

April

Newsletter

Metro Human Relations Commission



Holding the Line on Democracy: Representation, Rights, and the Work Ahead



Davie Tucker, Jr.
Executive Director

I was hoping, even when people more in the know than me, said I was expecting too much from the Supreme Court as they considered a case contesting the district maps from Louisiana on the basis of race. They were right. Today the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that race as a consideration in drawing representation maps is unconstitutional. This ruling significantly weakens key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and marks a profound moment in our nation's history. The ongoing struggle over who counts and who gets counted. For many Black Americans, and in modern history, all people of color, this is not unfamiliar terrain. It echoes a long history where access to the ballot has been contested, constrained, and at times deliberately denied under the threat of death.

The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution abolished slavery in name, while the 14th Amendment sought to establish equal protection under the law. Yet history makes clear that these constitutional guarantees required enforcement and vigilance. The Voting Rights Act was one such enforcement tool, born out of the courage of those who risked everything to make democracy real, has been possibly dealt a death blow.

The weakening of this tool carries consequences. Representation is not abstract; it shapes policy, resources, and ultimately determines what voices are heard. When barriers to voting increase, disparities that have long existed between Black life and White life across health, education, housing, and economic opportunity risk being further entrenched. The erosion of voting protections also raises broader concerns about the functionality and durability of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the legal framework that undergirds equal access in public life.

The Commission meets the first Monday of every month (unless it's a holiday) at 4pm at the Howard Office Building. The next full commission meeting is:

Monday, May 4, 4:00– 5:30 pm
Howard Office Building
700 2nd Avenue S. Nashville TN
37201

[Submit a public comment](#)
[online.](#)

This moment is undeniably a setback. But it is not the end of the story. The history of civil rights in America is a testament to the persistence of communities organizing, advocating, and insisting that our nation live up to its ideals. Our democracy depends on participation that is full, fair, and inclusive. Many lament this ruling, but it does not change the work that must be done, nor should it dampen our resolve to dare to believe- *We hold these truths to be self-evident that ALL men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

IncluCivics 2026 Is Out

Jihan Mohammed, Ph.D.



Next, we will be holding several public presentations across Davidson County. Details for each event are listed on the left. All these presentations are free and open to the public. We invite you to join us to hear and discuss the key findings.

Finally, we have prepared a community feedback survey ([here](#)) to gather your input on the report. Specifically, your thoughts on:

- Why Hispanic-Latino, Asian and Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native employees are underrepresented in the Metro workforce?
- Why women and non-White employees tend to earn less than their White colleagues?
- What do you think contributes to the trend of fewer employees living in Davidson County?

We have officially released the IncluCivics 2026 report, which can be found [here](#). This comprehensive 111-page document includes more than 300 infographics detailing 10 years of data on the Metro workforce.

In addition to the report, we have released eight interactive dashboards that allow users to explore the data in greater detail. We invite you to use the QR code below and use the available filters to tailor the information to your specific questions and interests.

