

**City of Mesa
Human Relations Advisory Board**



**Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens:
Inclusion & Diversity Report**

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Executive Summary

Based on information gathered, the City of Mesa is a wonderful place to live, enriched by its diverse cultures and multitude of differing ethnicities, abilities, beliefs and ways of understanding the world. Consistent with its mission to create an inclusive, respectful, and equitable community, the Mesa Human Relations Advisory Board, an advisory group Mesa's City Council, engaged in a process to assess how well Mesa is doing in promoting an awareness and respect for diversity within its increasingly diverse and growing community. The four-step, data-driven study process included:

- Documentation of the demographic diversity in the community;
- In January 2014, a telephone survey of 600 randomly selected Mesa residents on resident satisfaction with life in Mesa and perceptions of discrimination and intolerance;
- In late April and early May 2014, three community dialogues entitled "Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Community Conversations on Inclusion and Diversity" to gather anecdotal data from interested residents about actual diversity-related experiences and their ideas about how to make Mesa more inclusive and respectful of its diverse population; and
- A review of the various existing laws and protections for population subgroups that historically have experienced discrimination.

The diversity of Mesa's population can be seen with the following estimates of subgroup populations:

- 172,505 adult females
- 100,450 non-white alone or mixed race individuals
- 115,753 individuals of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 55,555 foreign born residents
- 90,678 residents speak other than English at home, 36,996 speak English less than very well
- 54,478 individuals with one or more disabilities
- 199,661 adults age 40 and over
- 40,428 households with minor children including 5,149 male-female unmarried partner households and 342 same-sex unmarried partner households
- 11,729 estimated gay, lesbian, or bisexual adults
- 1,005 estimated transgender adults
- 35,546 veterans

Taken as a whole, most residents (84%) rate Mesa as an excellent or good place to live and feel welcome and included per the results of the statistically valid *Mesa Opinion Survey: Satisfaction with Life in Mesa and Perceptions of Discrimination and*

Intolerance. Those subgroups that had average ratings above the community-wide average included: residents who are 55 and older (88%), religiously affiliated (86%), Caucasian (86%), and male (85%).

Other subgroups gave Mesa high ratings as a place to live, but slightly lower than the overall percentage. Residents who are 35-54 year olds (83%), people of Hispanic or Latino origin (82%), females (82%), people with a physical disability (81%), people with a mental disability (79%), and 18-34 year olds (77%) all had lower average ratings than the community-wide average. Thirty percent or higher of all subgroups except people with a mental disability rated Mesa as excellent. Only 17% of people with a mental disability rated Mesa as an excellent place to live.

In addition, the average of all subgroups felt valued and respected in Mesa. The average rating across all groups is 4.17 (out of 5). A rating of 4 or higher is desirable. Average ratings population subgroups ranged from 3.79 to 4.28. Three subgroups had an average score below 4: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) subgroup (3.79), people with a mental disability (3.86), and people with a physical disability (3.98).

Two themes were detected in which Mesa can continue building upon the promotion of inclusion and awareness for diversity. Survey participants gave a less than desirable rating to the City's efforts thus far to promote diversity and inclusion. The average rating across all groups is 3.85 and all subgroups had an average rating less than 4. The two subgroups with the lowest ratings were people with a mental disability (3.51) and the LGBT subgroup (3.63). Again, a rating of 4 or higher is desirable.

Survey respondents also believed that in general, people in Mesa desire more education about the cultures of different subgroups living in the city. This topic received the lowest level of agreement among survey participants indicating that more attention is needed in this area. The average rating across all groups is 3.52 (out of a 5 point scale). Ratings ranged from 3.14 (people with a mental disability) to 3.67 (55 or older subgroup). The LGBT subgroup (3.4) and people with a physical disability (3.45) also had ratings below the average across all groups.

Participants were also asked if they had experienced or observed discrimination, exclusion, or bias, either intentional or unintentional, in the past two years. There were significant differences among population subgroups in four areas – discrimination based race or ethnicity, physical disability, mental disability, sexual orientation.

- Experienced or observed *racial or ethnic* discrimination: Across all population subgroups, 19% said they personally experienced racial or ethnic discrimination and 23% said they had personally observed discrimination against someone else. Significantly, 51% of Hispanic or Latino respondents said they had personally experienced discrimination, exclusion or bias and 46% said they had personally observed this behavior.

- Experienced or observed discrimination because of a *physical limitation or disability*: Across all groups, 7% had experienced discrimination, exclusion or bias and 10% had personally observed it. However, the percent reporting discrimination, exclusion or bias is three times higher for people with a physical disability (21% said yes) and nearly double (19%) for those who reported observing discrimination based on a physical limitation or disability.
- Experienced or observed discrimination because of a *mental limitation or disability*: Across all population subgroups, 4% said they have experienced discrimination and 11% have observed it. One-quarter of people with a mental disability reported having experienced discrimination and more than one-third (35%) have observed it.
- Experienced or observed discrimination because of *sexual orientation*: Across all population subgroups, 5% said they have experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation and 14% have observed it. However, of the 29 survey participants who identify themselves as LGBT, one-third (34%) reported having experienced discrimination and nearly one-half (48%) reported observing discrimination based on sexual orientation. Though the sample is too small (n=29) to draw broad conclusions about the community as a whole, the disparity is large enough to warrant further consideration by policymakers.

Where did the discrimination survey respondents experienced or observed occur? The data did not reveal any discernible pattern in the locations where discrimination was experienced or observed. Based on survey responses, discriminatory behavior happens everywhere. Consistent with this result, survey participants also believed that promoting diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of all of the foundational institutions of the community – family, schools, local government, churches, and to a lesser extent the media.

In order to obtain more community feedback, the Board also gathered anecdotal data from 35 Mesa residents at three community dialogues. Participants worked in small table groups with a facilitator, a pre-determined set of questions, and a note taker at each table. A summary of the participants' comments are included in the full report.

Community dialogue participants recognized that there is no one solution to making Mesa a more inclusive and welcoming community. They offered their suggestions for how to move the city forward and effectively address issues of unequal or discriminatory treatment:

1. Expand diversity education efforts to dispel myths, correct misinformation, and confront stereotypes about the different population subgroups in Mesa.
2. Reinforce through education or adopt local legal protection for those population groups that have historically experienced discrimination.

3. Create more opportunities for the community to connect such as community events to celebrate and educate residents about the diversity in the community.
4. Find opportunities for City and other community leaders to demonstrate their support of Mesa's diversity.
5. Create public recognition for Mesa's veterans.

The HRAB engaged in a thorough review and discussion of the survey and community dialogue data to generate recommendations for the Mayor and City Council. The Board's discussions focused on the key results that emerged from the data:

- Three subgroups, people who are LGBT, people with a mental disability, and people with a physical disability, had an average score below 4 on the statement I feel valued and respected in my Mesa community.
- The average rating across all groups and among all subgroups was less than four when considering whether Mesa is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion. The same result was true when survey respondents were asked whether Mesa residents were well-educated in the cultures of different groups in the city.
- LGBT people and people with a mental disability expressed the lowest levels of belief that they could express and practice their religious beliefs and non-beliefs without worrying about how others in the community will react. In addition, LGBT people also expressed the lowest level of belief about feeling welcome to participate in the local activities of their neighborhood if they wished.
- The percentages of people who reported that they had experienced or observed discrimination were considerably higher for people who are Hispanic or Latino, people with a physical or a mental disability, and LGBT people than the average percentage across all groups.

