

REEI Committee Report

2025

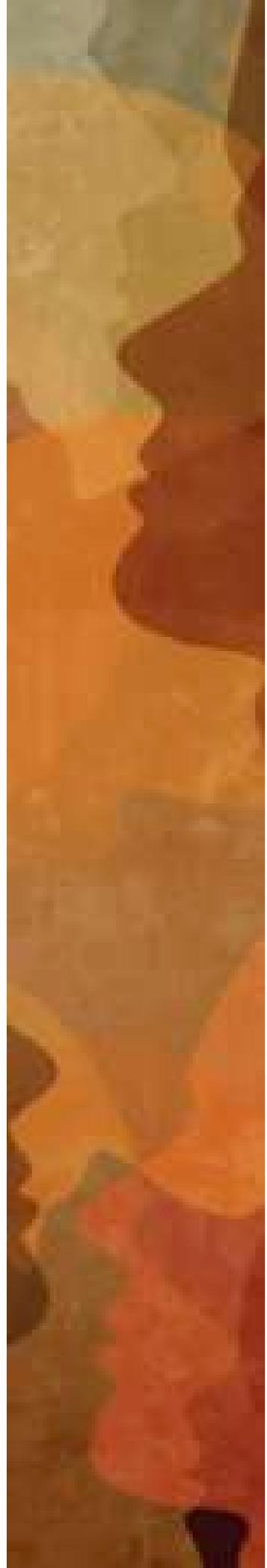


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024–2025 year has been one of deep listening, courageous dialogue, and visible progress for the City of Sanford’s Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (REEI) Committee. Through powerful community partnerships and heartfelt public engagement, the committee has continued advancing its mission to foster belonging, respect, and understanding among all Sanford residents.

This year’s Sanford Speaks: Youth Voices Leading the Way events drew over **175** participants and marked a defining moment in intergenerational dialogue. More than **90%** of attendees reported a positive overall experience, and nearly all said they were “very likely” to attend again. Youth participants called for deeper listening, mental health support, and inclusive community spaces, while adults committed to practicing “mirror listening” and advocating for safe places where youth can thrive. As one participant reflected, “What stood out most was their honesty and courage in naming what many adults often overlook.”

In the words of Co-Chair Barbara Coleman-Foster, *“We need our youth to be invested now in helping create and maintain a welcoming and supportive environment.”* Her co-chair, Dr. Tony Hernández, echoed, *“The best investment we can make for our city is to listen to our youth. By closing the generational gap, we can build a stronger, brighter future.”*

The *Pathways to Reconciliation Project* also advanced significantly this year, with community storytelling leading to the creation of the Goldsboro Commemorative Quilt—a living tribute to one of the South’s first Black-incorporated cities. Supported by the City Commission and Mayor, and developed in partnership with the Westside Quilters, UCF’s RICHES program, and the Sanford Museum, this project embodies the guiding values of history, healing, hope, and the Beloved Community.

From *TableTalk at Hopper Academy* to *Race Amity Day* and *MLK Celebrations*, REEI members have modeled dialogue, inclusion, and partnership across every endeavor. Together, they have reaffirmed that Sanford’s greatest strength lies in its people—their willingness to listen, learn, and lead with compassion. As Sanford moves toward its 150th anniversary, the REEI Committee’s work reminds us that progress begins with conversation, courage, and connection. This year’s achievements lay a foundation for a future where every voice is heard, every story is honored, and every resident belongs.

DR. TONY HERNÁNDEZ
CO-CHAIR
RACE, EQUALITY, EQUITY, AND
INCLUSION COMMITTEE

BARBARA COLEMAN-FOSTER
CO-CHAIR
RACE, EQUALITY, EQUITY, AND
INCLUSION COMMITTEE

REEI COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Dr. Patrice Anderson
Kenneth Bentley
Turner Clayton
Barbara Coleman-Foster - Co-Chair
Robin Dehlinger
Michael Foster
Dr. Pastor Tony Hernandez - Co-Chair
Michael Hernandez
Tamara Johnson
Stefani Lopez Smith
Anwar Syed
Dr. Kimberly Waters
Venise White
Dr. Velma Williams
Sylvia Wimberly

City of Sanford Staff

Nicole Osburn, Community Relations and Neighborhood Engagement Director
Pamela Smith, Administrative Specialist III



DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Human Resources Department City of Sanford Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training

In April of 2024, the City of Sanford selected All Things Diverse to conduct Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training for the employees of the City of Sanford. On August 5, 2024, Tammy Hodo, owner of All Things Diverse conducted the first session for the employees. Each session lasted three hours and she held the sessions each day for four days. All employees of the City and the City commission were asked to attend. Four series were conducted totaling fifteen classes between August 2024 through August 2025. Two commissioners and close to 300 employees attended the training. Some employees liked it so much they asked if they could attend twice.

