



August 6, 2020

Statement from the Lake Oswego City Council regarding anonymous neighbor letter:

“As many of you might have seen on the news or social media, a Lake Oswego family recently received an anonymous letter requesting the removal of Black Lives Matter signs from their home.

We want to reiterate our City Council’s commitment to making Lake Oswego a welcoming and inclusive community for everyone.

We are asking the people of Lake Oswego to stand with us, your City Council, in building a community where all people belong and are heard. A community where neighbors can have a difference of opinions or backgrounds, but with a mutual respect and uplifting one another in the process. We must all be able to listen to other voices and create open dialog to learn from one another. The more we understand one another, the better we can strengthen our empathy and compassion.

To further the City’s commitment, we have been actively partnering with community organizations to address systemic racism and racial inequality within Lake Oswego. This includes our coordination with the City of Lake Oswego Diversity Equity & Inclusion (“DEI”) Task Force. Currently, this task force is working with a number of community stakeholders to organize focus groups to help the City identify barriers that exist within our community and civic practices. The focus groups will serve as a starting point to gather initial data and feedback about DEI-related obstacles, observations, and experiences in our city.

Additionally, in conjunction with these focus groups, we will be launching a community survey. These efforts will provide us valuable data and insightful recommendations to help us shift existing practices and remove barriers to inclusion.

Lastly, the City Council will be launching a community discussion on policing in the coming months. A facilitator will help create a community dialog about their expectations about public safety and the Lake Oswego Police Department. This effort will also result in a collection of data and community-based recommendations.

Through this work, we, as your elected officials, will listen and learn.

We urge all of our community to join us in this journey.

We are committed to making an even stronger, more compassionate, and inclusive Lake Oswego. We appreciate your help and commitment in aiding in this endeavor. Please continue to stay engaged and work with us to make Lake Oswego a welcoming community for all.”

Sincerely,

Mayor Kent Studebaker
Council President Jackie Manz
Councilor Theresa Kohlhoff
Councilor John LaMotte
Councilor Daniel Nguyen
Councilor Skip O’Neill
Councilor John Wendland

For more information on the City’s DEI efforts and upcoming community engagement opportunities, visit www.lakeoswego.city/DEI.