condemnation. Code of conduct, consideration and dignity for everyone.

A place of empowerment

Viewing ourselves as a community unit and taking responsibility for all concerns. If any one agenda disparages another perspective, it should not be tolerated.

A place where an LGBTQIA couple can feel safe to live life in the same way as a straight couple in public (holding hands, etc.)

People work to respect each other, listen to each other, care about each other, and treat each other with dignity, no matter whether they agree or not.

All deserve: validation, understanding, safety, dignity, respect, empathy, honor, rights, protection, value, caring, love, compassion, consideration.

Differences: backgrounds, money, professions, values, faiths, beliefs, sexual orientation, gender ID, family structure.

Respect without depriving other's right to be happy.

Be more concerned of the needs of those marginalized.

Be more concerned of the welfare of all humans than just our own.

All people are treated just like they would like to be treated.

Every person has value. Note either/or but both/and.

A community that I could bring my 90 year old mother and she would feel included.
Each person's ideas tolerated and not put down.

ACCEPTANCE

Mixed income neighborhoods with public places
Good looks like all "colors" in my neighborhood and the entire city
School demographics that match community
Variety of choices
Fair housing. We uphold existing regulations.
Acceptance of people as individuals is more important than any group of people or ideology.

SAFETY

Every resident feels safe
Know you are protected by city policy
Physical features, job positions, skills, degrees or education should not limit opportunity for a safe life in our community.
Better trained officers.
Diversity in action. Restorative Justice.
Inclusive ordinances.

ACTIONS and CONTRIBUTIONS

It looks like we work at it – involvement is purposeful
We share information transparently
Everyone is expected to contribute to the common good
Leadership is shared and diverse
Removing barriers
Community commitment to improvement process: easier not more difficult
Stronger support schools public
To see a public school system where teachers are able to voice their concerns or strike. Contract XXXX the can be fixed in Holland.
Cultural activities aside from Tulip Time.
Make public celebrations of other cultures such as Chinese New Year, Jewish holidays, Islam holidays, etc.
Murals that reflect the city and neighborhood.
Greater advocacy for healthy marginalized.
Holding forums that have interpreters so that all ideas can be expressed.
Having designated parking for visitors, pregnant mothers, etc in addition to disabled that is close to destination.
Support for disabilities for park and downtown.
Advance relationships not behaviors.

COLLABORATIVE

Silos: education, government, church, business, non-profits

ACCESSIBLE

All families have equitable access to lake, downtown, farmers' market, parks and recreation
Neighborhoods are not segregated by wealth, distribution of income
People should have opportunity to become informed about resources, accessible to all and how some may need further support.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership positions reflect the demographics of our community
City council reflects community demographically
School board reflects community demographically
Diversity in agencies – Chamber, Tulip Time, etc
Business and organizations reflect demographics of community
Demographic mix of businesses on 8th street
Community make-up reflected in leadership groups
Engage citizens during election
A meeting that looks like those who it is trying to include
We cannot legislate inclusiveness, we must be willing to do our part to understand others' needs and perspectives.

CULTURAL VALUES

Variety of ethnic food establishments
Interesting
Celebrate Together
Each community event or festival is supported equitably by the city and its citizens: Cinco de Mayo, Juneteenth, Tulip Time, PRIDE, etc.

ECONOMIC

Strong and growing economic environment
Inclusion = Engagement and participation
Money, or lack of it, should not affect one's status as a community citizen.
To see downtown businesses not all white owned

BRAND

Holland is known outside of the area as an inclusive community. Great place for anyone and everyone to live!
Diversity and inclusion is viewed as an asset to the community.

ACCEPTANCE and ROLE of RELIGION

Those who don't practice religion are not ostracized by those who do.

Diverse – accepting of all ethnicities and religions (or none)

Equal opportunities for all – race, gender, etc.

Welcome differences. Accepting.

Yes, acceptance is good to a degree, but we need to discriminate in our choices else we compromise on what is true and good.

Don't assume everyone is Christian.

Open to all

Willing to understand ideas, points of view, etc.

A comfort in sharing diverse thoughts, being respectful

We're individuals who have choices and can make decisions accordingly.

How far does "inclusive" have to go? Is it at the expense of some people and not others? Especially if we disagree based on our belief system?

Successful relationships are not defined narrowly by heterosexual marriage only.

We don't live in "enclaves."

Respect and appreciation that everyone as a life story of value and importance.

Comfortable with conflict.

Institutional practices have been revisited to reflect on this question.

Engaging different complexions, different ideas.

I hear "they" are welcome in my church, my neighborhood, etc, but there is little movement out of those churches etc, into others. Need more reciprocity.

Welcome those with no religious faith (i.e., make space for them).

There is no right or better religion.

God can't help, we are the only one responsible.

No one race, religion, sexual behavior is preferred above another.

Q2: How can we achieve a more inclusive city?

GOVERNMENT

City ensure diverse appointments for boards and commissions

Take religion out of City Hall

Separate church and state

Separate church and state

Eliminate opening prayer at City Council Mtgs.

