

**Advisory Committee on Racial Equity,
Inclusion, and Human Rights Agenda
February 24, 2026 @ 6:00 PM
City Hall, Council Chambers, 73 Harlow Street, Bangor**

For language and physical assistance requests, please call Grace Innis at 207-992-4276 as soon as possible to ensure availability. Parking for the meeting is available in the parking lot next to the building on Harlow Street and includes a ramp and accessible doors.

Doors open fifteen minutes prior to the start of the meeting.

Council Chambers is located at the far end of the hallway on the first floor.

Current Membership and Terms

Regular Members:

Katie Brydon, Chair (12/31/2027)

Kathryn Robinson (12/31/2026)

Vacant (12/31/2026)

Suzette Furrow (12/31/2028)

Sharon Webber (12/31/2028)

Shane Boyes, Vice Chair (12/31/2027)

Rheylan Burke (12/31/2026)

Mark Roth (12/31/2027)

Teresa Fallon (12/31/2028)

Nonvoting Members:

Carollynn Lear, City Manager, or Designee

Emme Nguyen, High School Student

Marie Robinson, Superintendent of Schools, or Designee

Michael Beck, Councilor (10/31/2026)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call: Attendance

3. All Public Comment – Limited to 15 minutes; Chair may reopen at end

4. Approval of Minutes: January 27, 2026

5. Committee Business

- Current Status of Committee
- Language Access Plan

6. Council Liaison and/or Manager Updates

7. Adjourn

Future Business

- Council Direction/Guidance/Feedback
- Goals/Priorities for 2026 Discussion
- Citizens' Initiative Follow Up

Next meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2026 (subject to change).

Advisory Committee of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights

Minutes for the Tuesday, January 27, 2026 Meeting

6:00p | Council Chambers

Members Present: Member Sharon Webber, Member Suzette Furrow, Member Kathryn Robinson, Secretary Rheyln Burke, Vice Chair Shane Boyes, Member Mark Roth, Member Teresa Fallon, Chair Katie Brydon, Student Rep. Emme Nguyen

Members not present:

City of Bangor staff and guests present: Assistant City Solicitor, Grace Innis, City Council Liaison, Michael Beck

Call to Order

Call to order at 6:00pm

Introduction of Adv. Committee members and city members present

Roll Call

All members present

Election of Adv. Committee Leadership

- Member Robinson motions to vote Katie Brydon as 2026 ACREIHR Chair, Vice Chair Boyd second – 6 yes, 0 no
- Member Roth motions to vote Shane Boyes as 2026 ACREIHR Vice Chair, member Burke second – 6 yes, 0 no
- Chair Brydon motions to vote member Rheyln Burke as 2026 ACREIHR Secretary, member Roth second – 6 yes, 0 no

Public Comment

No public comment

Approval of Minutes

- Chair Brydon motions to approve Nov. and Dec. minutes
- Member Robinson asks for an amendment – Member Robinson was present in Nov.
- Chair Brydon motions to approve minutes, with amendment – 6 yes, 0 no

Committee Business

New Member Introduction

- Welcome new members, Suzette Furrow, Sharon Webber, and Teresa Fallon
- Chair Brydon reviews ACREIHRs mission and attendance policy
 - Requests feedback on onboarding document
 - No changes or questions

FOAA training conducted by Assistant City Solicitor Innis

- Reply All – not advised
- Five people presented are considered a quorum and a public meeting with notice is required

Annual Report

- Due February to be presented to the council

Advisory Committee of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights

Minutes for the Tuesday, January 27, 2026 Meeting

6:00p | Council Chambers

- Includes events attended, legislative policy and ordinance directives and ongoing goals etc.
- Chair Brydon motions to approve the annual report as is to Gov Ops, member Robinson second All in favor; the 2025 Annual Report will be presented to Gov Ops on Monday, Feb. 2nd at 5:15pm

Citizen Initiative

- Community member Jadin Wilson presented a resolve to the Adv. Committee to create sanctuary boundaries for transgendered and gender diverse people in Bangor.
- Jadin urged members to consider the present political climate and called for an additional layer of protection for Bangor’s transgender and gender diverse populations.
- Chair Brydon asks Councilor Beck what the ideal next step is.
- Councilor Beck shared that the City should consider additional efforts, beyond LD 227
 - Expressed concern over governing by resolve – is a resolution the best vehicle?
 - Recommends we touch base with the City Manager
- Member Furrow mentions the “Welcome to All” resolution that the council has previously passed and the presented resolution not being necessary.
- Member Burke highlights that the presented resolution addresses a specific population and regarding the political.
- Chair Brydon recommends that the ACREIHR follows up on the presented resolution at the next meeting with additional (Bangor specific) data and the City Manager present to address how we can effectively move forward.