The Board's recommendations flow from the survey and the community dialogue data, which led to the following conclusions:

The City's commitment to and support for diversity must be active and much more visible to the community. According to the survey, 79% of residents believed the City should be responsible for promoting greater awareness of diversity, inclusion, and tolerance in Mesa. The City's commitment to promoting diversity was not apparent to the survey respondents as reflected by data.

The data also pointed to the need for more education related to the cultural identity of the community. The survey question about residents being well-educated about Mesa's diversity received the lowest rating of all of the questions. On a positive note, the data showed that in general people enjoyed living in a multi-cultural group like Mesa.

The survey data pointed to four population subgroups who expressed the lowest levels of feeling included, understood, and valued in the community. These groups also experienced or observed the highest levels of discrimination.

Finally, the Board recognized that some population subgroups have no legal protection from discrimination at the Federal, State, or local levels of government. The Board's view is that all population subgroups should have legal protection from discrimination.

The HRAB offers seven recommendations to address these issues.

- A. Expand communication to population subgroups with the highest percentages of limited English proficiency.
- B. Make the City's commitment to welcoming and serving its diverse population more transparent and visible to the public.
- C. Engage and learn more about the needs of those population subgroups most alienated from the community (Hispanic/Latino, people with disabilities, and LGBT people).
- D. Create ways to bring the community together to learn about and celebrate Mesa's diversity.
- E. Create legal protection from discrimination for those subgroups not protected in Federal or State law.
- F. Educate the public about the cultural diversity within Mesa to break down barriers and misunderstandings between population subgroups that can lead to discrimination.
- G. Expand the City's visible recognition of veterans.

Specific actions to implement each of these recommendations are included in the full report.

In conclusion, a large majority of Mesa residents enjoy living in Mesa and feel valued and accepted as residents of the community. However, this is not the case for all segments of the population. While it is true that you can never please everyone, City leaders should be concerned by the disparity between the experiences of the community as a whole and specific subpopulations.

Certainly not all residents' experiences will rise to a level that would qualify as discrimination as it is defined by law. However, a community where population subgroups are segregated, excluded, singled out for different treatment, or do not see themselves visibly represented in the community sends strong, subtle messages about

whether that group of people and their contributions to the community's identity are valued.

In addition, Mesa is an increasingly diverse community with large numbers of residents that fall within what are considered protected classes under Federal and State law. There are also Mesa residents that have no protection from discrimination under the law.

These factors taken together suggest that Mesa needs more than one approach to addressing the issues identified in this report. The HRAB envisions Mesa as a community that not only includes and respects its diversity, but is enriched by it. The results suggest that although there is much satisfaction with Mesa, more could be done not only to be more welcoming and inclusive, but to also be enriched by the diversity of the community.

I. Introduction

Diversity and inclusion are core values of the Mesa Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB). In its ongoing work to increase their awareness and understanding of Mesa's cultural and demographic diversity, the Board sought valuable quantitative and anecdotal data about the diversity-related experiences of Mesa residents. Consistent with its mission to create an inclusive, respectful, and equitable community, the Board will use the data to assess how well Mesa is doing in promoting an awareness and respect for diversity within our growing community. To the extent that the data indicates a need for improvement, the Board will offer recommendations to the City Council for further consideration.

In 1999, the Mesa City Council created the 11-member Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) to advise the Council "about racial, religious, ethnic, cultural, disability, or other human relations issues affecting Mesa City government and the delivery of City services" (Mesa City Code Title 2, Chapter 12, section 2-12-2). The Board's purpose also includes recommending policies to eliminate discrimination and prejudice, and to promote mutual understanding and harmony, and serving as a public forum for citizen input on issues related to the purpose and functions of the Board.

The Board's review process followed these steps:

- The Diversity Office completed research on the various existing laws to identify where there were gaps in protection for the population subgroups that historically have experienced discrimination.
- The Diversity Office compiled census and other data to document the demographic diversity in the community.
- The HRAB used the Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University to conduct a telephone survey of Mesa residents. The report *Mesa Opinion Survey: Satisfaction with Life in Mesa and Perceptions of Discrimination and Intolerance* documents the statistically valid survey results from 600 Mesa residents.
- The HRAB conducted three community dialogues entitled, "Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Community Conversations on Inclusion and Diversity" to gather anecdotal data from interested residents about their actual diversity-related experiences and their ideas for how to continue the process of building respect and inclusiveness for Mesa's diverse populations.

The HRAB will use the data-driven and anecdotal results to form their recommendations.

II. City of Mesa's Demographic Diversity

Mesa is an increasingly diverse city with an estimated 445,671 residents, the third largest city in Arizona and the 38th largest city in the U.S. (based on 2012 data). In most cases, this report uses data from the 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates. Census 2010 data are used for race, Hispanic or Latino origin, and same-sex partner households because the level of detail needed was not available in the 3-year estimates data.

While the demographic groups that are protected classes under discrimination law represent a small percentage of Mesa's population, each group includes a substantial number of Mesa individuals (or households) as identified in Figure 2 below.

Figure III: Population (or Household) Subgroups in Protected Classes

Demographic Identifier	Estimated Population	Data Source
Sex	162,599 adult males, 172,505 adult females	2010-2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates
Race	100,450 non-white alone or mixed race individuals	Table DP01 Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010, 2010 Demographic Profile Data.
Ethnicity	115,753 individuals of Hispanic or Latino origin	Table DP01 Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010, 2010 Demographic Profile Data.
National Origin	55,555 foreign born, 16,059 foreign born are naturalized US citizens, 39,496 not a US citizen	2010-2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates
Language	90,678 speak a language other than English at home, 36,996 speak English less than very well.	2010-2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates
Disability	54,478 individuals with one or more disabilities	2012 ACS 1 Yr Estimates
Age (40+)	199,661 adults 40 or over	2010-2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates
Economic Disadvantage	14.5% of adults below poverty, 23.4% of children	2010-2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates
Familial or marital status	40,428 households with minor children including 34,937 husband-wife households, 5,149 opposite-sex unmarried partner households, and 342 same-sex unmarried partner	Table PCT19, 2010 Census Summary File 2

	households	
Sexual Orientation	11,729 estimated gay, lesbian and bisexual adults (3.5% of adult population)	The Williams Institute, University of California School of Law (Gates, 2011) ¹
Gender Identity	1,005 transgender adults (.3% of adult population)	The Williams Institute, University of California School of Law (Gates, 2011)
Religion	39.1% of County population engaged with religious organizations.	2010 Religious Census by the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies ²
Veteran status	35,648	2010-2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates
Total Population	445,671	2010-2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates

A. Sex

Across all age groups, forty-nine percent of Mesa residents are male and 51% are female. Adult males are 48.5% (162,599) of the population. Women are more than half (51.5%) of the adult population (172,505).

B. Race

Racially, Mesa is still predominantly white, which should not be assumed to be people of European descent. Seventy-seven percent of the population in the 2010 Census identified as white alone. In Census 2010, 56,086 of the 338,591 individuals (17%) identified as white alone also identified as Hispanic or Latino.

The next highest racial group is some other race, which most likely are predominantly people of Hispanic or Latino origin. In Census 2010, for example, 49,023 of the 115,753 people of Hispanic or Latino origin identified as some other race. People of Hispanic or Latino origin can be of any race. In Census 2010, 91% of the individuals identified as Hispanic or Latino also identified as either white alone or some other race.

¹ Gates, Gary J., Williams Distinguished Scholar, *How many people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender?* The Williams Institute, University of California School of Law, April 2011.

² Association of Religion Data Archives, Maps and Reports, County Membership Report for Maricopa County, 2010 data, downloaded on August 3, 2014 from www.thearda.com/rcms2010/r/c/04/rcms2010_04013_county_name_2010.asp.