The overall feedback from employees was very good. Participant feedback said they found the class interesting, fun and educational. A number of employees voiced that they came away with new knowledge that they did not previously have before attending the class.

According to Sharon Kraynik, Human Resources and Risk Management Director, the program was a huge success.

Police Department City of Sanford

The Sanford Police Department was provided the following recommendations from Sanford Speaks and residents, which were provided in last year's report. Included is their department update.

1. Emphasize hiring for diversity to create a police force that reflects the community.

Citizen feedback:

- a. Discern why black applicants are denied positions, and take into consideration*
- b. Systemic issues which may have disproportionately disqualified black applicants.*

2. Hire more black officers to match local demographics (27% black).

3. Continue hiring from the community.

At this time, there is no evidence indicating that black applicants are being denied positions within the agency. All hiring and selection processes are conducted in accordance with established policies, equal employment opportunity standards, and applicable laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, or ethnicity. The agency's recruitment and hiring procedures are designed to ensure fairness, consistency, transparency and the hiring of the most qualified candidates.

The Sanford Police Department has been dedicated to outreach to historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), community organizations, and youth programs that promote careers in law enforcement. The Sanford Police Department both hosts and attends many events in and around the City of Sanford. Each community event is treated as a potential recruiting opportunity where officers answer questions and provide information on the benefits and hiring process.

The Sanford Police Department is one of the most diverse agencies in Central Florida. According to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Black officers currently make up 18% of our sworn law enforcement staff, while Black officers only make up 12.3% of sworn law enforcement in the State of Florida.

4. Begin a co-patrol model of policing to support the increasingly frequent encounters with persons with mental health issues and/or living homelessness, as well as issues involving youth in schools.

The Sanford Police Department recognizes the growing need for collaborative and compassionate approaches when responding to incidents involving individuals experiencing mental health crises, homelessness, or substance use challenges. The department already partners with several key organizations that specialize in mental health, drug addiction recovery, and homelessness services. This includes a Seminole County wide mental health and threat team, Coalition for Homeless and assisting Seminole County Opioid Response Effort Team.

Additionally, the Sanford Police Department remains committed to addressing youth-related issues within schools by continuing to work closely with educational institutions, school resource officers, and youth outreach programs.

5. Develop a trauma-informed police department. A police department becoming trauma-informed benefits both law enforcement officers and the communities they serve. The REEI Committee recommends the Sanford Police Department train and develop a trauma-informed approach.

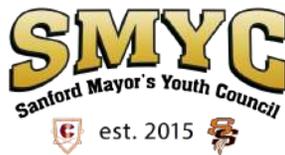
The Sanford Police Department has sent out a request for companies to bid on the Trauma-Informed Officer training course for the entire agency.



SANFORD SPEAKS



SANFORD SPEAKS 2025: YOUTH VOICES LEADING THE WAY



In April 2025, the City of Sanford's Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (REEI) Committee, in partnership with the Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) and the Mayor's Youth Council, hosted two powerful Sanford Speaks events that elevated the voices of youth and fostered authentic dialogue across generations. Held on April 10 and April 29 at the Sanford Convention Center and Dr. Velma H. Williams Westside Community Center, the events created a brave and respectful space for young people and community members to listen deeply, share experiences, and envision a more inclusive future for Sanford.

SURVEY DATA KEY FINDINGS

Strong Positive Experiences

- Over 90% of participants reported a positive overall experience and found the dialogues inclusive and respectful.
- 95%+ agreed they gained new insights from youth voices.
- Nearly all respondents indicated they were “very likely” to attend future Sanford Speaks events.

Insights from Youth Perspectives

Themes consistently highlighted by participants included:

- Listening and Respect – Youth want adults to listen more deeply, without rushing to give advice, and to acknowledge their perspectives as valid.
- Mental Health – Strong calls for greater support, services, and safe spaces, especially for teens facing stress, suicidal ideation, or lack of belonging.
- Equity and Inclusion – Youth expressed concerns about discrimination, deportation fears, and the need for more culturally inclusive spaces and resources.
- Safe and Accessible Spaces – Requests included more sidewalks, youth centers, and community gathering places that are open and welcoming to all.
- Intergenerational Learning – Youth want adults to share life experiences and history while also respecting their need to make mistakes and learn.