At each meeting ask "what are our assumptions that we are making?"

Understand that change and diversity are the future.

Strengthen the police community relations, Human Relations, other committees addressing community relations issues and social justice.

Change housing policies, practices

Change laws and ordinances city state. Ex. LGBTQIA

Empower citizen action. Avoid government action.

Ensure that LGBTQIA individuals and families have the same rights and protections that straight people

enjoy.

Pass employment and enforce non-discrimination laws.

Address the housing crisis. Gentrification.

Population is demographically unfairly represented.

Mentor, apprentice, encourage non-white leaders in government and business

PROCESS

We need to understand what we are losing

Current state vs. ideal state. What are gaps?

Apply a multitude of lenses to each situation.

City Council and staff meet on a regular basis with major employers to learn what inclusive means to business and employees.

All public (city) employees have regular on-going training re: sensitivity to all.

Council and City committees engage with existing diversity groups. Be proactive.

Have staff and city council trained on inclusion and diversity.

Training on conflict for council and staff (restorative circles)

Leadership to look at their own life with introspection to see what areas of growth are needed.

Be comfortable with uncomfortable in the process. Take Risks!

Know and share metrics.

Show the value.

COMMUNICATION

Communicate the process in multiple ways, layered communications.

“Listening sessions” hosted by city to specifically include young people.

Utilize diverse media outlets. Produce info in multiple languages.

Identify community programs that already are occurring and establish collaborative relationships, Out on the Lakeshore, Circles, LAUP

City web newsletter promote all kinds of diverse public events.

Communicate in a variety of ways x multitude

Have community picnics in each ward where all staff and council attends. Go to the neighborhoods.

Don't wait for people to come to you.

Have dialogue in neighborhoods, not just at City Hall.

Increase use of social media to disseminate knowledge about meetings.

Embrace a “challenge culture”

Create opportunities for listening/sharing

Define inclusivity

Encourage on-going communication

Increase communication and engagement in the community by the HRC

Social Media (business, city, personal channels), Newspaper

Churches, schools

Encourage continued dialog – actual person to person, not just social media or radio, paper, tv

Speak up forcefully against any attempt to “dominate”
People groups express themselves openly.
Continue public dialogue.

POLICY

Make a plan, work the plan
Initiate a city-wide effort to ask, understand, grow
Put it in writing
Commitment at top. Cascade goals and align at all levels
Look over our policies that our city holds.
Elected officials have to embrace the vision.
There is no official document generated by city gov’t stating we do not discriminate and articulating specifics, eg: LGBTQIA mentioned.
Modify housing protections to protect ALL people, LGBTQIA, gender identity.
Plan housing development strategy to meet the needs of all incomes.
Advocacy formalized.
Local policies (zoning) to break down barriers for mixed income neighborhoods.
No one idea should be preferred in teaching to Holland public school children as respect to race, religion, sexual behavior.
Fair access
Right to live
Change job hiring practices.
Challenge banks: loans and microloans

HOW WE LEARN

Benchmark what it is being done well. Don’t reinvent the wheel.
Learn from other places.
Look outside Holland for “best practices”
Set up a diverse group of advisors to seek out when public events are held (round table), or policy is formed.
Education = course studies, cultural awareness
Establish a baseline in order to measure effectiveness
“Equity Audit” (see HPS)
Create long-term opportunities for education (cross sector)
Answer the question “Do we want to be inclusive?”
Education, Engagement, Community Events, Celebrations,
Community classes
Encourage events around similar interests, build bridges of individual relationships
Get training/education.
Invite pastors and community leaders
Look at how we “welcome” our neighbors. LGBTQIA, Muslim, Christian.

PUBLIC INTERACTION

Support our diverse city schools

Provide support for all cultural festivals

Create “social seams” where people can easily interact from diverse backgrounds

Offer inter-generational learning environments (younger viewpoints)

Circles: intentional places for diverse people to gather and build relationships.

Develop mentoring programs

Ethnic food lunch or banquet. A taste of culture

Emphasize building solid relationships and connected neighborhoods. Block parties, porch parties in summer.

Perhaps a contest component to food fairs that could highlight cultural differences in a positive way.

We must celebrate and have more inclusivity events.

Closer coordination of organizations that embrace inclusivity.

Encourage community to report personal experiences and have monthly anonymous discussions on the topics.

Encourage neighborhood relationships.

Encourage neighborhood get togethers, parties.

Community spotlights – opportunities: farmers’ market, churches, ministries, businesses and employees, schools and parents, hospital.

Produce: training, dinners or breakfasts, art and marketing, projects

Go to audiences’ demographics (youth, ASL, Black, Brown, Age)

Teach and hear from youth

Follow up

Global reach of business highlighted in International Festival

Defend the marginalized.

Celebrate our similarities and differences but not exclude others.

Don’t be a hypocrite. Stand up on the right side of humanity.

Strive for unity.

Translators

ASL and Brail interpreters