In addition, 6% identified as two or more races, 1% identified as Black, 1.7% Native American, and the remainders were Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander. Although the percentages are small, there are 100,350 individuals that are a non-white race or of more than one race, the demographics more likely to experience racial discrimination.

Figure IV: Racial Demographics for Mesa

Race	Estimated Population	% of the Population
White alone	338,591	77.1%
Black or African American alone	15,289	3.5%
American Indian and Alaskan Native alone	10,377	2.4%
Asian alone	8,493	1.9%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	1,672	.4%
Some other race	49,578	11.3%
Two or more races	15,041	3.4%
Total Population	439,041	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table DP01 Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010, 2010 Demographic Profile Data.

C. Ethnicity – Hispanic or Latino Origin

In 2010, 29.6% of Arizona's population identified as Hispanic or Latino, the fourth highest percentage in the country behind New Mexico (46.3%), Texas and California (37.6% each). Mesa's percentage of population that is Hispanic or Latino is 3.2% less than the proportion of Hispanic or Latino individuals Statewide.

Figure V: Mesa Population of Hispanic or Latino Origin

Hispanic or Latino Origin ³	Estimated Population	% of the Population
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	115,753	26.4%
Mexican	99,666	22.7%
Puerto Rican	2,441	.6%
Cuban	455	.1%
Other Hispanic or Latino	13,191	3.0%
Not Hispanic or Latino	323,288	73.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table DP01 Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010, 2010 Demographic Profile Data.

³ The Census Bureau data is based on this definition: Hispanic or Latino refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

D. National Origin

More than 55,000 Mesa residents, an estimated 12.5% of Mesa's population, were born outside of the United States. The largest percentage of foreign-born residents come from Latin America (36,739 or 66.1%), followed by Asia (7,432 or 13.4%). Individuals from Northern America (5,326) make up 9.6% of the foreign-born population, as well as 7.9% from Europe (4,402), 2.3% from Africa (1,277), and .7% from Oceania (Australia and surrounding islands).

E. Language

More than 90,000 people age 5 and over, about 22% of the population 5 and over, speak a language other than English at home. Nearly 37,000 people (41% of those that speak other than English) speak English less than very well. Eighty-two percent (74,086) of those that speak other than English at home are Spanish speakers, 8% (7,076) speak an Indo-European language, 7% (6,129) speak an Asian and Pacific Islander language, and 3% (3,387) speak some other language.

F. Disability

Based on the 2012 American Community Survey data, 12.1% of Mesa residents (54,478) not residing in institutions live with one or more disabilities. This includes nearly 10% of the adult population ages 18 through 64, and nearly one-third of the population 65 years old and over.

Figure VII: Disability Characteristics by Age Group

Disability Characteristics by Age Group	# with disability	% with a disability	Total Population
Total civilian non-institutionalized population	54,478	12.1%	450,416
Population under 5 years	207	.7%	31,019
With a hearing difficulty	160	.5%	
With a vision difficulty	94	.3%	
Population 5 to 17 years	5,134	6.3%	81,848
With a hearing difficulty	1,078	1.3%	
With a vision difficulty	585	.7%	
With a cognitive ⁴ difficulty	4,088	5%	
With an ambulatory difficulty	970	1.2%	
With a self-care difficulty	1,075	1.3%	
Population 18 to 64 years	26,239	9.8%	266,847

⁴ The Census Bureau defines cognitive difficulty as "Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions."

With a hearing difficulty	6,214	2.3%	
With a vision difficulty	5,512	2.1%	
With a cognitive difficulty	10,539	3.9%	
With an ambulatory difficulty	13,087	4.9%	
With a self-care difficulty	4,049	1.5%	
With an independent living difficulty	7,659	2.9%	
Population 65 years and over	22,898	32.4%	70,702
With a hearing difficulty	9,909	14.0%	
With a vision difficulty	3,957	5.6%	
With a cognitive difficulty	4,913	6.9%	
With an ambulatory difficulty	14,390	20.4%	
With a self-care difficulty	5,144	7.3%	
With an independent living difficulty	9,297	13.1%	
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table S1810 Disability Characteristics, 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates			

Living with one or more disabilities can have a significant impact on a person's economic status. The percentage of the population with one or more disabilities that is employed is considerably lower than the percentage of employed individuals with no disabilities. Ten percent (31,119) of individuals ages 16-64 were identified with one or more disabilities in the 2005-2007 American Community Survey. Overall, forty-two percent (13,198) of individuals with a disability were employed compared to 76% of individuals with no disability. The percentage of the population with employment is higher for males than females among persons with a disability and persons with no disabilities.

Figure VIII: Employment Status By Age, Gender, and Disability Status

Disability Status	Total	Employed	%	Unemployed	%
With any disability	31,119	13,198	42%	17,921	58%
Male	15,468	7,140	46%	8,328	54%
16 to 34 years	4,094	2,037	50%	2,057	50%
35 to 64 years	11,374	5,103	45%	6,271	55%
Female	15,651	6,058	39%	9,593	61%
16 to 34 years	3,454	1,618	47%	1,836	53%
35 to 64 years	12,197	4,440	36%	7,757	64%
With no disability	268,743	204,025	76%	64,718	24%
Male	143,037	119,406	83%	23,631	17%
16 to 34 years	70,847	56,289	79%	14,558	21%
35 to 64 years	72,190	63,117	87%	9,073	13%
Female	125,706	84,619	67%	41,087	33%

16 to 34 years	55,635	35,821	64%	19,814	36%
35 to 64 years	70,071	48,798	70%	21,273	30%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table B18020 Disability Status By Sex By Age By Employment Status for the Civilian Non-institutionalized Population 16 to 64 Years, 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates					

G. Age

Adults age 18 and over comprise three-fourths of the City's residents. Nearly 30% percent (131,919) of the total population are between the ages of 40 and 64 years old. Forty-five percent of the population is 40 years old or older.

H. Economic Disadvantage

Mesa's 107,556 families reported in the 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates had a median family income of \$56,195. Slightly more than 12% of families had incomes below poverty level. One in five families (20.2%) with children lived in poverty. For married-couple families with children, 6.8% had incomes below poverty level compared to 38.4% of families with children with a female head of household. Among the population as a whole, 16.7% of all people lived with incomes below poverty. The percentage of adults 18 and over living in poverty is 14.5% and 23.4% for children under 18 years old.

I. Familial or Marital Status

The 2010 Census reported 165,374 households in Mesa. Just under one-in-four (24.4%) households include children under 18 years old. Less than half (47%) of the total households are husband-wife households, but 86% of households with minor children are husband-wife households. Unmarried partner households, both opposite-sex partner and same-sex partner households make up 8% of Mesa households and 14% of households with minor children.

Under the Federal Fair Housing Act, housing developers, landlords, and homeowners associations cannot deny housing to families with children or evict a family from housing because they have children. Also, they cannot restrict families with children to one area of a building or housing complex, cannot make rules that unfairly target children, or indicate that children are not wanted in housing advertisements.