Adult Reflections and Commitments

Adults who attended reported being inspired to:

- Practice mirror listening techniques at home and in the community.
- Engage more frequently with young people in informal and formal settings.
- Advocate for mental health services, safe gathering spaces, and opportunities for youth leadership.
- Bring youth feedback to the City Commission and other leadership bodies for action.

Vision for Sanford

Survey respondents consistently described a vision for Sanford as a diverse, inclusive, and compassionate city where:

- All residents feel safe and valued.
- Youth are provided spaces to thrive and opportunities to lead.
- Mental health and community well-being are prioritized.
- Differences are celebrated and transformed into sources of strength.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY LEADERS



Participants recommended that the City Commission:

- Expand youth forums and town halls across neighborhoods.
- Invest in youth centers, mental health resources, and safe community spaces.
- Strengthen mentorship programs and intergenerational initiatives.
- Model respectful dialogue and collaboration at public meetings.
- Continue and grow Sanford Speaks as a cornerstone for inclusion.

Reflections from the Sanford Herald

The *Sanford Herald* captured the heart of the April 29th event, emphasizing the courage and honesty of youth voices. Community leaders echoed the importance of listening and responding to the next generation:

- *“We want...need them to be invested now in helping to create and maintain a welcoming and supportive environment.” – Barbara Coleman-Foster, REEI Co-Chair.*
- *“The best investment we can make for our city is to listen to our youth. By closing the generational gap and coming together as one, we can build a stronger, brighter future.” – Tony Hernández, REEI Co-Chair.*

Conclusion

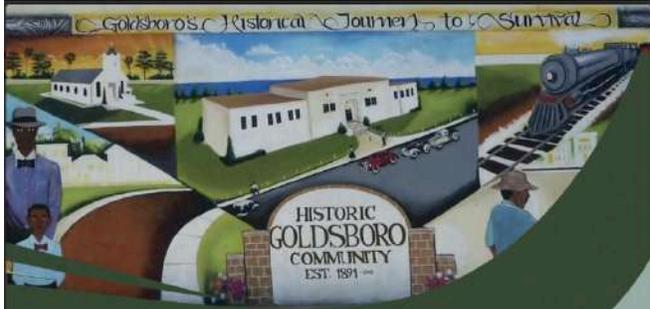
Sanford Speaks 2025 demonstrated that when youth are given the microphone, they bring honesty, vulnerability, and vision for a better city. Their voices call adults to action: to listen, to create safe and inclusive spaces, and to make equity and belonging a lived reality. As Sanford continues to evolve, these dialogues lay the foundation for a stronger, more united community where every voice matters.

PATHWAYS TO RECONCILIATION PROJECT UPDATE

The City of Sanford has launched the Pathways to Reconciliation Project, an ongoing, multi-faceted, multi-phase project implemented and maintained by the City of Sanford under the guidance of the REEI Committee. The Pathways to Reconciliation project will be educational and transformational, signaling to residents, visitors, and business owners that the City of Sanford is vibrant and thriving.

The Pathways to Reconciliation project will highlight and celebrate the contributions of local African Americans to the advancement of civil and human rights in and for the City of Sanford. Phase one is an initiative to honor the history of Goldsboro (1891–1911)—one of the first Black-incorporated cities in the South. Guided by the mission of History, Healing, Hope, and the Beloved Community, the project acknowledges Sanford’s historic harms while cultivating resilience, inclusion, and a deeper sense of belonging for future generations. At the heart of the project is the creation of a Goldsboro Commemorative Quilt, developed in collaboration with the Westside Quilters and inspired by stories collected from the community.

The quilt will depict Goldsboro’s historic streetscape, businesses, churches, and schools, symbolizing both the vibrancy of the community and its enduring resilience. It will hang in the newly renovated City Hall lobby alongside a proclamation and narrative to provide context for visitors. This commemorative installation will feature a website with photographs, maps, oral histories, and artifacts, with interactive elements such as QR codes linking to recordings and digital archives in partnership with RICHES at the University of Central Florida. The exhibit will not only preserve Goldsboro’s history but also create a public space for learning, reflection, and dialogue. The Goldsboro Commemorative Quilt is a partnership project with the Sanford Museum, the Public Arts Council, REEI and the Historic Planning Board.



PATHWAYS TO RECONCILIATION PROJECT
Honoring Historic Goldsboro

 **JULY 26, 2025**
9:00 - 11:00 AM

Dr. Velma H. Williams Westside Community Center
919 S. Persimmon Avenue, Sanford, FL 32771


CITY OF SANFORD
FLORIDA
in @ f x w Sanford

You are invited to share stories of Historic Goldsboro as the city prepares to honor the original incorporation from 1891-1911.

Join the Westside Quilters and REEI Committee to share your stories that become the inspiration for the commemorative quilt being created for a special future occasion.

Questions? Contact Nicole Osburn at 407-688-5132 or email Nicole.Osburn@sanford.fl.gov

Community engagement lies at the core of the project. The City of Sanford invited residents, neighbors, and friends to share personal or family stories at a storytelling gathering hosted at the Dr. Velma H. Williams Westside Community Center on July 26, 2025. The event underscored that “all are welcome—come to listen, come to share, and be part of history in the making.” These stories, together with archival research and historical references, will inspire both the quilt and the permanent exhibit.



As the project has developed, residents have participated in weekly quilting sessions, storytelling events, and planning meetings. Flyers were distributed through churches and civic organizations, and special invitations were extended to Civil Rights Tour participants and local heritage leaders. The City Commission and Mayor have demonstrated strong support, including a financial commitment of \$5,000 to advance the quilt's installation.

Key Components of the Pathways Project

- **Goldsboro Commemorative Quilt:** A community-created quilt inspired by residents' stories and historical imagery as a multi-dimensional, permanent exhibit at city hall with artifacts, oral histories, and interactive technology.
- **Storytelling & Archiving:** Oral history collection and digital preservation through UCF's RICHES project.
- **Community Engagement:** Storytelling gatherings and quilting workshops.
- **Institutional Commitment:** Support from the Mayor, City Commission, and key cultural and academic partners.

The timeline for the project began in 2024 with planning and design, continues through 2025 with the quilt's completion and installation, and will culminate in the unveiling of the City Hall exhibit in December 2025. Beyond this, programming and archival expansion will continue into Sanford's 150th anniversary in 2027, ensuring that this work lives on as part of the city's legacy.

Ultimately, the Pathways to Reconciliation Project is not simply about an exhibit or quilt. It is a living testament to resilience, a public acknowledgment of Sanford's complex past, and a commitment to building the Beloved Community. By honoring Goldsboro's contributions, the city affirms its vision of history, healing, and hope as the foundation for a more inclusive future.





CIVIL RIGHTS HISTORY TOUR

In May 2025, three members of the Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (REEI) Committee, two city staff, and the REEI consultant traveled together on a Civil Rights History Tour through Memphis, Little Rock, and Mississippi.

Attendees included Kenneth Bentley, Nikki Osburn, Robin Dehlinger, Rachel Allen, Britt Henderson, and Barbara Coleman-Foster.

This shared journey provided an invaluable opportunity to deepen our collective understanding of the painful legacy of oppression and structural racism in the United States, while also honoring the resilience and courage of those who fought for justice. The experience enriched our work as a committee, offering context for how Sanford might meaningfully commemorate its own difficult history and honor the lives of those harmed by racial injustice.

Highlights of the Journey

- Memphis, Tennessee: The group began at the Lorraine Motel/National Civil Rights Museum, the site of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination, followed by visits to the Mason Temple where Dr. King delivered his final "Mountaintop" speech, and the Clayborn Temple where sanitation workers launched the "I Am A Man" campaign. In the evening, members of the Memphis Lynching Project shared their work of remembrance and truth-telling.
- Little Rock, Arkansas: In Little Rock, the group visited Central High School, where nine Black students integrated the school in 1957 under intense resistance. The Daisy Bates House offered a powerful reminder of grassroots leadership in the struggle for education equity. At the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, participants engaged with the history of Black entrepreneurship and community resilience. The day closed with a reflective circle led by facilitator Valada Flewellyn.

