

# Civic Dinners: Inclusion and Belonging

Presented by Sharon Kraun, Communications Director



SANDY SPRINGS™

GEORGIA

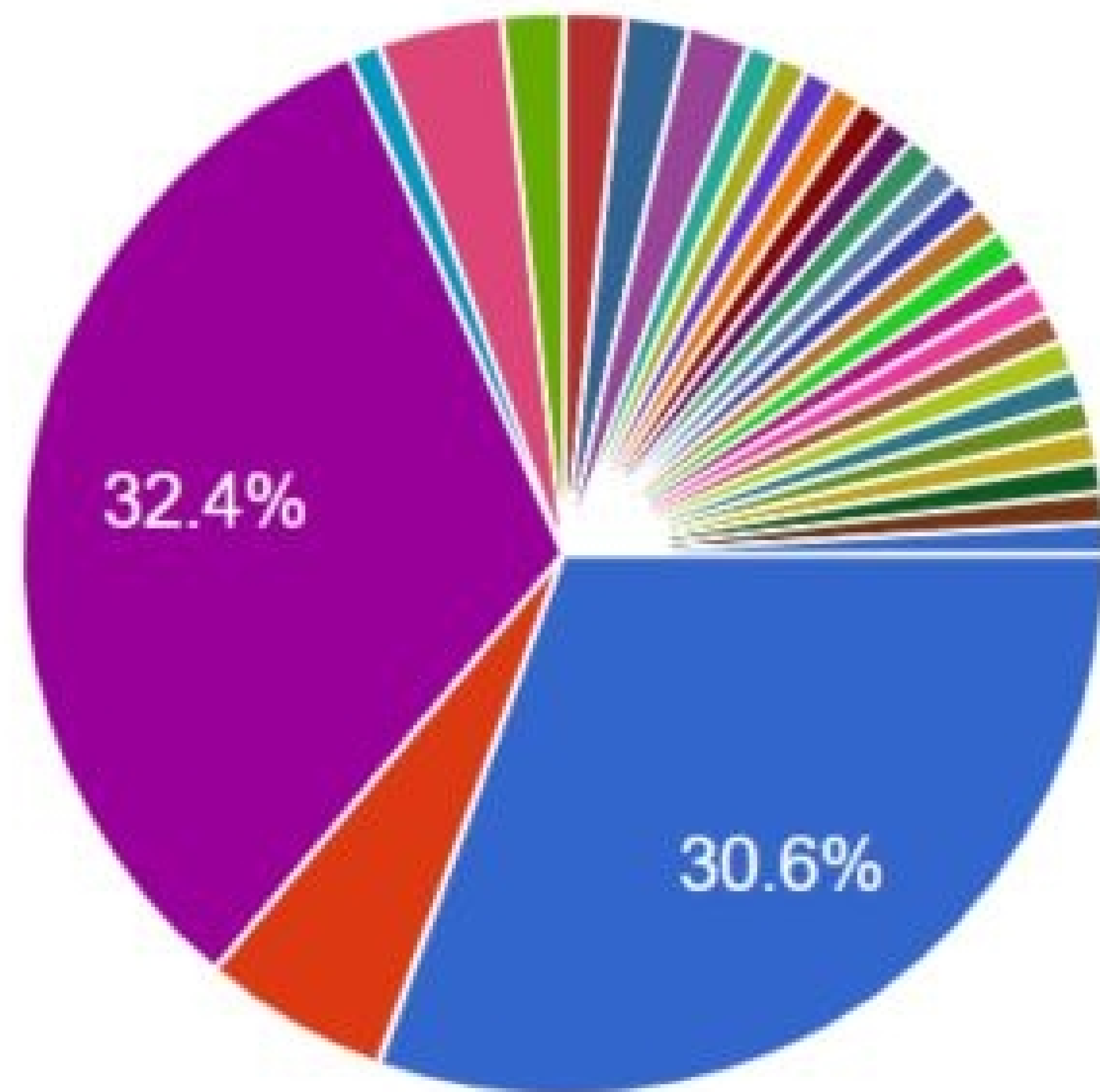
# Sandy Springs Civic Dinners: Inclusion & Belonging

- 44 Dinners
- 341 Attendees
- 44 Note takers
- Dinners held in English and Spanish
- Diverse marketing and evaluation committees



We cordially invite you help us build community and foster inclusion by better understanding one another. Join our civic conversations on diversity and inclusion.

