



## Legislation Text

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### ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE DULUTH CITY CODE BY ADDING ARTICLE XXXVI ESTABLISHING A DULUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION.

BY COUNCILOR KENNEDY, PRESIDENT ANDERSON, AND COUNCILOR VAN NETT:

The city of Duluth does ordain:

Section 1. That Chapter 2, Article XXXVI of the Duluth City Code is hereby created as following:

#### **Article XXXVI. Duluth African Heritage Commission.**

##### **Sec. 2-148 Creation of commission. Purpose.**

There is hereby established an African Heritage commission. The purpose of this commission is to ensure that the views of the African Heritage community are incorporated in the decision making, future planning, and stewardship of the city of Duluth. The commission will endeavor to act as a guide in the development of public policy, planning and services so that the African Heritage community is adequately represented in these processes. The commission will also endeavor to increase understanding and acceptance of the African Heritage community and culture and to increase African Heritage community involvement in all aspects of community affairs in Duluth. The commission shall consist of seven members and shall reflect African Heritage diversity in the area. A majority of the members shall be residents of Duluth. Members shall be appointed by the mayor with approval of the city council. Of the first seven appointments, three shall be for three years, two shall be for two years and two shall be for one year. Thereafter, all appointments shall be for a term of three years.

##### **Sec. 2-149. Officers; meetings; conduct of business.**

The African Heritage commission shall meet within 60 days after all its members are appointed to elect its officers, which shall consist of a chair, a vice-chair and a secretary. Thereafter the commission shall meet at stated intervals fixed by resolution of the commission. The commission may adopt reasonable bylaws, rules and regulations for the conduct of its business.

##### **Sec. 2-150. Staff support.**

Staff support, including clerical services and incidental expenses, shall be provided by the city.

##### **Sec. 2-151. Duties.**

The African Heritage commission shall have the following duties:

- (a) To advise the mayor and city council about issues concerning services, policies, procedures and facilities that are of concern to the African Heritage community;
- (b) To serve as a forum for citizen involvement and expressions on issues affecting the community;
- (c) To identify and apply for funds and grants on behalf of the African Heritage community;
- (d) To make recommendations to the city council regarding community development planning;
- (e) To recommend to the city council legislation that empowers and promotes African Heritage community development;
- (f) To increase public understanding and acceptance of the African Heritage community and culture;
- (g) To develop a process to institutionalize a dialog with the city council, the mayor's office and city departments;
- (h) To foster programs that will increase African Heritage community involvement in all aspects of community affairs;
- (i) To develop research and information about African-American heritage and the African Heritage community;
- (j) To establish community development objectives and policies;
- (k) To develop a strategic plan for the African Heritage community.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall take effect 30 days after its passage and publication.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This ordinance establishes an African Heritage commission to assist the administration and city council develop policies and programs to increase the African Heritage community involvement in all aspects of community affairs in Duluth. Duluth is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in public policy and values the principles of health and fairness. The city of Duluth has worked hard to address historical discrimination and racism in our community; we continue to see African Heritage community members disproportionately facing poverty and decreased life expectancies across our neighborhoods. The legacy of systemic racism still lingers in our community, inequitable policies continue to impact the health, welfare, safety, education, economic wealth and wellness of African Heritage community members. By creating, supporting and sustaining an African Heritage commission the city will ensure that decision making, future planning, services, workforce and policy decisions are fair and equitable, valuing diversity and inclusion. The city of Duluth is committed in fostering a path forward for relevant and adequate representation in decision making within all aspects of community affairs.