

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION AND IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

BACKGROUND:

The Ames Human Relations Commission (AHRC) has a group of volunteer investigators who are responsible for investigating alleged acts of discrimination in the Ames community. The Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) also works towards this purpose using professional staff and resources in its investigations. For the past several years, the ICRC has entered into a cooperative agreement with the City to assist AHRC in resolving complaints. A renewal of that agreement has been proposed by ICRC for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017.

The agreement provides monetary compensation for the City to 1) act as the intake officer for complaints alleging discrimination, and 2) forward the complaint to the ICRC for investigation. **The purpose of the agreement is to reduce local agency backlogs and ensure that complaints are investigated promptly. The City has full discretion in choosing which cases, if any, it wishes to forward to the ICRC for investigation. AHRC has discussed the cooperative agreement and recommended that it be approved by the City Council.**

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the cooperative agreement between the Ames Human Relations Commission and the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.
2. Do not approve the cooperative agreement.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

This agreement formalizes the mechanism that may be used by the City to transfer civil rights investigations to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission for investigation. The City has the option to choose which cases to submit to the ICRC, which may be exercised if the City has a backlog of cases, if a case would be uniquely difficult to investigate locally, or if other circumstances justify that the ICRC should investigate. The ICRC will compensate the City for acting as the intake agent under this agreement. This agreement has been adopted between the City and the ICRC for several years.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving the cooperative agreement between the Ames Human Relations Commission and the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.