Figure VI: Households By Household Type and the Presence of Minor Children

Type of Household	# of Households	% of Households
Total Households	165,374	100%
Husband-Wife Households	78,469	47%
Unmarried Opposite-sex Partner Households	11,604	7%

Unmarried Same-sex Partner Households	1,171	1%
All other households	74,130	45%
Total Households with children under 18	40,428	100%
Husband-wide Households with children under 18	34,937	86%
Unmarried Opposite-sex Partner Households with children under 18	5,149	13%
Unmarried Same-sex Partner Households with children under 18	342	1%
Source: 2010 Census Summary File 2, Table PCT19 Husband-Wife and Unmarried Partner Households By Sex of Partner By Presence of Related and Own Children Under 18 Years		

J. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

It can be difficult to measure the size of the lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) population for a variety of reasons. There is no consistency in the definition of who is included in the LGB population, there are differences in survey methods, and no consistency in the questions asked over time to measure the population. The Williams Institute of the UCLA School of Law, a topic expert on LGB research, estimates that 3.5% of the adult population identifies as lesbian, gay or bisexual based on a review of five surveys conducted in the U.S. The same study estimates that about .3% of adults are transgender.

An estimated 335,104 adults 18 years and over resided in Mesa according to the 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates. Assuming that the Williams Institute percentages applies to Mesa, an estimated 11,729 gay, lesbian or bisexual adults and 1,005 transgender adults reside in Mesa.

K. Religion

Given that limited statistical data is available for the religious affiliations of Mesa residents, we look to the 2010 U.S. Religion Census, compiled and published by the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, for an assessment of the religious composition of the City. Data includes statistics for 236 religious groups and provides information on the number of their congregations and adherents within each state and county in the United States. For Maricopa County, 39.1% of the County's 2010 population participated in the 236 religious groups included in the census representing 1,491,480 people. The religious census includes an adherence rate defined as the number of adherents of a particular group per 1,000 people. The three largest denominations reported were Evangelical Protestant (140 per 1,000), Catholic (136.2 per 1,000), and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) (63.6 per 1,000).

As previously indicated, an estimated 335,104 adults 18 years and over resided in Mesa according to the 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates. Assuming that the percentages from the 2010 U.S. Religion Census applies to Mesa, an estimated 46,915 Evangelical Protestants, 45,641 Catholic, and 21,313 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints practicing adults reside in Mesa.

The U.S. Religious Landscape Survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religious and Public Life found that 26.3% of the overall U.S. adult population belongs to Evangelical Protestant churches, 23.9% of adults belong to Catholic churches and 1.7% belongs to the LDS faith. Maricopa County has a smaller percentage of Evangelical Protestant followers (14% vs 26.3%) and Catholics (13.6% vs 23.9%) than the country as a whole, but a much higher percentage of LDS followers (6.4% vs 1.7%).

L. Veteran Status

Mesa was home to an estimated 35,648 veterans, about 10.8% of the civilian population 18 and over, according to the 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-year estimates. About one-third are Vietnam era veterans, nearly 15% are from the first Gulf war, and 7.8% are from the second Gulf war. The remaining veterans are from the Korean War (15.8%) and World War II (8.9%).

III. Mesa Resident Survey

In January 2014, Arizona State University's Morrison Institute for Public Policy conducted a telephone survey of 600 randomly selected Mesa households on behalf of the HRAB. The survey entitled *Satisfaction with Life in Mesa and Perceptions of Discrimination and Intolerance* asked residents their opinions about Mesa, its institutions and their experiences related to discrimination, bias and intolerance. A report was later prepared and made available to the public in April 2014 that outlined the findings.

The researchers report that the sample size for each of the population subgroups measured in this report except the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) subgroup is statistically representative of the adult population as a whole so that the attitudes and opinions identified in this survey can be projected to the Mesa adult population as a whole. Although the sample size for the LGBT subgroup is too low (n=29) to be statistically representative; the results should be considered anecdotal and do provide insights worth pursuing related to this population subgroup. The LGBT subgroup is one that is historically undercounted for various reasons (as identified on page 12), thus the undercounted results for this survey are not uncommon.

When asked to rate Mesa as a place to live, 84% of total survey respondents rated Mesa as excellent or good. The population subgroups with the highest percentages of excellent or good responses were those age 55+ (88%), religiously affiliated (86%), Caucasian (86%), and male (85%). Other subgroups still gave Mesa high ratings, but slightly lower than the overall percentage such as 35-54 year olds (83%), people of Hispanic or Latino origin(82%), females (82%), people with a physical disability (81%), people with a mental disability (79%), and 18-34 year olds (77%). Thirty percent or higher of all subgroups except people with a mental disability rated Mesa as excellent. Only 17% of people with a mental disability rated Mesa as an excellent place to live.

Next, survey participants were asked to what degree they agree or disagree with a series of statements intended to determine how well they believe they are treated by others in Mesa. Participants answered using a 1 to 5 scale. A score of 5 indicated that the participant agreed completely with the statement and a 1 indicated that the participant disagreed completely. Ideally, an average score of 4 or better is desirable indicating at least some level of agreement with the statement. An average score less than 3 indicating at least some level of disagreement is undesirable. The following survey results are selection of the questions asked (survey statements italicized):

- *I feel valued and respected in my Mesa community.* The average rating across all groups is 4.17. Average ratings population subgroups ranged from 3.79 to 4.28. Three subgroups had an average score below 4: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) subgroup (3.79), people with a mental disability (3.86), and people with a physical disability (3.98).

- *I feel Mesa is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion.* The average rating across all groups is 3.85 and all subgroups had an average rating less than 4. The two subgroups with the lowest ratings were people with a mental disability (3.51) and the LGBT subgroup (3.63).
- *I feel that, in general, people in Mesa are well-educated in the cultures of different groups here in the city.* This statement received the lowest agreement of all of the statement indicating that more attention is needed in this area. The average rating across all groups is 3.52. Ratings ranged from 3.14 (people with a mental disability) to 3.67 (55 or older subgroup). The LGBT subgroup (3.4) and people with a physical disability (3.45) also had ratings below the average across all groups.
- *I enjoy living in a multi-cultural community like Mesa.* The average rating across all groups is 4.33. The rating for each subgroup is also greater than 4. Ratings range from 4.12 to 4.36.
- *I feel I can express and practice my religious beliefs and non-beliefs without worrying about how others in the community will react.* The average rating across all groups is 4.20. Ratings ranged from 3.40 to 4.36. The LGBT subgroup had the lowest rating for this statement (3.40) followed by people with a mental disability (3.91). All other subgroups had a rating of 4 or better.
- *I feel I am accepted in the community.* The average rating across all groups for this statement is 4.31. All subgroups rated this statement with a 4 or higher as well.
- *I feel welcome to participate in the local activities of my neighborhood if I wish.* The average rating across all groups for this statement is 4.37. All subgroups rated this statement as 4 or higher except the LGBT subgroup (3.94).

The remaining survey questions ask participants about their experiences with discrimination, exclusion or bias, either intentional or unintentional. Participants responded to the following question:

In the past two years or so, have you or anyone in your household ever experienced (category of discrimination) discrimination, exclusion or bias against, whether intentional or unintentional? Nine categories of discrimination were included in the research: racial/ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender, age, physical disability, mental disability, sexual orientation, social or political beliefs, and socio-economic status. Participants were instructed to direct their answers to experiences that occurred within Mesa. A selection of the participant responses were as follows:

- Experienced or observed *racial or ethnic* discrimination: Across all population subgroups, 19% said they personally experienced racial or ethnic discrimination and 23% said they had personally observed discrimination against someone

else. Significantly, 51% of Hispanic or Latino respondents said they had personally experienced discrimination, exclusion or bias and 46% said they had personally observed this behavior.