City Manager/Council Liaison Updates

- City Council Liaison Updates from Councilor Beck
 - Encampment was closed – city helped to provide transportation, bins, cell phones and tents etc.
 - Bangor’s Housing and Homelessness Committee has been approved as a standing committee; the selection of members is being finalized by City Council and staff.
 - The City has hired a new Homelessness Coordinator which comes highly vetted and with years of experience and service; confident will be a good fit for Bangor.
 - BCAT fully staffed for the first time (finally at 4 staff after being staffed by 2 for several years).

Events

MLK Breakfast, hosted by the NAACP on Jan. 19

- Chair Brydon and Member Robinson attended.
- Update from Member Robinson. **Call to adjourn**
 - Motion to adjourn by Chair Brydon; seconded by Member Robinson
 - All in favor; meeting end at 7:35pm

Next meeting: February 24 at 6:00pm in Council Chambers

Proposal: Creating a Language Access Plan (LAP) for the City of Bangor

Purpose of This Document

This document explains what a Language Access Plan (LAP) is, why Bangor should create one, how it could be implemented across city departments, and how our committee can support the process.

What is a Language Access Plan?

A **Language Access Plan (LAP)** is a structured framework that ensures residents with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to city programs, services, and information.

An LAP typically includes:

- Identification of languages spoken in the community
- Methods to provide interpretation and translation
- Department-specific protocols for serving LEP community members
- Staff training plans
- Performance and accountability measures

The goal is to remove barriers and ensure all residents—regardless of the language they speak—can access essential city services.

Why Bangor Needs a Language Access Plan

Bangor's population is increasingly diverse, with more residents speaking languages other than English at home. A formal LAP would:

- Improve access to city services such as public safety, housing, health, and education
- Reduce misunderstandings and increase trust between residents and government
- Support legal compliance regarding civil rights and nondiscrimination
- Strengthen community engagement
- Ensure city communications (emergency notices, public meetings, forms, etc.) reach everyone

Bangor could benefit from a LAP that means our size and scope; it should be focused, efficient, and scalable.

What Implementation Could Look Like

A LAP does not need to be complicated. Bangor can adopt a plan that matches our capacity and community needs. Below is a clear structure for implementation.

1. Assessment of Language Needs

Each department would:

- Track language requests (phone calls, walk-ins, emails)
- Note frequently encountered languages
- Identify services with high public interaction (e.g., police, clerk's office, general assistance)
- Collaborate with organizations that support individuals with language-support needs to identify highest language needs

The committee can support by reviewing available demographic data and community feedback.

2. Developing Protocols for Interpretation and Translation

The city would determine:

- When professional interpretation is required
- Which documents should be translated (e.g., emergency alerts, essential forms)
- Preferred vendors or tools (phone interpretation services, statewide language lines)

Departments would have simple reference sheets explaining how to access these resources.

3. Staff Training

Topics could include:

- How to identify when someone needs language support
- How to offer interpretation respectfully and legally
- How to use the city's approved tools and vendors

Trainings can be brief and tailored to department needs.

4. Standardizing Signage and Notices

Examples:

- "Language assistance available" signs in multiple languages
- Key forms available in the city's top-requested languages
- Multilingual announcements for public meetings or emergencies

5. Monitoring and Improvement

The city manager's office would receive:

- Annual updates from departments on usage and needs
- Recommendations for adjustments
- Feedback from the Advisory Committee

This keeps the LAP effective without creating unnecessary administrative burdens.

What Each Department Might Need

High-Contact Departments

- Police Department
- Fire/EMS
- General Assistance
- City Clerk's Office
- Public Health and Community Services
- Schools (separate but highly relevant partners)

Needs may include:

- Access to interpreter services (phone, virtual, or in-person)
- Translated versions of critical forms
- Procedures for emergency communications

Lower-Contact Departments

- Planning and Code
- Public Works
- Parks and Recreation
- Economic Development

Needs may include:

- Clear signage
 - Website accessibility improvements
 - Translated outreach materials for public meetings, projects, or notices
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How Our Committee Can Support This Process

Our committee can:

- Provide research on best practices for small cities
- Help identify priority languages in Bangor
- Coordinate community feedback from immigrant, refugee, and LEP residents
- Review draft LAP materials and offer recommendations
- Assist with developing equity-centered communication approaches
- Partner with local service organizations for outreach and education

We can serve as a bridge between the community and the city manager, ensuring the LAP reflects real needs and practical solutions.

Proposed Next Steps

1. Committee reviews and refines this document for presentation to the City Manager.
 2. Recommend that the City Manager authorize a preliminary needs assessment (cost-effective, using existing data where possible).
 3. Develop a draft LAP framework based on Bangor's specific needs and capacity.
 4. Share the draft with departments for feedback.
 5. Finalize and vote to adopt the LAP, with annual review.
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Summary

A Language Access Plan is an achievable, essential step to ensure equitable access to city services in Bangor. With coordinated effort and a right-sized, realistic plan, Bangor can provide better service to all residents while strengthening trust, communication, and community well-being.

Our committee is well-positioned to guide and support this work.