Public Presentations

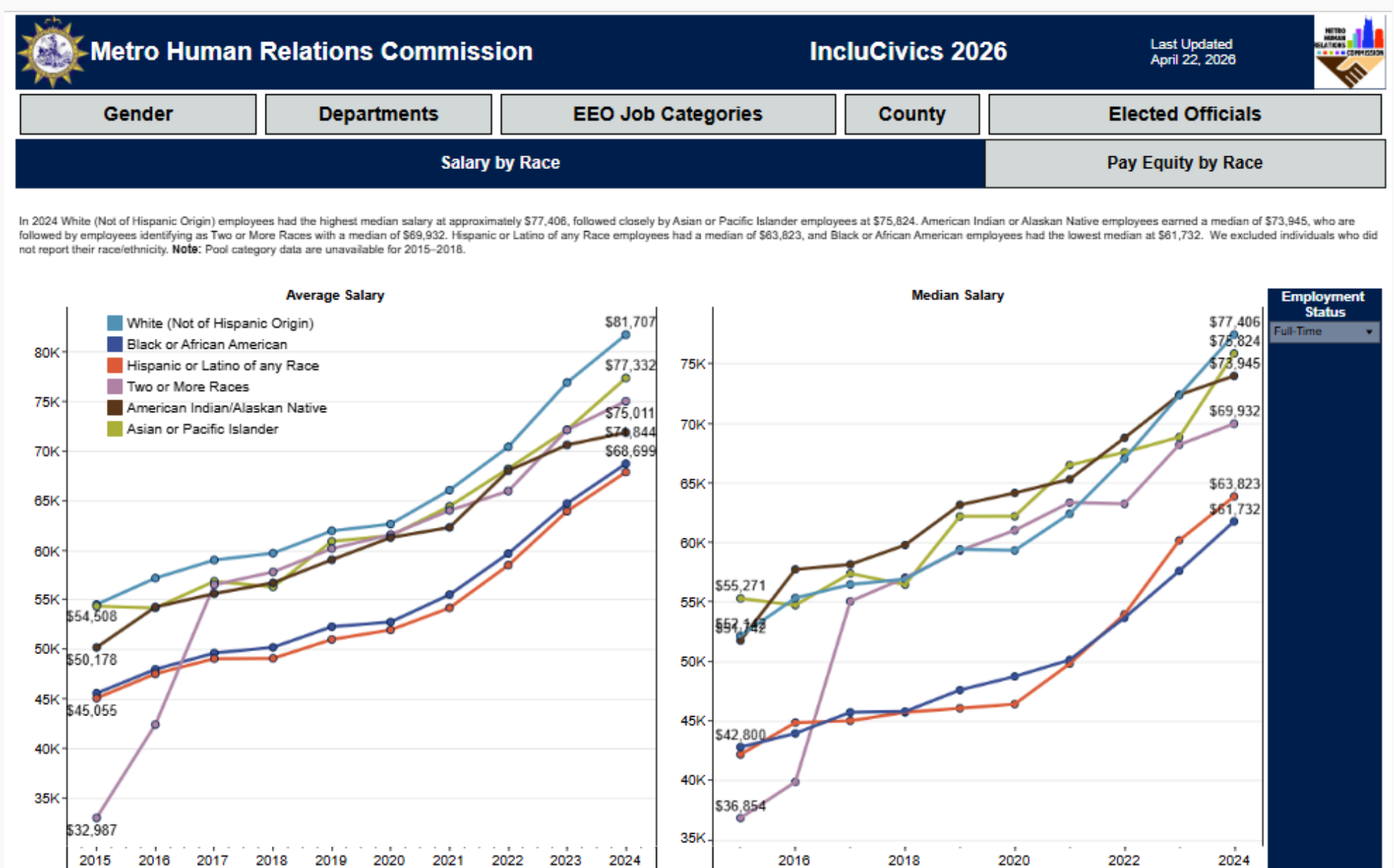
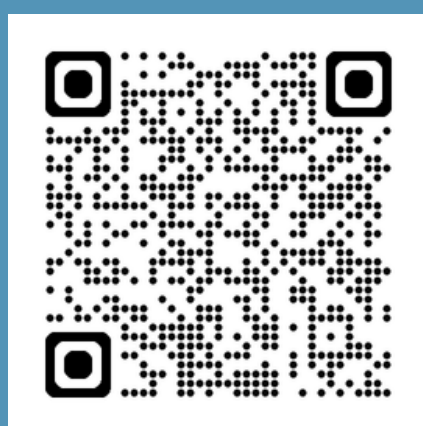
Nashville Public Library
Southeast Branch
Wednesday, May 6, 2026
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Metropolitan Courthouse
& City Hall
Thursday, May 7, 2026
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Madison Community Center
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Nashville Public Library –
Inglewood Branch
Tuesday, May 19, 2026
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Use the QR below to
access the dashboards.



