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DEI Needs Discussion

Summary and Background Information:

Commerce City hired Corona Insights, a Denver-based research and evaluation firm, in December 2022 to conduct a diversity, equity, and inclusion needs assessment for Commerce City to help provide input and guidance for the City's DEI Commission. The work began by forming a needs assessment advisory subcommittee of the Commission and meeting with each City Councilmember to gather their perspective, ensuring that the research process provided plenty of opportunity for participation and feedback. The workplan contained two research elements to support the work of the DEI Commission:

- Research focused on illuminating the diversity of the Commerce City community and disparities within the community.
- Research focused on what the DEI Commission needs in order to expand the impact of the Commission's work.

Approach:

- Kickoff meetings with the DEI Commission and the Commerce City DEI Team to introduce the project.
- Interviews with City Councilmembers
- Analysis of community data on diversity and disparities
- Interviews with DEI Commission members
- Case studies of DEI Commissions in other municipalities
- Meetings with other key informants to gather information

Summarizing the findings from the needs assessment:

- Commerce City is a diverse community with people from every race/ethnicity living throughout the city.
- But most residents are either Hispanic or White. Northern Commerce City is predominately White while southern Commerce City is predominately Hispanic.
- Economic, health, education, and housing disparities exist by geography. These disparities are notable considering comparison communities are almost always in between the north and south.
- These disparities reveal that the residents in southern Commerce City may need very different types of programs and support in order to be well and thrive in the community.
- They also illustrate that disparities by race, socioeconomic status, or other

characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion are likely reflected in geography.

Key Findings for Commerce City's DEI Commission:

- Specific and robust DEI training is necessary for a successful board. The training can happen internally or externally, but should be provided by the City Government.
- Understanding the relationship between the commission and the city population is crucial to understanding the function of the board.
- Cooperation and a general culture of teamwork are important for any DEI commission; board members should see themselves as working together to apply DEI principles to a variety of situations.
- Understanding the city's diversity and the specific challenges that different parts of the community face is a dynamic, ongoing process. This understanding will deepen as the board becomes more established and visible.

The City Council would like the Commission to focus actionable agenda items on how decisions made at the city level impact underrepresented populations in the community, and there are many ways to achieve this.

Staff Responsible (Department Head): Jason Dennison, Director of Strategic Partnerships

Staff Member Presenting: Melissa Sumner, Community & Cultural Liaison; Introducing Corona Insights

Financial Impact:

Funding Source:

Staff Recommendation:

Suggested Motion: