

Welcome Signs

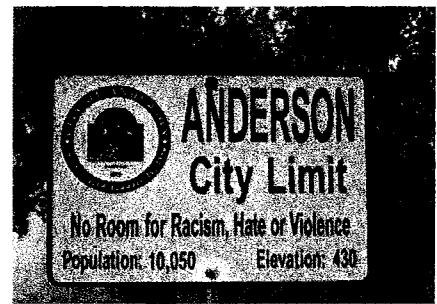
The welcome signs surrounding a city can be important markers signifying much more than population or city seal. Oftentimes, these signs are used to communicate those beliefs and ideals a community shares. Throughout the Not In Our Town movement, communities looking to express their values have turned to welcome signs as a way of sending their message.



"No Racism, Not In Our Town!"
sign in Bloomington, Illinois.

One of the earliest and most proactive communities in the Not In Our Town movement, the city of Bloomington, Illinois fully embraced the Not In Our Town message. Even though Bloomington had not seen hate crimes hit inside city limits, residents took up the charge of keeping hate out. In addition to holding rallies and community forums, the people of Bloomington put up signs at the entrances of the town saying, "No Racism, Not In Our Town!"

In 2004, the small community of Anderson, California was shocked to find a burning cross on the lawn of an African American family's home. Local city officials and civic leaders were determined to organize against the hate crime and within a week, over 600 community members joined the mayor, police chief, and the Shasta County Citizens Against Racism in a march. But the people of Anderson were not finished, and six months later the city put up eight new city limit signs proclaiming, "No Room for Racism, Hate or Violence."



"No Room for Racism, Hate or Violence"
sign in Anderson, California.

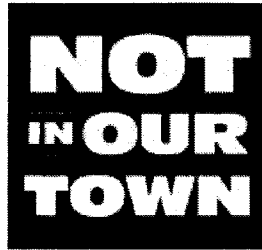
In looking for positive welcome signs, we found other great examples of communities using signs to show their values

In the county of Kitsap, Washington, the Kitsap Human Rights Network has created a program called "Hate Free Communities Project." Relying on the power of neighborhood connections, the grassroots project starts with a resident making the pledge that their home will be a "Hate Free Home," hanging up signs on their windows saying so. When 50% of the homes in a neighborhood are Hate Free Homes, the county designates and puts up signs marking it as a "Hate Free Neighborhood." When 50% of the neighborhoods in a community or city are Hate Free Neighborhoods, signs go up showing the community is a "Hate Free Community."



"Welcome. We are building an inclusive
community" sign in Mesa, Washington.

The National League of Cities' Inclusive Communities Partnership is another example of a strong national network of cities making the pledge for inclusion. 178 cities and towns have become Inclusive Communities Partners, affirming their dedication to fostering acceptance and inclusion. Many cities, including Newark, California, also a part of the Not In Our Town network, have put up signs stating, "Welcome. We are building an inclusive community."



Stories from Palo Alto

NIOT.org Palo Alto Stories

- Upstanders on TV: Palo Alto Community Members Engage in Not In Our School Conversation: <http://www.niot.org/?p=1638> [5/21/09]
- Highlights from Not In Our School Palo Alto: <http://www.niot.org/?p=1371> [4/28/09]
- New Video: Community Members Gather for Premiere of "Not In Our School: Palo Alto": <http://www.niot.org/?p=1227> [4/2/09]
- Silicon Valley Moms Urge Community Response to Cyberbullying: <http://www.niot.org/?p=1145> [3/25/09]
- New NIOT Video: March on Palo Alto: <http://www.niot.org/?p=692> [12/18/08]
- Community Members Rally Against Racial Profiling in Palo Alto, CA: <http://www.niot.org/?p=449> [11/11/08]
- Not In Our School Podcast from Palo Alto High: <http://www.niot.org/?p=33> [5/20/08]
- Third Annual Not In Our School Week in Palo Alto: <http://www.niot.org/?p=31> [5/20/08]
- Palo Alto Students Respond to the School Shooting of Larry King: <http://www.niot.org/?p=15> [3/15/08]
- Silicon Valley Leaders Gather to Address Hidden Bias: <http://www.niot.org/?p=12> [3/15/08]

YouTube Videos from Palo Alto

- Not In Our Schools Palo Alto Premiere: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6pLppZGr6g>

- Palo Alto High Art Students Picture a World Without Intolerance:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRzdifKjcbY>

- Tune In and Speak Out: JLS Middle Schoolers Talk About Inclusion and Diversity:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hg0NGIES4A0>

- March On Palo Alto: A Rally to End Racial Profiling:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EulHWvTvKS8>

- Not In Our School – What Do You Say to “That’s so gay”?:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQbhMRXwqc4>

- LaDoris Cordell Urges Silicon Valley to Act Against Bias:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eo7kvY4ZVso>

- Palo Alto High Students Respond to Larry King Shooting:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqY4NWcWfSc>

6/10/09

To: Palo Alto Human Relations Commission

From: Kathy Espinoza-Howard, Division Manager, Human Services
and
Cubberley Community Center

Subject: Draft Mandatory Response Ordinance Communication Plan

Cubberley Community Center
and Human Services Division

On July 8, 2009 the Palo Alto Human Relations Commission recommended to amend Ordinance No.5033 Section 9.72.070 (d) of Chapter 9.72 (Mandatory response to Request for Discussion of Disputes between Landlord and Tenant.

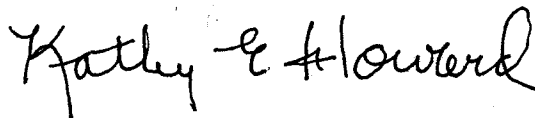
The City Council approved the amendment to the ordinance at its March 16th meeting. The amended section reads as follows:

Section 9.72.070 (d) as amended

(d) Failure of a landlord to comply with the notice provisions described above or in a form which provides substantially the same information shall render any rental increase notice invalid and unenforceable, and shall provide the tenant with a defense in any legal action brought by the landlord to collect rent in whole or in part based upon the amount of the rental increase, including any unlawful detainer action based on failure to pay rent which includes an unenforceable rental increase amount as a basis for all or part of the unpaid rent alleged in that action. The failure to comply with the notice provisions will be cured only after the proper written notice of Tenant's Rights, along with a new rental increase notice, has been properly served on the tenant.

The City Council also approved a requirement to have staff develop a Communication Plan to inform landlords and tenants about the amended ordinance. The plan would be brought back to the Human Relations Commission for review and approval.

Attached is the draft plan for your review and discussion.



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Draft

Landlord Registry Communication Plan

Goal: 95% of Palo Alto Landlords are in compliance with the Mandatory Response Ordinance by December 31st 2010.

Objective: Provide information about the Mandatory Response Ordinance to all Palo Alto Landlords by using the following action steps:

1. Acquire the addresses of all the Palo Alto Landlords through the Santa Clara County Office of the Assessor.
2. Mail a letter with a copy of the Mandatory Response Ordinance to all Palo Alto Landlords by September, 2009.
3. Provide information on the ordinance through the Tri-County Apartment Association Newsletter twice a year.
4. Host a Landlord/Tenant Forum in October, 2009 for the purpose of reviewing the Mandatory Response Ordinance, landlord's responsibilities and tenant's rights and responsibilities. Publicize the forum widely in local on-line venues and newspapers

Objective: Maintain ongoing compliance through the following action steps:

1. Update Landlord information yearly through the Santa Clara County Office of the Assessor.
2. Host twice yearly Landlord/Tenant Forums. Publicize widely in local on-line venues and newspapers
3. Review leases for compliance with the ordinance as part of the mediation process conducted by the Palo Alto Mediation Program.
4. Communicate non-compliance to the City Attorney's Office for enforcement.
5. Review Mandatory Response Ordinance outcomes with the Human Relations Commission yearly.