- Experienced or observed discrimination because of *religious affiliation or belief, or non-belief*: Across all groups, 12% had experienced discrimination, exclusion or bias and 17% had personally observed it.
- Experienced or observed *gender* discrimination: Across all groups, 6% had experienced discrimination, exclusion or bias and 7% had personally observed it. There was no substantial difference between males reporting a discriminating experience (5%) versus females (7%). The same is true for the percent who observed gender discrimination 6% male versus 8% female.
- Experienced or observed *age* discrimination: Across all groups, 7% had experienced discrimination, exclusion or bias and 8% had personally observed it. There were no substantial differences between age groups.
- Experienced or observed discrimination because of a *physical limitation or disability*: Across all groups, 7% had experienced discrimination, exclusion or bias and 10% had personally observed it. However, the percent reporting discrimination, exclusion or bias is three times higher for people with a physical disability (21% said yes) and nearly double (19%) for those who reported observing discrimination based on a physical limitation or disability.
- Experienced or observed discrimination because of a *mental limitation or disability*: Across all population subgroups, 4% said they have experienced discrimination and 11% have observed it. One-quarter of people with a mental disability reported having experienced discrimination and more than one-third (35%) have observed it.
- Experienced or observed discrimination because of *sexual orientation*: Across all population subgroups, 5% said they have experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation and 14% have observed it. However, one-third (34%) of those identifying as LGBT reported having experienced discrimination and nearly half (48%) reported observing discrimination based on sexual orientation. Though the sample is too small (n=29) to draw broad conclusions about the community as a whole, the disparity provides anecdotal insights for policymakers to consider further investigation.
- Experienced or observed discrimination because of *social or political beliefs*: Across all population subgroups, 13% said they have experienced discrimination based on their social or political beliefs and 13% have observed it.
- Experienced or observed discrimination because of *socio-economic status*: Across all groups, slightly more than one in ten (11%) households reported

experiencing discrimination based on their socio-economic status and 14% reported observing discriminatory behavior. The percentage is higher among Hispanic or Latino participants (14% experienced and 13% observed) and is highest for large households (5+ households) where 17% reported experiencing discrimination and 19% have observed it.

Participants responded to two final questions. First, where did the discrimination you experienced or observed occur? The data did not reveal any discernible pattern in the locations where discrimination was experienced or observed. Based on the survey responses as shown in Figure IX, it is clear that discriminatory behavior happens everywhere.

Figure IX: Where did the discrimination you experienced or observed occur?

Location	Experienced	Observed
Work	16%	22%
Store/mall	16%	17%
School	14%	17%
In public (general)	13%	9%
Public transportation	9%	13%
Restaurant/hotel	6%	4%
At home	5%	3%
Police	5%	3%

Finally, who should be responsible for promoting greater awareness of diversity, inclusion, and tolerance in Mesa? From the perspective of survey participants, promoting diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of the foundational institutions of the community – family, schools, local government, churches, and to a lesser extent the media (see Figure X below).

Figure X: Survey Responses on Who should be responsible for promoting greater awareness of diversity, inclusion, and tolerance in Mesa?

Parents	92%
Schools	84%
The City	79%
Churches	75%
The Media	69%

A. Summary

As stated in the report, *Mesa Opinion Survey: Satisfaction with Life in Mesa and Perceptions of Discrimination and Intolerance*, the research produced from this report finds that overall Mesa receives positive reviews from its residents.

While complaints certainly exist, there does not appear to be a blanket pattern of bias or discrimination in Mesa. Although, that is not to deny that some residents have experienced legitimate problems, but rather identifies areas to be countered effectively in order to promote a safer, livable city. While the reported experiences do not appear to have significantly lowered opinions of Mesa, there remains a need for Mesa to continue efforts to educate its citizenry and to find new ways to embrace its diversity while also reducing incidents of bias and discrimination.

IV. Community Conversations

Dr. David Daugherty, Director of Research at the Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University presented the results of the telephone survey to the Mesa Human Relations Advisory Board on February 26, 2014. Based on these results, the Board decided to gather anecdotal data from Mesa residents at three community dialogues entitled, “Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Community Conversations on Inclusion and Diversity”. Conversations were held on April 26th (at Mesa Utilities Building), April 29th (at Red Mountain Multigenerational Center), and May 6th (at Fiesta Fountains Community Center). Child care was provided at the April 26th meeting and Spanish translation was provided at the May 6th meeting to mitigate possible barriers for participation from some residents. In total, 35 participants worked in small table groups with a facilitator, a pre-determined set of questions, and a note taker at each table to keep the conversation focused and to document the main points from each group.

Note-takers were instructed to record notes on an electronic fillable form. This method for collecting the data had some limitations. First, the method was non-representative sampling. The participants were self-selected, meaning that they chose to attend the meeting and make comments. Assumptions about the attitudes or experiences of individuals who did not attend the dialogue meetings cannot be made. A second limitation is note-taker bias. Some note-takers may have transcribed very detailed or specific notes, while others may have been brief or summarized comments.

A. Data Analysis & Findings

In the first part of the conversations, participants were asked to respond to three questions.

1. *In your opinion, how inclusive and welcoming is Mesa of its cultural and demographic diversity? Just give a few words or phrases, whatever first thoughts come to mind.*
2. *What makes it difficult to be a member of your identified group in Mesa?*
3. *Have you ever felt targeted or treated differently, either intentionally or unintentionally, because of whatever group (i.e. race, ethnic group, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, or economic status,) you identify with? If yes, briefly describe what happened when you felt targeted or treated differently because of whatever group you identify with.*

(Questions and the numerical summary of responses can be seen in their entirety in Appendix A & B).

The following anecdotal comments, organized by common themes, came from participants at the community dialogues. These comments have been summarized and are not verbatim in order to keep the anonymity of the participants.

1. General Climate

- There are two ways to look at diversity – a melting pot/harmony concept where cultures intermingle harmoniously and a salad bowl/ segregation concept where groups and cultures operate more separately in their own enclave. We want Mesa to be a melting pot!
- Mesa needs more celebration of cultures through community events, education of holidays and historic events, and group/ community celebrations that are not segregated or divided.
- Feelings of needing to hide your identity. Biggest challenge is feeling the need to conform and not expressing your diversity.
- In Mesa, there is a lot of diversity. Proud but pleasantly surprised with the reaction of Mesa residents towards diversity acceptance.
- The school board and City Officials are not as diverse. Increased awareness is needed and more diversity in the political office.
- Talk is cheap. City can claim to be inclusive or welcoming, but the power structures are not inclusive (City Council).
- Did not want to move to Mesa because of conservative views and perceived lack of inclusiveness.
- Mesa is not the open, fun place it could be.
- Not able to openly express liberal Democratic political views without potentially affecting career or other affiliations.
- Being inclusive is different than simply showing tolerance.
- Mesa is more inclusive than it is perceived to be.
- Over the past decade, Mesa has increased awareness and seems to be on the right track.

2. Race and Ethnicity

- Cultural and ethnic bias from police based on perceived traits and stigmatism.
- Denied entry or access to local establishments based on racial profiling.
- Discrimination or harassment based on color of skin or ethnic background (including bi-racial individuals or interracial relationships).
- Negative connotations towards specific minority groups due to perception.
- Equal amount of discrimination between individuals from differing minority groups.
- Official minority groups and networking groups do not also provide a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.
- Racial discrimination seen through children i.e. daycare or schools making assumptions on health or education levels, using racial slurs, bi-racial children feeling like they have to choose a dominant race.
- Segregation of certain races and ethnicities in pocket neighborhoods
- Increase of negativity towards race and ethnicity during newsworthy events.

- Assumed gang relations or criminal tenancies due to race or ethnicity.
- Parents are afraid to come to the schools because of the climate of fear (racial).
- Less opportunity for minority children to be involved in sports or school related activities.