# How Did You Learn about the Dinners



- City of Sandy Springs e-newsletter
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Friend or colleague
- Local news
- IDEA Council
- Community Assistance Center

# Hosts: What did the attendees gain?

- Understanding of another side of an issue
- Felt heard and appreciated the opportunity
- Was able to share concerns or opportunities

# Participants: What did you enjoy?

- Meeting new people & feeling like I made a difference
- Diversity of opinions
- Great conversation
- Candor and willingness to listen
- Enjoyed the excellent observations and suggestions
- The diversity of the participants



**David Adkins** @David\_adkins22 · Aug 5  
I incredibly appreciate the efforts of @SandySpringsGA to make our city more inclusive. I enjoyed hosting a @civildinners discussing diversity and inclusion with fellow members of our community. #Inclusivesandysprings



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# Hosts: Some of the main points of discussion

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General understanding of the need for the city to play an active role in inclusion, diversity and equity; City is trying but needs to do more

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Diversity in leadership

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Socio-economic disparity in addition to racial divide

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Community programming provides opportunities for creating connections

# What does inclusion mean to you?

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Diversity is being invited to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance

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Everyone has access to the same things - all groups knowing and interacting with each other

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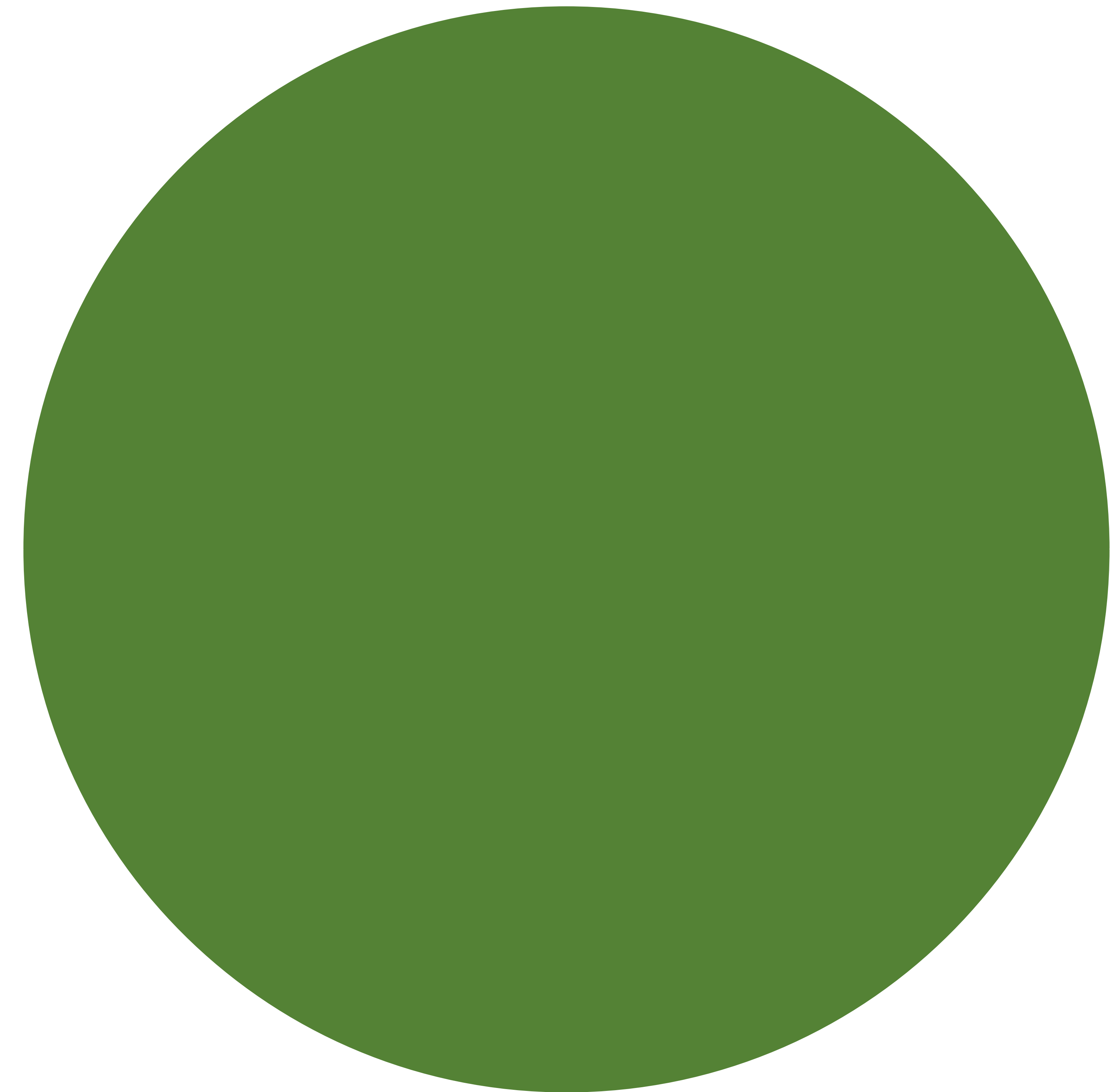
Every group, decision, action is seen through the lens of awareness of the members of my community