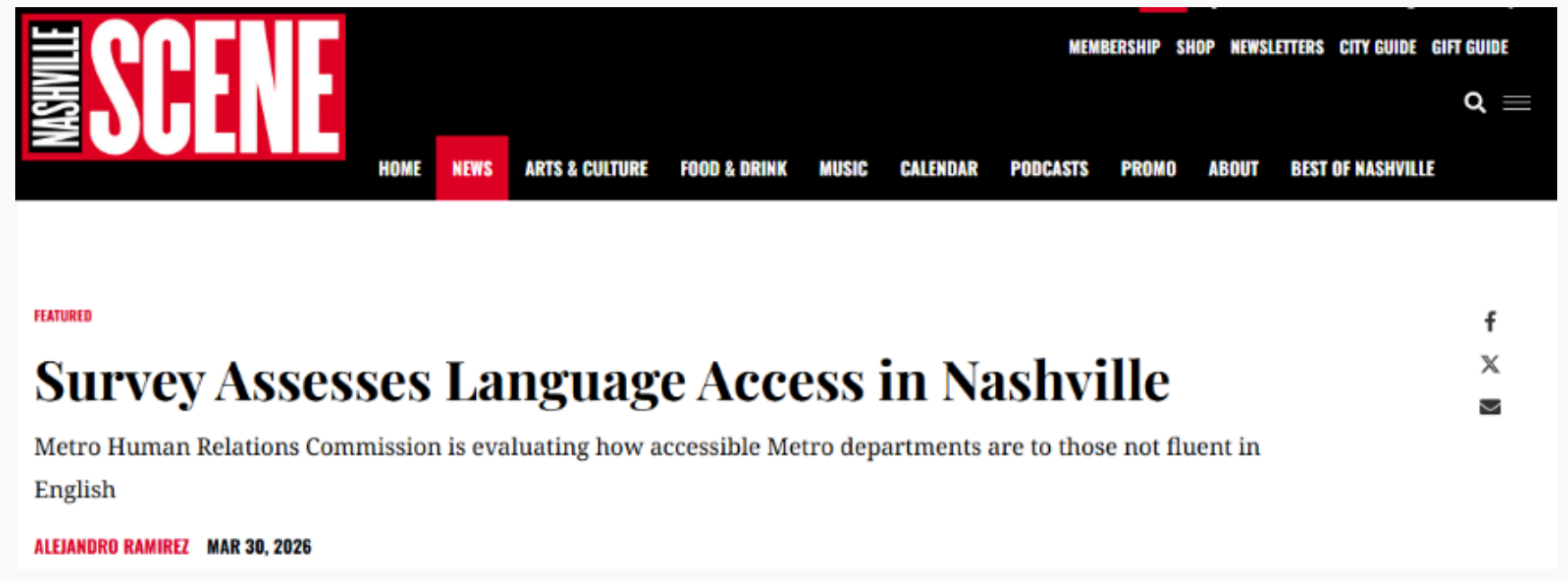
Language Access Out in the World

Gavin Crowell-Williamson, M.Ed.