- Mississippi: Perhaps the most searing part of the journey was a day devoted to the story of Emmett Till, the 14-year-old brutally murdered in 1955. At the Emmett Till Interpretive Center and the Tallahatchie County Courthouse in Sumner, the group confronted the realities of racial terror and injustice. Stops at the Tallahatchie River site, Bryant’s Grocery, and the Emmett Till Historical Intrepid Center in Glendora brought history into painful focus. A healing ceremony and dialogue with Deborah Watts of the Emmett Till Legacy Foundation offered both mourning and hope.
- Cultural Connections: In addition to the civil rights sites, the group visited the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, Sun Studio, and the Memphis Rock ‘n’ Soul Museum, recognizing the deep connection between music, culture, and movements for freedom.

REFLECTIONS FOR SANFORD

- Traveling together, the REEI Committee members and city staff developed stronger relationships and a shared language for addressing Sanford’s own history of racial injustice. This experience underscored the importance of truth-telling, commemoration, and community healing.
- The tour illuminated how communities across the South are reckoning with difficult histories in public spaces—through museums, interpretive centers, historical markers, and ceremonies of remembrance. These examples will serve as inspiration as Sanford continues its own journey to acknowledge past harms and build a more equitable and inclusive future.



COMMUNITY PARTNER EVENTS

TableTalk at Hopper Academy 2025

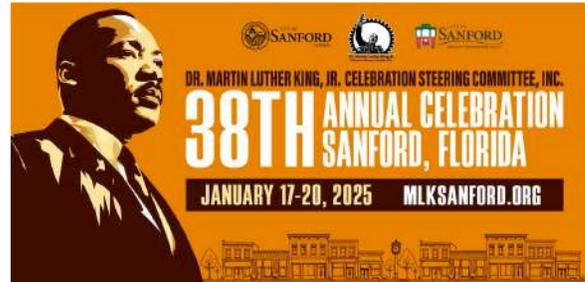
This year's TableTalk, led by the Peace and Justice Institute (PJI), highlighted the strong partnership between the City of Sanford's Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (REEI) Committee and community partners. From planning to implementation, REEI members played an active role in shaping the event and ensuring diverse voices and experiences were represented. Guided by PJI's Principles for How We Treat Each Other, REEI members also participated directly in the conversations, modeling the spirit of respect, accountability, and inclusivity at the heart of Sanford's equity work.

The event also showcased the power of cross-community collaboration. The Georgetown community, RICHES, and the Sanford Museum joined with REEI and PJI to create a dialogue that lifted up history, honored lived experience, and envisioned a more inclusive future. By engaging residents alongside educators, leaders, and cultural institutions, REEI reinforced its commitment to listening deeply, amplifying all voices, and building partnerships that advance Sanford's vision of belonging and equity.



MLK Celebrations

On January 20th, 2025, REEI committee members participated in the annual Martin Luther King, Jr (MLK) city events, including the annual parade and festival in Ft. Mellon Park.



Race Amity Day Event

For the 3rd year in a row the REEI Committee participated in Race Amity Day Festival by providing a speaker. Barbara Coleman-Foster, co-chair of the committee, spoke to the audience at the Velma H. Williams Community Center on Sunday June 8, 2025



REEI IN THE MEDIA

The screenshot shows the Sanford Herald website. At the top, the logo 'SANFORD HERALD' is visible. Below it is a navigation bar with links for Home, Cities We Cover, Community, Sports, Public Notices, Place A Legal Ad, Opinion, Subscribe / Renew, and Classifieds. The main content area features a news article titled 'Sanford Speaks: Youth Voices Leading the Way' with a 'News' tag. The article includes a photograph of a young man speaking into a microphone on a gymnasium floor, with a police officer and a woman standing nearby. Below the photo is the byline 'By Britney Pierce'. To the right of the article is a red 'SUBSCRIBE FOR AS LITTLE AS \$.99 / DAY' button and a 'Join Our Mailing List' form with fields for Email address, First name, Last name, and a Submit button. Below the form is a preview of the Sanford Herald newspaper front page, dated Wednesday, November 16, 2023, with a price of \$1.50. The newspaper preview includes headlines such as 'High schooler wins in Page Football', 'Terrell Castro takes over as mayor', 'COMMUNITY EVENTS', and 'Honoring Veterans Through Art - Steve "P" Pizzelli'.

Sanford Herald - Sanford Speaks: Youth Voices Leading the Way

There’s something powerful happening in Sanford, and it’s coming straight from the voices of our youth. On Tuesday, April 29, 2025, the City of Sanford’s Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (REEI) Committee, the Peace and Justice Institute, and the Mayor’s Youth Council hosted Sanford Speaks, a candid conversation between the youth of Sanford and the community. Held at the Dr. Velma Williams Westside Community Center, this event brought residents together for one important purpose: to listen deeply.

The Sanford Speaks event is built on mutual respect and courage. This year, the community dialogue invited youth to sit with the community and share their perspective on what it’s like to be young today, how they see diversity, what they wish adults knew about their lives, and how they’d vision a more inclusive Sanford. They had the opportunity to take the mic through a mirror listening exercise and share their lived experiences. It’s a chance for adults and community leaders to hear directly from the next generation about what matters most to them.

Participants said...

“What stood out to me most about what the youth shared was their honesty and their courage in naming something many adults often overlook, being unafraid to speak about issues that they see in their lives and generation.”

“Sanford can thrive once we spend more time interacting with each other, in particular, those from differing backgrounds and situations.”

The Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (REEI) Advisory Committee serves as a vital resource for the City of Sanford. Its mission is to advise the City Commission and staff on strategies to promote diversity, inclusion, and racial equity within the community. The committee focuses on initiatives that foster a sense of belonging for all residents. Through Sanford Speaks, they are creating spaces that help build bridges and trust across generations and Sanford's diverse communities.

Barbara Coleman-Foster, Co-Chair of the REEI committee said, "It's important for us adults to remember that these young people will become the leaders who make decisions on behalf of our community. We want...need them to be invested now in helping to create and maintain a welcoming and supportive environment. I believe that starts by not only listening to but truly hearing the youth and responding to their concerns."

Additionally, Tony Hernández, REEI committee Co-Chair shares, "We are happy today, but we strive for a better tomorrow. The best investment we can make for our city is to listen to our youth. By closing the generational gap and coming together as one, we can build a stronger, brighter future. Why wait for tomorrow when we can start today?"

The insights gathered from these events will be transcribed into a comprehensive report presented to the City Commission, highlighting key takeaways and recommendations for making equity and inclusion a living part of Sanford's policies and culture.

As Sanford continues to grow and evolve, events like Sanford Speaks remind us of the value of simply listening. When we make space for all voices, especially our youth, we lay the groundwork for a stronger, more united city.

Visit the City of Sanford website to read past reports and stay up to date on future events. Because in Sanford, every voice matters.

Read it here: <https://sanfordfl.gov/government/community-relations/race-equality-equity-and-inclusion-committee/>



COMMUNITY IMPACTS

SPONSORED BY THE CITY OF SANFORD

Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (REEI)

"Folks want to be connected to their community, most people want to be connected to their neighbors, and that's really what creates a sense of community and a sense of belonging. I think/hope the work of REEI is helping to foster that sense of community and sense of belonging," as stated by Barbara Coleman-Foster, Co-Chair of the City of Sanford's Race, Equity, Equality, and Inclusion Advisory Committee (REEI). Professionally, she is Associate Vice President for Organizational Culture and Strategy/Title IX Coordinator for Seminole State College. She has been with the Committee since its inception, when she was placed by appointment from Sanford City Commissioner Sheena Britton.



REEI, a vital resource for the City of Sanford, was established to advise the City Commission and staff on strategies to promote diversity, inclusion, and racial equity within the community. The Committee is comprised of a core group of people who have multiple responsibilities and activities in the community. There is a variety of races, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, and economics represented on the Committee.

The City of Sanford responded proactively to the death of Trayvon Martin in 2012 with changes in the Police Department and a demonstration of unity among City leadership (from the 2022-2023 report located at https://sanfordfl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/REEI-FINAL-REPORT_8.5-x-11_8-23-2022.pdf). The concept for the REEI committee took root after a local community organizer proposed a plan in June of 2020 to paint a Black Lives Matter mural on the pavement of Historical Goldsboro Boulevard in front of Sanford's Police Department. This came in response to the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and others, followed by local and nationwide protests. In response, the Committee acknowledges that there are some significant omissions about the contributions of Black people in the history of Sanford, especially as it relates to how the community (then City) of Goldsboro was incorporated into the City of Sanford.