3. Sexual Orientation

- Denied entry or access to local establishments and asked to leave a store based on sexual orientation.
- Discrimination from faith groups based on sexual orientation.
- Feeling like one cannot fit in because of being bi-sexual and a feminist, even though one is excepting of others, other people are not accepting back.
- Public misconceptions regarding transgender individuals. When you are exposed to different people, you can relate to them and realize that they are normal. It comes down to personal relationships.
- Before, being LGBT was a big deal and career suicide. Since coming out, it has been good. Mesa doesn't seem to be an unwelcoming city.
- People protested the Day of Silence and the fact that the school district supported it so there were many conflicts. A person feared that their son would get hurt if he came out, surprisingly he had no issues and it has gotten better.
- Mesa Police Department (MPD) participated in the Gay Pride parade. Cultural perception changed positively because of the MPD participation in the Gay Pride Parade.
- Feeling as though individuals need to leave Mesa to surrounding cities, such as Phoenix, for LGBT socializing. In Mesa, has not had a problem out and about, it is a choice to live here and the person loves it.
- In the gay community, the perception is they cannot show public displays of affection for fear of being hurt or threatened.
- Derogatory comments mostly about gay men at networking meetings or chamber meetings.
- Wanting the right to marry and be recognized within the State.
- Teachers, among many other professions, not able to be 'out' in the workplace.
- Feels as though there is a "don't ask – don't tell" mentality about.
- There is a fear base due to no anti-discriminatory law in Mesa, unable to speak openly about different sexual orientations. Neighbors at a gathering asked if my partner and I were sisters, we said no, and have not been invited again.
- Unavailable or unequal medical coverage for domestic partners. Lack of domestic partner registries makes hospital visits and caring for partners very difficult.
- Discrimination and harassment occurring for youth LGBT.
- Although a person did not feel he would be supported when in high school, his children now have a shot at being supported. People should be supportive of everything.

4. Religion

- Feelings of having to conform to predominant Mormon religion in certain neighborhoods.
- The religious community says it allows women in leadership, but women are not actually in those positions. If organizations were really inclusive, their employees and their leadership would be reflective of that.
- Religion has an impact on which schools kids go to. Education is segregated because of religion and children's participation in sports and events based on religious affiliation.
- Mormon religion plays a predominant part in education and politics around in Mesa.
- City should reflect its diversity through more cultural and religious parades or events that change the city.
- Mesa is as inclusive or welcoming as it appears on the surface, there is a problem with cliques of religions i.e. Mormon, Catholic, etc.
- Need for greater separation between church and state.
- There is a stigma to being a divorced Mormon.
- Mesa schools invites an environment of either privilege or animosity because of the seminary program that allows Mormon students to leave campus to learn their religion as opposed to other youth who have to choose between practice and study time after school and religious education classes.
- Liberal Catholic equals "Bad Catholic".
- Feeling that it is discrimination to be asked if I am a particular religion when at in a business environment.

5. Veterans

- There are no resources for veterans. There needs to be more veteran-oriented events in the city - monuments, services, parks and museums.
- Veterans are a large group in Mesa but appear to have no respect within the community.

B. Recommendations from Participants

To close out the conversations, participants offered their ideas on effective ways to make Mesa a community more inclusive and respectful of its diversity in response to the following question:

- 4. Moving forward, what would be most effective in addressing issues of unequal treatment or discrimination in Mesa?*

Participants' solutions included:

1. Education

- Ignorance causes people to behave in a discriminatory way. Education is the remedy. Educate about different groups and how to embrace them.
- Schools need to be talking about diversity. Students of color have reported that sometimes they feel excluded, that there is a clique in school. Special education students also need to be treated better. There should be education for this as well as for diversity in general.
- There is a lack of knowledge and experiences. We need to train people of the dominant culture. Whites will be the minority at some point. All races need to speak up more. Kids will learn from parents. Otherwise, things will not change.
- Education is the parents' responsibility, but if the parents are not educated it doesn't happen. Media affects everything with technology. For the City or State to move forward there must be positive information. Get rid of stereotyping of such things as disability and gender identity. This stigma is driven by TV and social media.
- Care to embrace others and be embraced. Do not label a person by what you think their group is. City and police force should provide specific training on demographics. Include Mesa cultural diversity education for leaders in the community. Bring the entire community together.

2. Legal Protection for Discrimination

- A city non-discrimination ordinance should be implemented. Without it, people can lose their jobs and services since there is not equal protection.
- The majority culture needs to hold people accountable even if it is a joking situation. The schools are critical also.
- Create a policy with consequences. People will be more accepting to avoid the consequences. My circle of friends would feel safer to show who they are if there was a law.
- Some things should be legislated. There should be punishment for discriminating.

3. Ways to Come Together

- Family oriented events are good because the children are the guides. If the parents have the wheel then they will lead children to what they believe. Letting kids have the wheel is going to take them to where THEY want to go.
- Cultural events should be created to bring the communities together. Promote more celebrations, cultural art walk, movies in the park, and events focused on the cultures in mesa.
- Communities should spend time together and learn about each other. Also, neighborhood activities and a way for neighbors to come together are needed.

4. Leadership

- It should start with the leaders. Hate is Ignorance. Kids these days are so much more accepting of race, sexual orientation etc. As adults, we are very adamant

about saying no to drugs and substance abuse, but less so with other situations such as stereotypes or judgments (for example, saying a homeless person is just lazy, etc.). Those comments influence our youth. Adults need to be more accepting of all groups.

- The City needs to demonstrate leadership by showing Mesa's diversity.
- Leadership is changing. Learning to communicate among groups and political figures will help to create a better environment.
- For the leaders of Mesa to publicly say that they support the different groups would be helpful.
- Faith leaders in community must work together.

5. Recognition of Veterans

- Bring in the veterans and have a survey. Ex: What do you think should be done to better the veteran community?
- Include a note on the utility bills that says "thank you veterans".
- If businesses are asked to become veteran-friendly, they will most likely say yes.
- Veterans recognition banner to be displayed as a constant reminder of their service. Recognizing the veterans will make them feel welcome and make more veterans come in from other cities.
- Reach the young and the older veterans by bringing them together.
- A park dedicated to Veterans in downtown Mesa that could be used to assemble on Veteran's Day or Memorial Day.

V. Existing Laws and Protections

There are a myriad of Federal laws governing civil rights protections in employment, public accommodations, housing and voting in the United States. A few examples, though not an exhaustive list, include:

- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act)
- Civil Rights Act of 1991
- Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1968
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
- Pregnancy Discrimination Act
- Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA)
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)
- Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994
- Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act

The Federal civil rights laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion and gender. Subsequent laws addressed discrimination based on age, disability status, and military service.

Arizona's anti-discrimination law also protects individuals from discrimination in four areas: employment, housing, public accommodations and voting. Places of public accommodation includes: restaurants, banks, hotels and motels, museums, parks, day care centers, health clubs, grocery and department stores, theaters, medical or dental offices, and health care facilities.

The State law prohibits discrimination based on gender, race, color, national origin, religion or creed and disability status. There is no State law prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status.

Figure 1: Demographic Characteristics Covered By Arizona Civil Rights Law

Arizona Civil Rights Laws	Sex	Race	Color	National Origin	Ancestry	Religion Creed	Disability	Veteran	Sexual Orientation	Gender Identity
Employment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	No	No	No
Housing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	No	No	No
Public Accommodation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	No	No	No
Voting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	No	No	No

Note: Individuals age 40+, pregnant women, and individuals at risk for retaliation are protected against employment discrimination. Families with children and individuals at risk for retaliation are protected classes under housing law as well.