City of Bangor – Mini Language Access Plan (LAP)

Effective Date: [Insert Date]

Last Reviewed: [Insert Date]

Contact: Language Access Coordinator – [email / phone]

1. Purpose

The City of Bangor is committed to ensuring that all residents, regardless of the language they speak, have **meaningful access** to city services, programs, and information. This plan ensures that residents with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Deaf/Hard of Hearing residents can access services safely, effectively, and equitably.

2. Scope

- Applies to all city departments, staff, and contractors who provide public-facing services.
- Covers residents whose primary language is not English or who rely on ASL.
- Includes vital documents, public notices, and emergency communications.

Definitions:

- **LEP:** Individuals with limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English.
 - **Vital Documents:** Emergency alerts, utility notices, public safety instructions, city permits, registration forms.
 - **Meaningful Access:** Services are provided so that LEP residents can access them at the same level as English speakers.
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3. Priority Languages

Based on local data (Census, schools, community organizations):

1. **Spanish** – largest LEP population in Bangor.
2. **American Sign Language (ASL)** – for Deaf and Hard of Hearing residents.
3. **Other emerging languages** – e.g., Arabic, Somali, French, based on local refugee and immigrant populations.

Languages may be updated annually based on population trends and community feedback.

4. Language Services

Interpretation:

- Staff fluent in priority languages will assist when available.
- Contracted interpretation (phone or video) will be used when staff are unavailable.

Translation:

- Vital documents (utility notices, permits, public safety instructions) will be translated into Spanish and ASL summaries where feasible.
- Emergency notices will be provided in priority languages as needed.

Digital Access:

- City website to include a “Language Assistance” page with translated documents, links to interpretation resources, and contact information for the Language Access Coordinator.

5. Staff Roles & Training

- **Language Access Coordinator:** [Name / Contact Info]
 - **Staff Training:**
 - Identifying LEP individuals.
 - How to request interpretation/translation services.
 - Documenting assistance provided.
 - Training will be conducted annually or as new staff are hired.
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6. Public Notification

- Multilingual signage in key municipal locations: City Hall, Library, Community Center.
“Language assistance is available at no cost. Ask staff for help.”
 - Website and social media updates to inform residents about available services.
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7. Community Engagement

- Partner with:
 - Bangor School District
 - Local community centers, churches, and refugee organizations
 - Collect feedback on language access needs and evaluate which languages/services should be prioritized.
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8. Complaint / Feedback Process

Residents may submit concerns via:

- Email: [Insert Email]
- Phone: [Insert Phone]
- In-person: City Hall, 2nd Floor Reception

The Language Access Coordinator will investigate and respond within **10 business days**.

9. Annual Review

- Departments report usage of interpretation and translation services.
- Priority languages are reviewed and updated as needed.
- Procedures revised based on community feedback.
- Summary report submitted to **Bangor City Council annually**.

1. Purpose & Commitment

- State the city's commitment to ensuring **all residents have access to services**, regardless of English proficiency.
- Emphasize that **language access is about equity, safety, and engagement**.

Example:

"The City of Smalltown is committed to providing all residents meaningful access to city services, programs, and public information, regardless of the language they speak."

2. Scope & Definitions

- Define **Limited English Proficient (LEP)** residents.
- Define "**vital documents**" (e.g., emergency alerts, permits, service applications).
- Define "**meaningful access**".

Tip: Keep definitions concise and practical for small city staff.

3. Identify Priority Languages

- Use census data, school enrollment, and local input to identify the top 1–3 non-English languages spoken in the city.
 - For very small populations, focus on **Spanish, ASL, and one or two additional languages** if there are communities with a consistent presence.
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4. Language Services

- **Interpretation:** Provide access via staff who speak the language, phone interpreter services, or volunteers.
 - **Translation:** Translate **vital documents** and key forms. Start small—emergency notices, utility info, public health alerts.
 - **Digital options:** City website can have Google Translate options or PDF translations for vital content.
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5. Staff Roles & Training

- Assign a **Language Access Coordinator** (could be a part-time staff person).
 - Train front-line staff on:
 - How to identify LEP individuals.
 - How to access translation/interpretation resources.
 - How to document language access requests.
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6. Community Engagement

- Partner with **local schools, churches, community organizations, or immigrant groups** to understand needs and improve outreach.
 - Encourage feedback from residents on language access.
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Sample for Small City

7. Public Notification

- Post signage in **municipal buildings** (City Hall, libraries) noting:
“Language assistance is available at no cost. Ask staff for help.”
 - Include information on websites and social media.
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8. Complaint/Feedback Mechanism

- Provide a simple way for residents to report **denied access** or difficulties, e.g., via email, phone, or form in multiple languages.
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9. Annual Review

- Review LAP annually to:
 - Update priority languages.
 - Track usage of interpretation/translation services.
 - Adjust procedures based on city capacity and community needs.
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Key Considerations for Small Cities

- Start small: focus on **critical services first** (emergency services, utility billing, city council notices, public health).
- Leverage **technology and volunteers** for interpretation.
- Collaboration is essential: partner with **neighboring municipalities or county programs**.
- Focus on **practical implementation over formal bureaucracy**.