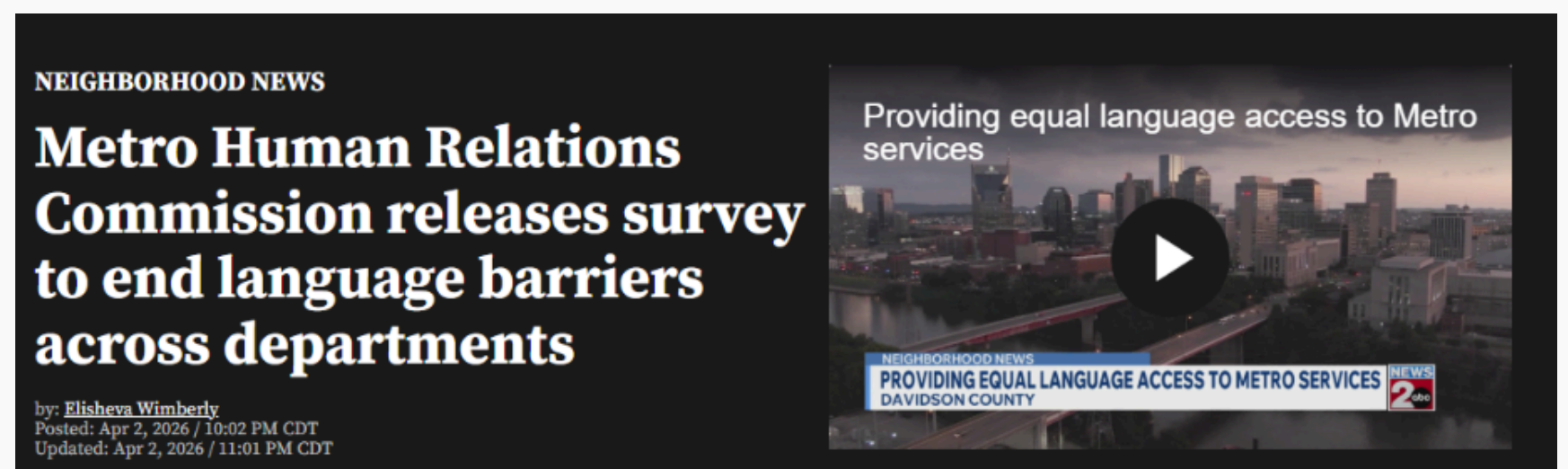


Our language access survey has been making the media rounds! We are grateful to the Nashville Scene, WKRN, and News Channel 5 for their coverage and for recognizing the importance of a government that works for all Nashvillians.

The Nashville Scene



WKRN



News Channel 5

'A sign of care:' Nashville launches survey to improve government language access

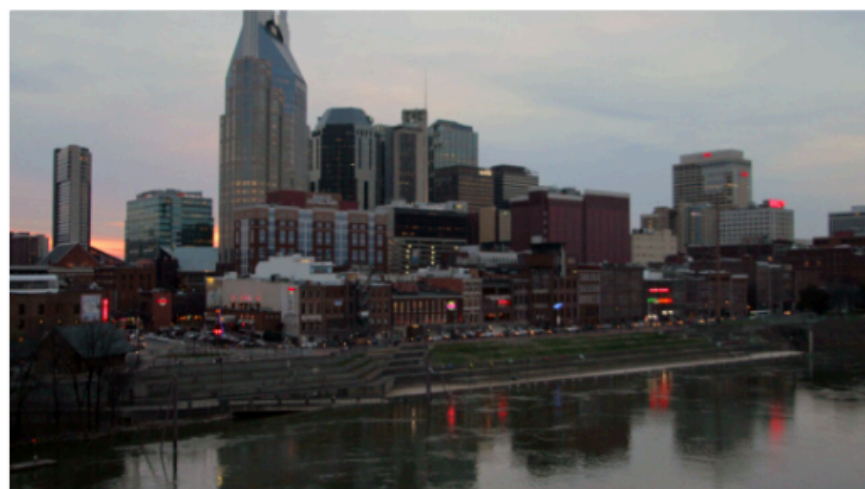


Photo by: WTVF
FILE: Downtown Nashville



By: Patsy Montesinos
Posted 6:41 PM, Apr 10, 2026



Watch at 6PM, streaming live on every device.

The Scene - In Print



We still need your help though!

Our survey, which we have translated into over a dozen languages and dialects, needs to make it into every corner of Nashville – so share with friends, family, colleagues, and anyone who might benefit from better language services in Nashville. For more information about the study or survey, please contact Gavin Crowell-Williamson, gavin.crowell-williamson@nashville.gov, 615-880-3391

No Hate On My Plate Program



BAREFOOT REPUBLIC
CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

No Hate On My Plate is a project of the Metro Human Relations Commission designed to hold communal meals across the city each month where community members will have a safe space to discuss experiences and observations that seek to show our shared values and commonalities. We believe that the more I know about my neighbors, hate and animosity are much more difficult to take root. Trained facilitators guide the participants in dialogue as they share a meal across differences.