The Arizona Attorney General's website includes examples of discrimination allegations for each area covered by the law:

A. Examples of employment discrimination allegations:

- Failing or refusing to hire or discharging individuals
- Providing different pay, benefits or other terms and conditions of employment
- Segregating jobs or work sites
- Sexual harassment
- Engaging in or tolerating harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, age or disability
- Pregnancy Discrimination
- Failing to provide a reasonable accommodation for disabled persons
- Treating people differently because they have complained about discrimination
- Treating an individual less favorably because of the results of genetic testing

B. Examples of housing discrimination allegations:

- Refusing to show, rent or sell
- Refusing to negotiate
- Charging more to buy, rent or asking for a larger security deposit
- Advising that the property is no longer for sale or rent when it really is
- Advertising that they want a certain type of person to buy or rent
- Denying access or use of the facility or service that is normally available with occupancy
- Telling owners or renters to move because the neighborhood is being integrated
- Suggesting you move to an area where you don't want to live
- Allowing unlawful bias to affect the appraisal of a property
- Refusing to allow disability accommodations for an assistive aide, assistive animal, parking or physical modifications

C. Examples of public accommodation discrimination allegations:

- Failure to allow entrance
- Inability to enter due to barriers
- Treated differently in places of public accommodation

D. Examples of voting discrimination allegations:

- Denying an individual the opportunity to register to vote
- Imposing on any person a literacy or other test as condition for voting
- In some circumstances, failing to provide a ballot or voting information in a language other than English
- Denying an individual the right to vote

In addition to State law, four Arizona cities – Tucson (1999), Phoenix (2009), Flagstaff (2013), and Tempe (2014) – have created and adopted local human rights (anti-discrimination) ordinances. Tucson, Phoenix, and Tempe include public accommodation, employment, and housing in their ordinances; Flagstaff includes public

accommodations and employment. Currently, these four cities are the only places in Arizona where discrimination based on an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or military status is outlawed.

Figure II: Anti-discrimination Laws in Arizona Cities

Arizona Cities	Protected Classes	Areas of Protection
City of Tucson	Race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, age, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status or marital status.	Public accommodation Employment Housing
City of Phoenix	Race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, genetic information, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability	Public accommodation Housing Employment Employers doing business with the City that are vendors, suppliers or contractors and employ more than 35 persons unlawful to discriminate against any person because of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.
City of Flagstaff	Race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran's status, national origin, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression,	Public accommodation Employment.
City of Tempe	Race, color, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, familial status, age, disability, or United States military veteran status.	Public accommodations, Employment, Housing

Certainly not all residents' experiences will rise to a level that would qualify as discrimination as it is defined by law. However, a community where population subgroups are segregated, excluded, singled out for different treatment, or don't see themselves visibly represented in the community sends strong, subtle messages about whether that group of people and their contributions to the community's identity are valued therefore some cities have chosen to expand coverage as seen above.

VI. Board Recommendations

The HRAB first reviewed and discussed the full draft report at its annual retreat on August 23, 2014. After initial clarification and discussion of the report findings, Board members took time individually to consider what approaches might be most effective in addressing the issues raised by the lengthy assessment process they had undertaken before the Board drafted recommendations. The report results made clear that there would be no one solution that could address all of the issues raised. Board members were encouraged to study the themes that emerged from the community dialogues data, namely education, legal protection from discrimination, ways to come together, leadership, and recognition for veterans, when crafting potential recommendations.

At its September 24, 2014 meeting, the HRAB completed its process for drafting recommendations for the City Council's consideration. The Board reviewed the key findings from the resident survey. Any resident survey result with a rating below 4 was reviewed. A portion of the resident survey asked respondents to rate statements based on a five-point scale, where 5 meant that the respondent agreed completely with the statement and 1 meant the respondent disagreed completely. A score of 4 or above was desirable on these questions indicating that there was some level of agreement. The Board also reviewed results where survey respondents in specific subgroups reported a significant difference in experiencing or observing discrimination compared to the survey population as a whole.

These key results included:

- Three subgroups, people who are LGBT, people with a mental disability, and people with a physical disability, had an average score below 4 on the statement I feel valued and respected in my Mesa community.
- The average rating across all groups and among all subgroups was less than four when considering whether Mesa is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion. The same result was true when survey respondents were asked whether Mesa residents were well-educated in the cultures of different groups in the city.
- LGBT people and people with a mental disability expressed the lowest levels of belief that they could express and practice their religious beliefs and non-beliefs without worrying about how others in the community will react. In addition, LGBT people also expressed the lowest level of belief about feeling welcome to participate in the local activities of their neighborhood if they wished.
- The percentages of people who reported that they had experienced or observed discrimination were considerably higher for people who are Hispanic or Latino, people with a physical or a mental disability, and LGBT people than the average percentage across all groups.

The full Board created a list of potential recommendations aimed at addressing these key findings. The general themes identified in the community dialogue data were used to stimulate the Board's thinking and generate a broad list of options for recommended actions. The Board discussed the suggested recommendations and revised the list to the recommendations presented here that received the support of the full Board.

The Board's recommendations flow from the survey and the community dialogue data, which led the Board to the following conclusions:

The City's commitment to and support for diversity must be active and much more visible to the community. According to the survey, 79% of residents believed the City should be responsible for promoting greater awareness of diversity, inclusion, and tolerance in Mesa. The City's commitment to promoting diversity was not apparent to the survey respondents as reflected by data. The Board's recommendations suggest several methods for demonstrating the City's commitment to diversity. Cultural groups know they are welcomed and valued in a community when they see their culture and population represented in community life. Actions such as expanding communication to population subgroups with limited English proficiency, having representation on Boards and Commissions that reflect the community's diverse demographics, making visible policy statements related to diversity, promoting the community's diversity as a point of pride through marketing campaigns and support for community celebrations, and expanding the City's visible recognition of veterans.

The data also pointed to the need for more education related to the cultural identity of the community. The survey question about residents being well-educated about Mesa's diversity received the lowest rating of all of the questions. On a positive note, the data showed that in general people enjoyed living in a multi-cultural group like Mesa. Education can happen in structured ways such as taping presentations to the Board and making these available to the public, or continuing the diversity film series that the City sponsors. Education also happens in informal ways such as bringing the community together for diversity-related celebrations. Knowledge and interaction between diverse population groups helps to reduce fear and misunderstanding between groups and generate appreciation for each group's contributions to Mesa's identity.

The survey data pointed to four population subgroups who expressed the lowest levels of feeling included, understood, and valued in the community. These groups also experienced or observed the highest levels of discrimination. Through its discussions, the Board recognized the need to have more interactions with these population subgroups to identify and better understand their needs. The Board recommends that the City make conscious efforts to educate itself about the needs of population subgroups that experience the most alienation from community life. In this report, those subgroups are Hispanic/Latino people, people with disabilities (physical and mental), and LGBT people.

Finally, the Board recognized that some population subgroups have no legal protection from discrimination at the Federal, State, or local levels of government. The

recommendations specifically suggest a local ordinance, but the Board did not discuss in any depth what impact a local ordinance would have in combating discrimination or the mechanics of actually enforcing a local ordinance. The general recommendation is that all groups should have legal protection from discrimination.

- A. Expand communication to population subgroups with the highest percentages of limited English proficiency.
- B. Make the City's commitment to welcoming and serving its diverse population more transparent and visible to the public.
- C. Engage and learn more about the needs of those population subgroups most alienated from the community (for example: Hispanic/Latino, people with disabilities, and LGBT people).
- D. Create ways to bring the community together to learn about and celebrate Mesa's diversity.
- E. Create legal protection from discrimination for those subgroups not protected in Federal or State law.
- F. Educate the public about the cultural diversity within Mesa to break down barriers and misunderstandings between population subgroups that can lead to discrimination.
- G. Expand the City's visible recognition of veterans.