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Acknowledgement, embracing of people that look or think differently than myself and larger society

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Affordable and equitable housing



# Do you believe Sandy Springs is inclusive?

A majority indicated “no,” but acknowledged efforts

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Does not feel inclusive to me, I think partially because of class issues

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I believe COSS is 50/50 because, it is still a new city, it is still growing and maturing, it needs to be more involved with everyone to see what a city is to them

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We are diverse, but there is a lot more we could do on many levels to be inclusive.

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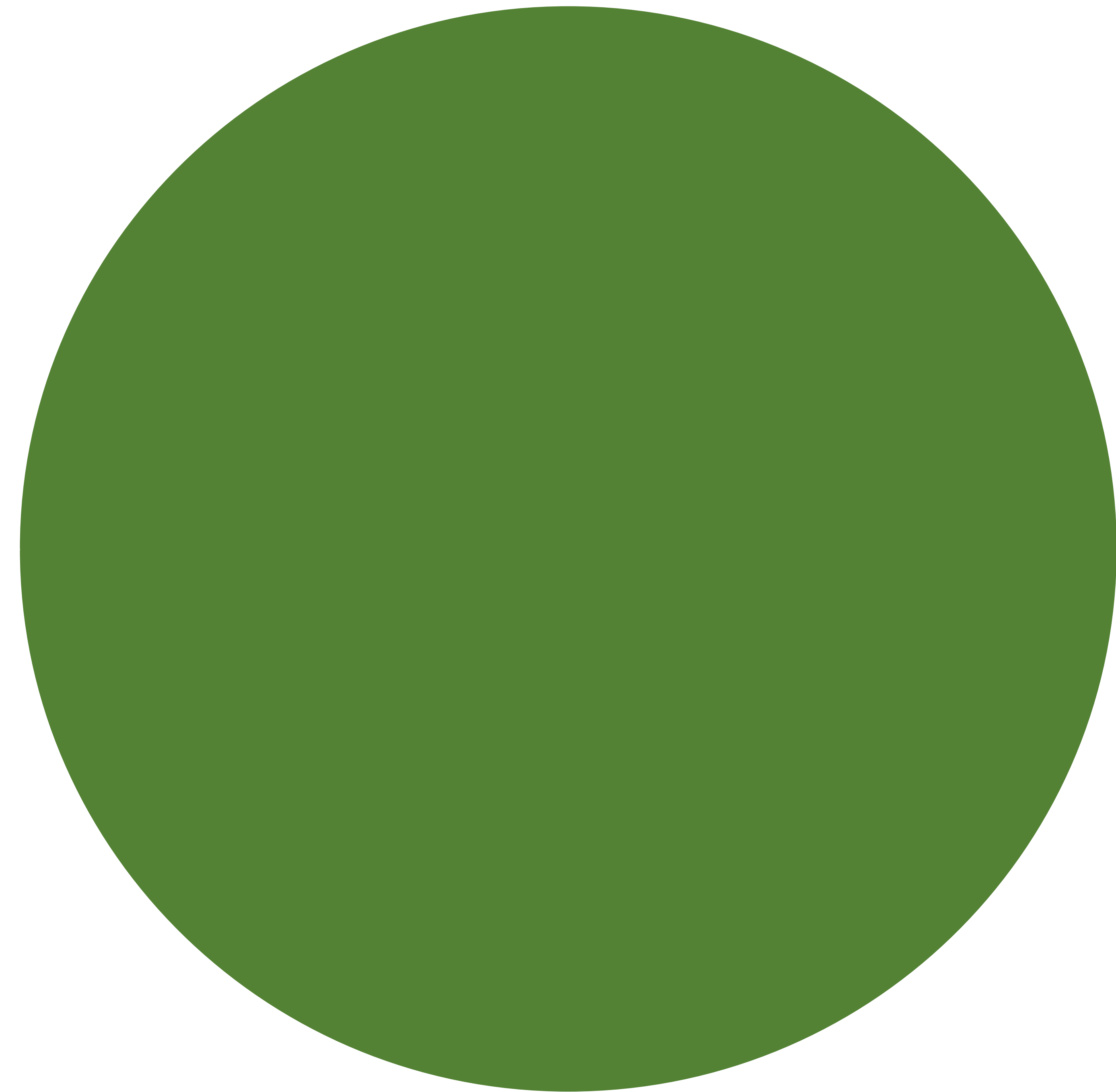
Creating an equitable experience for all citizens in the city

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Need more diversity (in events and programming)

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Inclusion = equality for all. I believe Sandy Springs is not inclusive of the lower income individuals and families.



# What actions are you willing to take?

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Be less judgmental

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Advocate for safe, diverse and inclusive communities and work environments where EVERYONE can thrive

