

## STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** April 28, 2026

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Daryel Dunston, City Manager  
Kelly Stachowicz, Assistant City Manager  
Carrie Dyer, Community Relations Program Manager

**SUBJECT:** Follow Up from Human Relations Commission Recommendations from Muslim/Arab/Palestinian/Allies (MAPA) Subcommittee Report

---

### **Recommendation**

1. Receive as informational the recommendations made by the Human Relations Commission in response to the Muslim, Arab, Palestinian, and Allies (MAPA) report, which was prepared by a subcommittee of the commission.
2. Acknowledge that discrimination of all forms exists in Davis and affirm the City's commitment to ongoing education and action to prevent discrimination.
3. Continue to provide awareness and education about the right to freedom of speech, emphasizing that political expression is constitutionally protected, regardless of view point. This applies to all members of our community.
4. Ask the Hate-Free Together Initiative to partner with the City to develop/share broad-based, cross-cultural, anti-bias information, resources or training that would be made available to the community.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The fiscal impact for staff time to address this issue is covered by the existing operating budget. There could be additional fiscal impacts associated with the development of resources provided by Hate-Free Together.

### **Commission Input**

The Human Relations Commission (Commission) serves as an advisory body to the Davis City Council. Its purpose is to promote mutual respect, understanding, justice, and advancing the human rights of all people. The Commission performs the following functions:

- Study and make recommendations around equity and discrimination in the city, including gathering information from affected individuals and connecting them to the appropriate agency, official, or process.
- Conduct and support, as appropriate, community forums and activities to prevent and address discrimination and promote diversity, equality, and justice relevant to the goals and policies of the City Council.

- Serve as the lead Commission regarding the City’s community engagement component of the Hate-Free Together initiative.

At the October 24, 2024 Human Relations Commission meeting, a subcommittee was created to inquire about possible discrimination against Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims and their supporters/allies within the Davis community in 2023 and 2024. The culmination of the subcommittee’s work was the creation of the Muslims, Arabs, Palestinians, and Allies (MAPA) report, presented to the full Commission in April of 2025.

In November of 2024, and as part of the same series of conversations at the Commission level, an additional subcommittee was created to investigate and document incidents of antisemitism and discrimination within Davis and propose strategies to combat antisemitism and discrimination. Rather than create a report, this subcommittee opted to focus on efforts that promoted the Jewish community, such as recommending endorsement of the Jewish American Heritage picnic and looking at ways to recognize Jewish calendar events in Davis.

At the April 2, 2025 meeting of the Human Relations Commission, the Muslim Arab Palestinian and Allies subcommittee presented a report, now referenced as the “MAPA” report, to the full Commission to include the feedback they received and their initial recommendations. This report was qualitative in nature, drawing from individual surveys, conversations, and online postings, to share the feelings, concerns, and fears of individuals who identified as Muslim, Arab, Palestinian, or their allies. At the Commission’s request, this item was brought back to the April 24, 2025 Commission meeting for additional review and consideration.

At the April 24 meeting, the following motion was made:  
Commissioner Baker moved, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan, for the Commission to receive the subcommittee report titled “Report on MAPA Climate & Experiences in Davis” and to forward the subcommittee-proposed recommendations to the City Council.

Commissioner Kol proposed a Friendly Amendment: Revise “MAPA” to “marginalized communities” throughout recommendations. The friendly amendment was not accepted by the mover.

The original motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Alvarez, Gorman, Pickett, Tamimi, Wong-Chen, Baker  
NOES: Kol

Commissioner Kol moved to write and submit a letter as an individual Human Relations Commissioner reflecting the minority opinion to append to the report and recommendations in order for City Council to see different views. No second to the motion was received and the motion failed.

At the next Human Relations Commission meeting on May 22, 2025, Commissioner Kol, with a second by Commissioner Wong-Chen, moved to agendaize a discussion to discuss at a subsequent meeting to discuss Commissioner Kol's proposed minority opinion to be submitted alongside the MAPA report recommendations. The motion failed by the following vote:

AYES: Kol, Wong-Chen  
NOES: Alvarez, Baker  
ABSTAIN: Gorman, Pickett  
ABSENT: Tamimi

This staff report provides to the City Council for consideration the recommendations approved by the full Commission on April 24, 2025.

### **Background and Analysis**

The MAPA report, prepared by a subcommittee of the Human Relations Commission, compiles qualitative information gathered through interviews, review of social media posts, and a survey. According to the report, respondents included residents, UC Davis faculty, staff and students, and DJUSD parents and staff. The subcommittee asserts that the respondents represent a relatively even mix of Muslims, Arabs, Palestinians, and their allies. Based on this input, the subcommittee recorded input from MAPA community members, which highlighted the respondents' concerns related to:

- A climate of fear and discrimination
- Fear of retaliation
- Silencing and erasure of voices
- Weaponization of antisemitic labeling
- Frustration with the normalization of intimidation
- Perceived disregard by UC Davis and the City of Davis for issues affecting Muslim, Arab and Palestinian communities

### **Human Relations Commission Recommendations:**

The Commission ultimately supported the following recommendations to forward to the City Council for consideration:

*1. Acknowledgement of anti-MAPA discrimination in Davis.*

According to the subcommittee, while the City of Davis has worked to recognize Arab American Heritage month on April 1, 2025, many feel an acknowledgement of the anti-MAPA discrimination in Davis since 2023 is needed.

*2. Commitment to free speech, including speech advocating for justice for Palestine and the Palestinian people.*

According to the subcommittee, in recognizing anti-MAPA discrimination, many feel a commitment to demonstrate solidarity and care for the MAPA communities going forward requires a commitment to explaining that political non-hate speech is protected, including speech on justice for Palestine and the Palestinian people.

