



City of Shoreview — 2025 Equity and Inclusion Survey Analysis

Prepared by the Shoreview Human Rights Commission

Executive summary

In 2025, the human rights commission conducted an online survey to identify strengths and challenges related to equity and inclusion. The survey was open from February 16 to March 14, 2025 on the city's engagement platform, Polco. It was promoted on the city's communications platforms and with fliers at the library, apartment complexes, and faith communities.

This survey offers valuable insight into how individuals perceive diversity, equity, and belonging within the city. While many respondents expressed generally positive sentiments, the data reveals important disparities—particularly among underrepresented groups. Below is a quick snapshot of who completed the survey:

- 264 responses
 - o Age – half of the respondents are between 55 and 74
 - o Race – majority of respondents identify as white (83%)
 - o Gender – majority of respondents identify as female (57%)
 - o Sexual orientation – majority of respondents identify as straight (79%)

It's critical to note that the demographic makeup means that the data may not fully reflect the experiences of immigrants, younger populations, or others. These limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting results and planning future community engagement efforts.

Perceptions of welcoming and respect

Overall, most respondents view Shoreview as a respectful and welcoming place. Approximately 77% of respondents rated the community as "good" or "excellent" in providing a safe environment for people of all backgrounds. Similarly, 73% felt residents are treated with respect, and 69% believed Shoreview is generally welcoming. This shows that the city's current outreach and engagement efforts are working to an extent. Yet, 6% find Shoreview to be unwelcoming, citing issues such as racial bias, LGBTQ+ exclusion, and negative experiences with neighbors and city. These findings suggest that while the general climate is positive, some individuals continue to experience barriers that deserve attention.



City government and public engagement

When evaluating the performance of the city government, respondents were a little more divided. When asked if the city encourages diverse participation in decision-making, 59% rated Shoreview as “excellent” or “good”, while 19% gave the city a “fair” or “poor” rating in this area. Additionally, a significant portion of respondents—27%—selected “don’t know” when asked whether the city helps new residents feel welcomed, connected, and included. This could be due to a lack of visibility of outreach efforts or community awareness. Both of these suggest an opportunity for the city to further promote and communicate its existing welcoming and inclusion-related initiatives.

Support for equity as a community priority

Many respondents support equity as a guiding principle for the city. Nearly half (49%) of respondents said that fostering a diverse, inclusive, and fair community should be a high priority. A similar number (47%) emphasized the importance of equitable access to jobs and housing. However, only 30% considered hiring a diverse city staff to be a high priority. This discrepancy may point to hesitancy or a limited understanding of the importance of internal representation and highlights an area where more public education and dialogue could be valuable.

Barriers to living in Shoreview

While most respondents don’t perceive barriers to living in Shoreview, it is noteworthy that some residents do based on the identities below.

- Race – 13%
- Age – 13%
- National origin – 11%
- Disability – 11%
- Religion or faith – 10%
- Sexual orientation or gender identity – 7%

These percentages suggest some parallels to the demographics. This may show that those from marginalized populations face greater barriers than those from the majority population.

In addition, up to 25% selected “don’t know” for several of these questions. These gaps in perception suggest that while some residents are experiencing systemic or interpersonal exclusion and barriers others may not notice or understand the challenges some of their neighbors face in their daily lives.



Experiences of discrimination

Although the majority of respondents did not report personal experiences of discrimination, several individuals shared concerns. Their comments reflected incidents of profiling, discomfort in public spaces, racialized assumptions, and overt bias. Some described feeling judged in community spaces or singled out during interactions with neighbors or city staff. Others noted that resistance to affordable housing seemed racially coded. These narratives show that not everyone experiences that welcome equally.

Themes from open comments

Resident comments provided deeper insight into the lived experiences behind the statistics. Many shared positive stories of feeling welcomed by neighbors or enjoying our safe, quiet environment. Others expressed neutrality—acknowledging that they hadn't faced barriers but didn't know enough to comment on broader community dynamics. However, several respondents voiced significant concerns. They described racism and classism in neighborhoods, homophobic attitudes, and a culture that can feel closed or cold to newcomers. A few noted feeling scrutinized for how they looked or spoke, especially in public-facing spaces or during interactions with local officials.

Conclusion

Shoreview is widely viewed as a safe and respectful community, but this perception is not universally shared. This survey reveals both strengths and areas for improvement. Some areas of improvement include visibility, representation, and meaningful inclusion of marginalized groups. The following strategies are being recommended to help Shoreview be a welcoming community to all:

1. Create a "Welcome to Shoreview" campaign to:
 - a. Welcome new residents
 - b. Share opportunities for diverse populations to join community events and advisory boards.
 - c. Promote the city's value of inclusion and encourage residents to live by it.
2. Showcase our community diversity by:
 - a. Fostering an environment for all residents
 - b. Hosting multicultural events that represent different groups in the city