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Volunteer

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Reach out to neighbors

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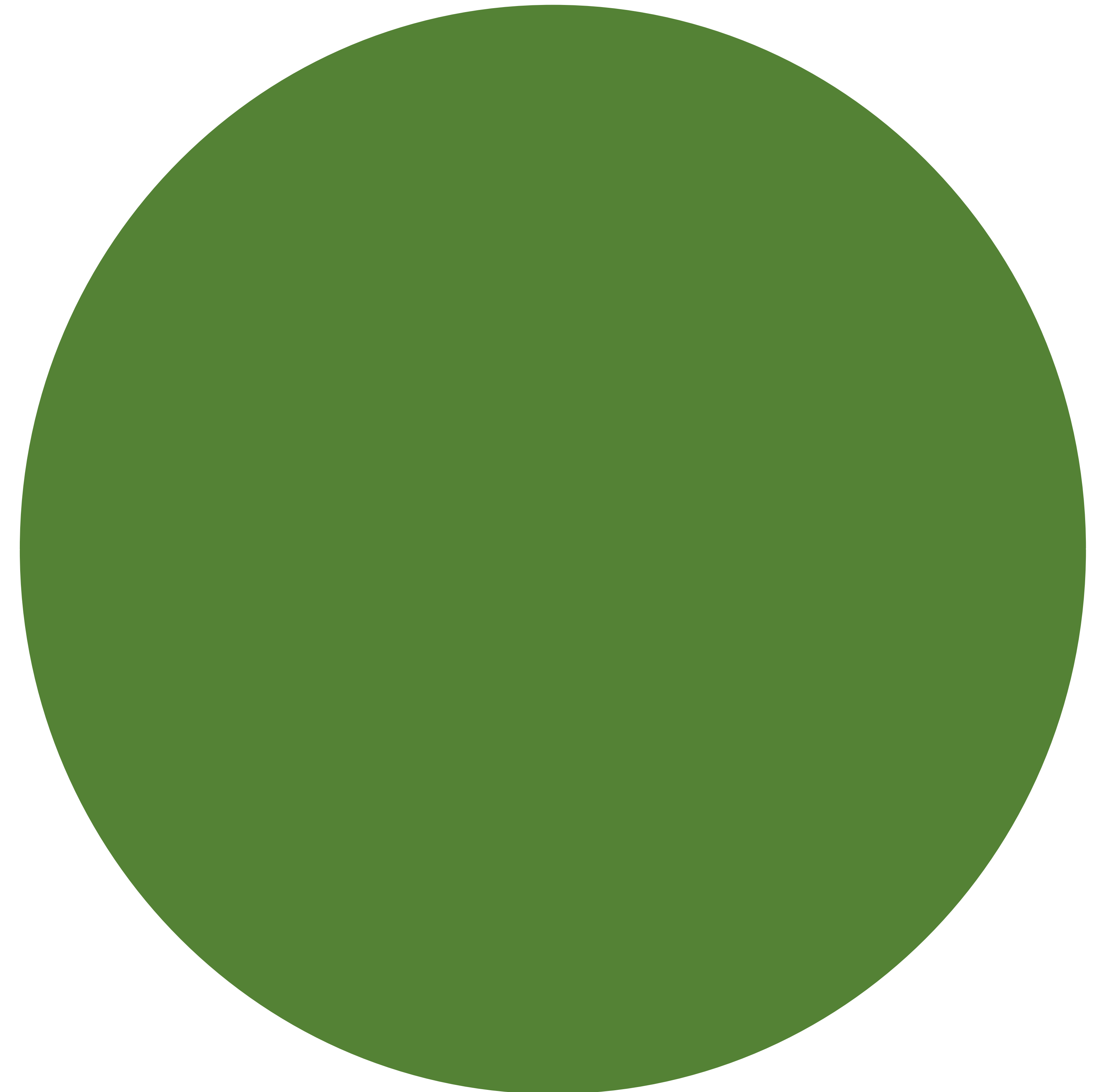
Participate more; go to city council meetings

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Continue civic discussions

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Vote





# What actions should city leaders take?

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More programs to highlight our communities rich tapestry and maintain the socioeconomic diversity we are so lucky to have

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Diversify leadership

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Diversity committee

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Continue citizen academies; more police | resident programs