In the past thirty days, we held two No Hate On My Plate events. The first was hosted by Council member Joy Styles on March 31 at the Southeast Regional Community Center. The second was hosted by Barefoot Republic Camp & Retreat Center on April 16 at their location.

Part of our assessment of this program, is a post-event survey. Based on the 32 responses we have received so far, feedback is overwhelmingly positive. Most participants felt comfortable, fully engaged, and supported by our skilled facilitators. A strong majority viewed the program as valuable. Nearly all said they would recommend the event to others and attend again.



Council Member: Joy Styles
District 32

For more information about this program, please visit:
<https://www.nashville.gov/departments/human-relations/humans-over-hate/no-hate-my-plate>

Commissioner Spotlight



Dr. Ben Tran

Born in the Cajun country of western Louisiana and raised in New Orleans and Atlanta, Ben Tran moved to Nashville from the Bay Area to research and teach in Vanderbilt's Asian Studies and English departments. He has lived in Nashville for nearly 20 years with his spouse and their two children.

He has served as a commissioner and chair of MHRC since Dec 2020-April 2022, Nov 2022-May 2026 and June 2024-May 2026, respectively. He says that his time of service with MHRC has been one of his most rewarding experiences as a Nashvillian: *"It has been an honor to serve on MHRC and to work with my fellow commissioners and the staff members as we all work to 'protect and promote the personal dignity of all people' here in Nashville. This is not only the purpose of our commission, but during these times, treating all people with dignity is one of our greatest imperatives as a society. This is ongoing work for so many people. I have been humbled to have met and worked with so many people dedicated to a more just Nashville."*

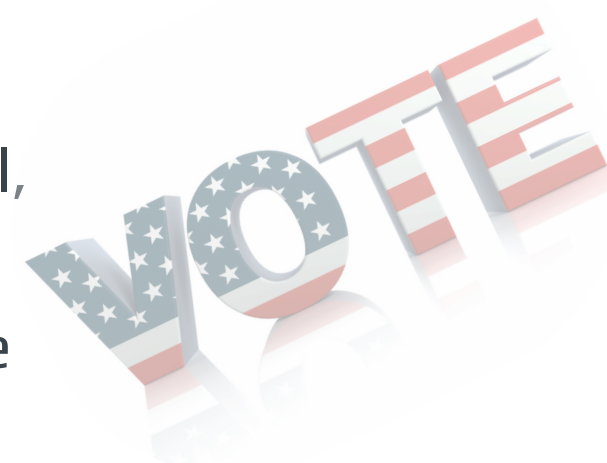
Commissioners:

Dr. Ben Tran, Chair
Dakota Galban, Vice-chair
Jeff Teague, Vice-chair
Dahron Johnson, Secretary
Todd R. McKinney, Treasurer
Garlinda Burton
Keri Adams
Erin Coleman
Dr. Amy Crawford Charlton
Cara Ince
Sarah Martin
Whitney Pastorek
Dr. Carmen Reese Foster
William Slone
Claudia Weber
Alecia Wynn
Katie Feldhaus

Are you interested in becoming a commissioner? [Click here!](#)

Davidson County Primary Election

Today was the final day of early voting for the Davidson County Primary Election. Election Day is May 5. Voters will decide races for Nashville's criminal, circuit, and general sessions courts, as well as several clerk's offices. Four MNPS school board seats (Districts 2, 4, 6, and 8) are also included. Make sure you vote, every voice matters.



[Find my School District](#)

[Who is on the Ballot?](#)

[Your Customized Ballot
Based on Your Address](#)

[2026 Election Information Guide](#)