The Board suggests specific actions to implement each of these recommendations.

- A. Expand communication to population subgroups with the highest percentages of limited English proficiency. Suggested actions include:
 - Create a City policy requiring the availability of materials related to City services printed in Spanish, and specific Asian and other languages for population subgroups with the highest percentages of limited English proficiency. Federal Civil Rights law provides guidance on what is required to serve population subgroups with limited English proficiency.
 - Hire a Public Information Officer for outreach to the Spanish-speaking community.
 - Create a City policy for distribution of press releases and public service announcements through media outlets that serve the Spanish-speaking population and other population subgroups with Limited English proficiency.
 - Purchase at least one Braille Embosser and associated software for the Library

B. Make the City's commitment to welcoming and serving its diverse population more transparent and visible to the public. Suggested actions include:

- Develop a diversity branding campaign similar to the award winning Safe Space Project of the University of Washington as the program would serve as a means to identify support for inclusion on the part of residents and businesses of Mesa.
- Increase the Mayor and City Council's verbal statements of support for the City's diversity. Leadership support for Mesa's diversity needs more visibility.
- Post a City Non-Discrimination Policy Statement prominently on the City's website
- Membership on City Boards and Committees should be more reflective of the City's demographics.
- Encourage leadership internships and opportunities for underrepresented population subgroups.
- Create a gender identity policy for City employees.
- Monitor and measure how well the City does at welcoming and serving its diverse population. Find a tool that can be applied to all population subgroups. (For example, the Human Rights Campaign created a municipal equality index to assess how well cities serve the needs of the LGBT community.)

C. Engage and learn more about the needs of those population subgroups most alienated from the community (Hispanic/Latino, people with disabilities, and LGBT people). Suggested actions include:

- Create a City Advisory Board to assess the needs, make recommendations, monitor ADA compliance, and educate the residents and businesses of Mesa about those with physical, mental, emotional, and developmental disabilities.
- Hire an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator and Title VI Coordinator for the City.
- Create a task force to assess the specific needs of Mesa's Hispanic/Latino population and its LGBT population. The Board and the City need to know more about how to best serve these segments of the Mesa community.
- Support the 'Alzheimer's Aware' and Dementia-Friendly Community initiatives.

D. Create ways to bring the community together to learn about and celebrate Mesa's diversity. Suggested actions include:

- Create an annual community-wide diversity celebration with interactive activities and information that is welcoming of all groups.
 - Show more active support of Mesa's population subgroups and their celebrations.
- E. Create legal protection from discrimination for those subgroups not protected in Federal or State law. Suggested actions include:
- Create a Non-Discrimination Ordinance in housing, employment, and public accommodations which provides protection on the basis of ethnicity, age, race, sex, gender, national origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or perception, gender identity, genetic information, veteran or military status, marital or familial status, or disability.
- F. Educate the public about the cultural diversity within Mesa to break down barriers and misunderstandings between population subgroups that can lead to discrimination. Suggested actions include:
- Videotape presentations to the HRAB and Diversity-related events and post them on the City's website.
 - Encourage Mesa Public Schools to sponsor/host educational activities that address cultural and diversity dynamics.
 - Create a listing of all diversity-related advocacy groups and churches and post to the City's website as a resource.
- G. Expand the City's visible recognition of veterans. Suggested actions include:
- Support/promote the Hometown Hero's Campaign.
 - Include a Veterans Memorial in the new downtown Mesa Center plan.
 - Post Thank You banners on Solid Waste vehicles and the City's website to thank and celebrate veterans for Memorial Day and Veterans Day each year.
 - Create an annual Veteran's Day Memorial event.

VII. Conclusion

A large majority of Mesa residents enjoy living in Mesa and feel valued and accepted residents of the community. The research underlying this report finds that, for the most part, Mesa receives positive reviews from its residents. While complaints certainly exist, they do not appear to indicate an overall pattern of bias or discrimination in Mesa. For nearly every concept related to bias and discrimination measured in this research, most local residents give Mesa high marks.

This is not of course to deny that some residents have experienced legitimate problems. Reducing incidents of bias and discrimination always remains a work in progress. The survey data identified four subgroups- Hispanic/Latinos, people with a physical disability, people with a mental disability, and potentially LGBT residents – where there was a substantial difference in experience from the community as a whole. However, these experiences do not appear to have significantly lowered their opinions of Mesa. While it is true that you can never please everyone, the Board and City leaders should take note of the disparity between the experiences of the community as a whole and these specific subpopulations.

In addition, Mesa is an increasingly diverse community with large numbers of residents that fall within what are considered protected classes under Federal and State law. There are also Mesa residents that have no protection from discrimination under the law.

These factors taken together suggest that Mesa needs more than one approach to addressing the issues identified in this report. The HRAB envisions Mesa as a community that not only includes and respects its diversity, but is enriched by it. The results suggest that although there is much satisfaction with Mesa, more could be done not only to be more welcoming and inclusive, but to also be enriched by the diversity of the community.

Appendix A

Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Community Conversations on Inclusion & Diversity Participation Questions

The purpose of this effort is to provide the Mesa Human Relations Advisory Board with meaningful feedback about how inclusive and welcoming Mesa is of its cultural and demographic diversity. If you live, work, recreate, or go to school in Mesa, we hope to hear from you! Your participation will remain anonymous and carries no penalty.

- 1. In your opinion, how inclusive and welcoming is Mesa of its cultural and demographic diversity? Just give a few words or phrases, whatever first thoughts come to mind.*
- 2. What makes it difficult to be a member of your identified group (i.e. race, ethnic group, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, or economic status) in Mesa?*
- 3. Have you ever felt targeted or treated differently, either intentionally or unintentionally, because of whatever group you identify with? If yes, briefly describe what happened and address the following in your answer: what happened, when (generally), where (i.e. school, neighborhood, workplace, business, public place, other), how does the way you were treated relate to the group you identify with, did you report the incident (to whom), and what result/remedy occurred?*
- 4. Moving forward, who/what do you feel would be most effective in promoting greater awareness of diversity, inclusion and tolerance in Mesa?*

Appendix B Numerical Summary of Comments from Conversations

Category	Total Comments per Event			
	Total	April 26, 2014	April 29, 2014	May 6, 2014
Question 1	Open-ended question, used as ice-breaker and not categorized			
Question 2:				
Race/ Ethnicity	25	11	9	5
Religious Belief or Non –Belief	8	4	3	1
Gender	4	3	1	
Age				
Physical Disability	2		1	1
Mental Disability	0			
Social/ Political Belief	4	1	3	
Sexual Orientation	10	2	8	
Socio-Economic Status	1	1		
Other (Please List)	3	1-Veteran		2-Veteran
Question 3:				
Work	6	2	4	
School	11	5	4	2
Finding Employment	1		1	
Finding Housing	1		1	
Public Transportation	0			
Store/Mall	2	1	1	
Medical Office	2		2	
In Public (General)	25	9	11	5
Socio-Economic Status	1		1	
Other (Please List)	6	4- Court(1), Police(3)	1- Social Media	1-Police
Question 4:				
Parents	6	2	3	1
School	11	2	8	1
The City	16	7	6	3
Churches	1	1		
Media	1	1		
Overall Community	21	3	13	5
Other (Please List)	0			

*** Highlighted Figure is Highest Scored for that Question**