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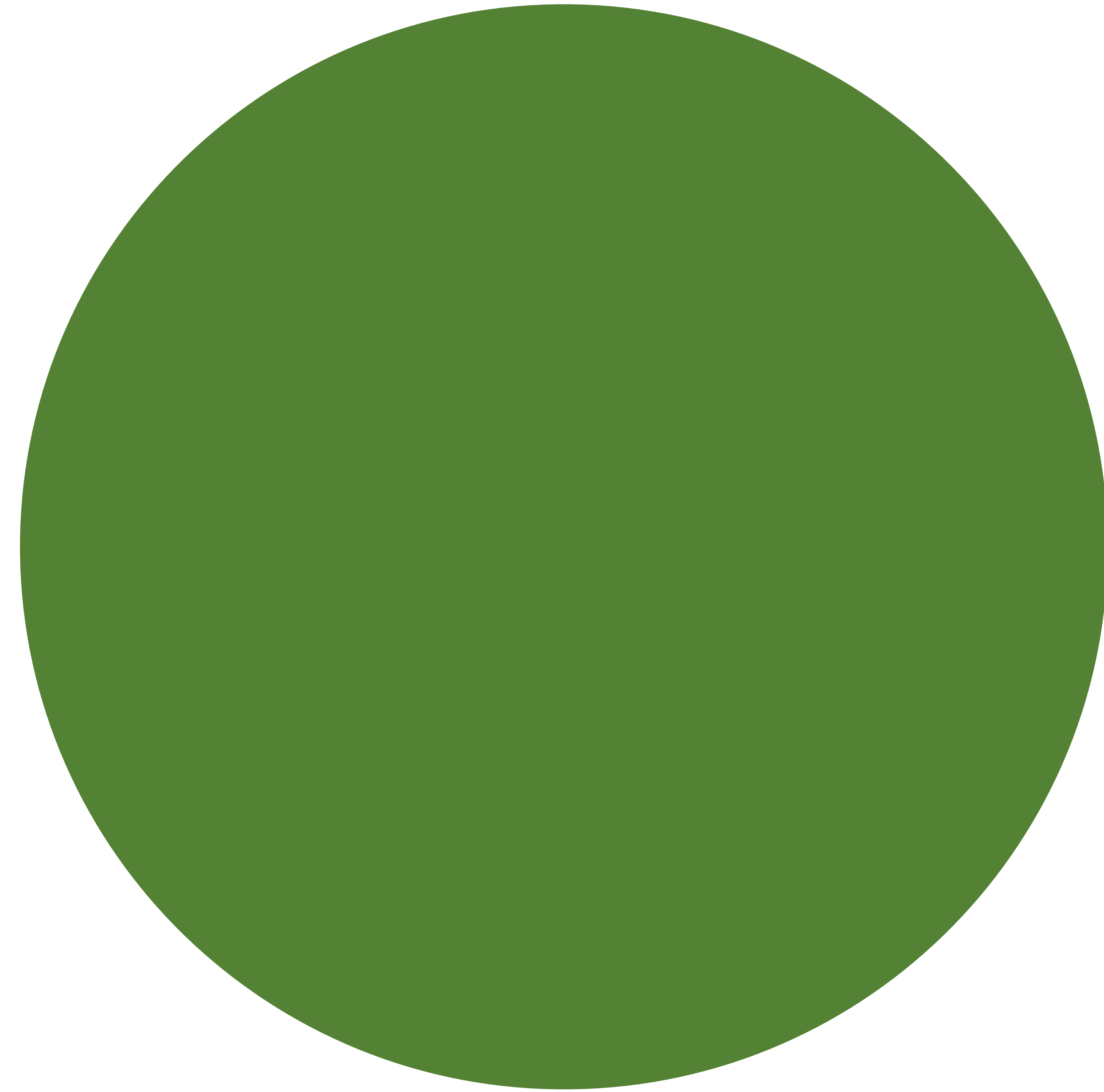
More diverse programs in PAC; more local acts; more low-cost events

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More Civic Dinners

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Put money into affordable housing



# Next Steps for Consideration

# Civic Engagement: Diversity & Inclusion Committee

- Comprised of community members & city staff
- Provide ideas and feedback on topics related to inclusion and diversity
- Serve as advocates by building, engaging and mobilizing positive strategies of inclusion and increased civic engagement
- Assist in building trust, relationships and partnerships within the community to better understand and identify barriers and further goals

# Civic Engagement

- Explore weekend Citizens on Patrol & Police Academy programs targeting underserved markets
- Build a network of mentors in each of the City's target industries, focusing on developing women, minority and young business owners to reach the City's diverse business base
- Continue live-streaming city council meetings
- Continue Civic Dinners
- City 101 Community Program
  - Efforts already underway
  - Prioritize development for a Spring 2021 launch

# Increase Diversity of Programming

- Include diverse programming in 2021 Season at City Springs
  - Explore ticket pricing opportunities to make more affordable
- Explore opportunities to add a cultural festival or event in 2021

# Affordable Housing

- Housing Study Underway
- North End Redevelopment Planning Underway

# Final Quotes from Participants

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A step in the right direction

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It's encouraging and enlightening to hear from my neighbors in a constructive listening environment

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If you want a neighborhood, you have to be a neighbor

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The Civic Dinner program reminded me how connected and empowered we all are as citizens of Sandy Springs

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A great way to get out of our silos, learn from each other, and open our minds to new perspectives