*3. Recommend that the City Manager or appropriate City staff reach out to set up meeting(s) to review the report and discuss appropriate next steps with DJUSD and UCD administrators.*

The subcommittee requested a report on planned next steps within 6 months and implementation progress provided to HRC within 1 year.

*4. City commitment to Anti-Palestinian Racism and Anti-Muslim Bias Training for staff and council.*

As part of creating a comprehensive anti-bias and anti-racism training set, the subcommittee recommends the inclusion of anti-Palestinian racism and anti-Muslim bias training in the city's professional development requirements.

*5. A request from the City for the DJUSD Superintendent to acknowledge and release a statement on MAPA discrimination in Davis.*

According to the subcommittee, while the school district has taken steps to remedying a lack of focus on MAPA communities, an acknowledgement of the lack of communication to show solidarity and care for the MAPA communities would be helpful.

*6. A request from the City for the UCD Administration to acknowledge and release a statement on MAPA discrimination in Davis.*

Given the deep concerns regarding the treatment and handling of complaints by UCD MAPA communities, which were brought up by faculty, staff and administrators, the subcommittee requests a statement of solidarity with MAPA communities and a public commitment to protect them on campus is needed.

#### Staff Response and Recommendations

The report, the discussions at the Human Relations Commission, and the Commission's recommendations have spurred impassioned and often heated comments from many community members across many perspectives. The City has heard from many individuals and groups, including Jewish organizations and affiliated community members, both in public testimony and in writing at multiple commission meetings, at City Council meetings, in the press and online, that they too feel frightened, targeted, and discriminated against in Davis because of their religion, heritage, affiliation, and/or political views.

Community input on the report has been very divided: some community members support the report and its recommendations based on the view that it offers voice to members of the community who have felt unheard and afraid. Other community members believe that the report and its recommendations are harmful and have only contributed to further tension and division within the community.

Discussions surrounding the MAPA report have been painful for many, yet they have also created an opportunity for community members from multiple perspectives to share their concerns, anger, fears, and lived experiences in a public platform.

It is clear to staff that the anger and the fear on the many sides of this issue are real, are deep-rooted, and are not fully resolvable by the Davis City Council. The City strives to provide an atmosphere where all community members feel safe to practice their religions, honor their heritages, and speak their beliefs, within legal boundaries and while respecting constitutionally protected, individual freedoms.

With that in mind, staff provides the following responses to the Commission recommendations, along with staff recommendations to the City Council for consideration:

*HRC Recommendation 1: The City acknowledge MAPA discrimination in Davis.*

*Staff Response:* The City of Davis stands firmly against all forms of discrimination and will continue to reaffirm the City Council's commitment against violence, anti-Muslim hate, anti-Arab hate, anti-Palestinian hate, antisemitism, and other forms of bigotry, hatred, and discrimination against any group based on any protected class.

The Hate-Free Together Initiative, which is a joint effort that includes the City of Davis, Yolo County, UC Davis, the Davis Joint Unified School District and the Yolo County Office of Education, provides resources, support, and opportunities for actions that help to condemn hate, create safety, and cultivate change.

The Hate-Free Together website ([www.hatefreetogether.org](http://www.hatefreetogether.org)) lists a variety of resources for community members, maintains a learning center, and notes upcoming events, programs and learning opportunities.

*HRC Recommendation 2: A commitment to free speech, including speech advocating for justice for Palestine and the Palestinian people.*

*Staff Response:* The City takes its commitment to free speech, as protected by the federal and state constitutions, very seriously. Political speech, regardless of its viewpoint, is at the core of this protection. The City remains firmly committed to protecting freedom of speech in public forums over which it has control. However, taking action that expressly indicates support or opposition for the content of that speech is not recommended.

*HRC Recommendations 3, 5 and 6: These recommendations each deal with other jurisdictions, specifically Davis Joint Unified School District and UC Davis. One is for the City to set up meetings with UCD and DJUSD to review the report and discuss next steps. The remaining two recommend that the City request the DJUSD Superintendent and the UCD Administration, respectively, to acknowledge and release a statement on MAPA discrimination in Davis.*

*Staff Response:* The City of Davis does not have authority over other jurisdictions and cannot require them to issue statements or implement programs. Both UC Davis and DJUSD have representatives who participate in the Commission meetings and are aware of the subcommittee's report, the spectrum of viewpoints surrounding the issues, and the Commission's recommendations. It is up to each jurisdiction to determine whether or how they wish to pursue any of the recommendations or feedback. Staff does not recommend pursuing recommendations 3, 5 or 6.

*HRC Recommendation 4: City commitment to Anti-Palestinian Racism and Anti-Muslim Bias Training for staff and council.*

The City has a robust Anti-Harassment and Discrimination policy, last revised in 2022. In conjunction with SB 1343 (2018) and AB 1825 (2004), the City requires anti-harassment and anti-discrimination training for all staff upon hiring and thereafter, every two years, covering protected classes and characteristics such as race, religion, ancestry, and national origin. All staff are expected to perform their employee duties with the highest regard to providing strong customer service free of discrimination. This further reinforces the City's stance of zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination. Staff does not recommend singling out any one particular group, belief system, race, religion, etc, for specialized training.

For these reasons, staff proposes alternatives to the commission's recommendations. Instead of the Human Relations Commission's recommendations, City staff propose that City Council:

- Acknowledge that discrimination of all forms exists in Davis and affirm the City's commitment to ongoing education and action to prevent discrimination.
- Continue to provide awareness and education about the right to freedom of speech, emphasizing that political expression is constitutionally protected, regardless of view point. This applies to all members of our community.
- Ask the Hate-Free Together Initiative to partner with the City to develop/share broad-based, cross-cultural, anti-bias information, resources, or training that would be made available to the community.