



Statement from Mayor Boesen and Initiative List

May 23, 2025

Five years ago, the nation and the world took notice following the death of George Floyd. In Des Moines, this came at a time when our City was in the midst of a transformation to improve outcomes for all members of our community. The 2018 Bridging the Gap initiative brought together over 400 residents from all backgrounds to start a conversation and move our City forward with better relationships between our police and our residents.

Some of the proposed initiatives were already in motion five years ago and others were accelerated by the demands for progress in our City like the Des Moines Police Department's unbiased policing policy that City Council put into policy in June of 2022. The events of 2020 also brought forward new ideas to pursue and areas to focus on. Over the five years since, we have seen momentum and the early results of policy changes and new initiatives. We have also seen new regulatory challenges arise at the same time.

Continuous improvement is a journey without a destination. The work continues and we will keep working on for ways to improve Des Moines for all members of the community. – **Mayor Connie Boesen**

Initiatives:

City Workforce Housing Incentives

- Research began as part of Bridging the Gap initiative in 2019
- Cash incentives to motivate City employees to live in the city they serve were passed by City Council in May, 2021
- 114 city employees have used the incentive to either buy their first house in Des Moines or move into the City of Des Moines
- Top 3 Departments
 - Police Department (25)
 - Public Works Department (20)
 - Fire Department (19)



30x30 Initiative

- Aimed to increase the representation of women in police recruit classes to 30% by the year 2030
- Adopted by DMPD in Fall 2021
- Will no longer continue due to state legislation

Traffic Stop Written Warnings

- Des Moines Police began issuing written warnings in 2022 to provide more data and transparency on police traffic stops
- This data was issued in the 2023 Annual Report and will be featured in future DMPD Annual Reports

Source of Income Protection

- June 3, 2019 Des Moines City Council passed an amendment to the Human Rights Ordinance adding income as a protected class expanding housing protections to Des Moines residents
- This was later pre-empted by new state legislation

Unbiased Policing Ordinance

- This ordinance was preceeded by a Police Department policy implemented in 2017.
- Des Moines City Council passed an ordinance banning biased policing on June 22, 2020.
- This ordinance mandated annual police de-escalation and additional training requirements.

Restored Youth Advisory Board

- Youth Advisory Board was reassembled in 2022 to give younger community members (Ages 14 – 25) a voice in local government.

Strengthened Human Rights Ordinance Amendments



- November 15, 2021 City Council approved ordinance amendments intended to strengthen human rights including:
 - Required cultural competency training for members of boards, commissions and City Council
 - Protections against discrimination in commercial and residential tenancy and credit
 - Prohibition of false reports to police based on bias
 - Voluntary community mediation services offered by Civil and Human Rights Commission

CARE Team

- Created in 2022 to provide a non-law enforcement response to non-violent 911 calls with a mental health or crisis component.
- CARE Team now responds to thousands of calls annually without a police officer where an officer previously would have been dispatched leading to fewer arrests.

Public Safety Equity Liaison

- Funding and Financial support was provided for DMPD's proposal to hire a Diversity and Equity Coordinator embedded with the Police and Fire Departments.
- The position's job description is currently being reviewed given new state legislation.

Police Department Reviews

- Public Works LLC and 21st Century Policing Solutions Each conducted reviews of Des Moines Police Department policies, procedures and training and developed lists of recommendations to improve DMPD service to the Des Moines Community
- Many of these recommendations have been adopted or are in the process of being adopted.