The Committee proposed the Pathways to Reconciliation Project, a working title, designed to:

- Capture the history of Black people in Sanford and their contributions to the city
- Highlight key historic places and spaces in the city, possibly a digital self-guided tour
- Provide space for dialog about what's happening and what can we do to make things better

Coleman-Foster considers the Sanford Speaks events to be the greatest accomplishment of the Committee to date. "Sanford has such a rich history that people just aren't aware of, whether they are transplants or lifelong residents. It was mesmerizing for us to hear Dr. Velma Williams, Turner Clayton, and Kenny Bentley talk about history." Building on the national initiative to create more equitable communities, the public (people who live, work, or play in Sanford) are invited to join annual



The City of Sanford, and REEI, with the support of the Peace and Justice Institute, hosts their signature event Sanford Speaks annually. Photo Credit: Willie J. Allen Jr.

community dialogues. These sessions provide a safe and open space for participants to share concerns, needs, and visions for the future, focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Attendance has increased at each Sanford Speaks, and people leave the events feeling hopeful.

When asked if she were concerned about the anti-diversity efforts of the President and the Governor of Florida, she expressed gratefulness that the City has allowed the Committee to continue but is concerned that at some point, there will be a complaint that would place the Committee in jeopardy. But she hopes there will be more people around Sanford who want to continue these discussions, who appreciate what the Committee is doing, and will stand in support of the Committee.

Coleman-Foster is most concerned about the number of issues that have been brought to the Committee's attention, like homelessness, health disparities, affordable housing, etc., that could keep the Committee from staying focused on accomplishing one thing at a time.

Ultimately, Coleman-Foster and her Co-Chair, Tony Hernandez, envision creating a model for the country to see what a beloved, connected, and inclusive community looks like. "Yes,



there will be conflict, there will be issues, that's inevitable, but if we can take the approach of coming together to discuss and collectively figure out how we solve them for our community and our residents, then we will have accomplished a perfect model that can be emulated throughout the country. I hope we will reach a point that in Sanford it won't matter what color, race, ethnicity, or gender someone is."

The REEI Committee operates under the City of Sanford's Community Relations and Neighborhood Engagement (CRANE) Department.



From the Article:

Sanford Speaks

To Ms. Adams, a Goldsboro native whose family has lived in Sanford for generations, the changes her community most urgently wants are material: more affordable housing, increased opportunities for homeownership, and additional economic investment from the city.

Yet she also sees the benefits of a far more intangible change – and one that might be the secret to Sanford’s progress.

In 2022, the REEL committee partnered with the Peace and Justice Institute, a local nonprofit, for its first Sanford Speaks event. The idea was simple: Get city residents from all walks of life into a room, and have them talk about their experiences.

Although the number of attendees at the public events is small – PJI executive director Rachel C. Allen says they typically get about 80 attendees – residents and officials report having meaningful, honest conversations.

Ms. Coleman-Foster says she would like to see more attendance, especially from Goldsboro residents.

Still, to some, the events show that the city is listening. Many city officials attend, including Mayor Woodruff and Chief Smith. “To be able to get people into a room together is not easy,” says Farra Worrell, who moved here shortly after Trayvon’s death. “When we do that, we’re making a decision that we want to see change.”

She says the spirit that underlies Sanford Speaks is part of what held the city together in the aftermath of Trayvon’s killing. Sanford did not see any violence or arrest any protesters, officials say, an accomplishment that Ms. Worrell credits to a willingness to listen.

“There’s no training for that. You have to have a heart for people,” she says. “That’s a big part of why I trust living here.”

PHOTO GALLERY



PHOTO GALLERY

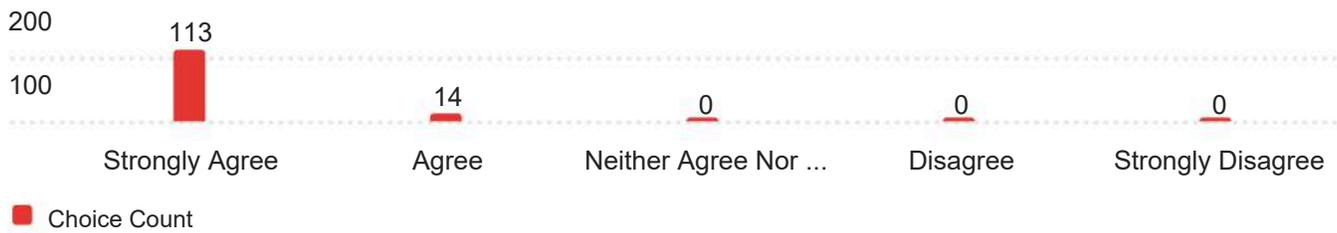


PHOTO GALLERY

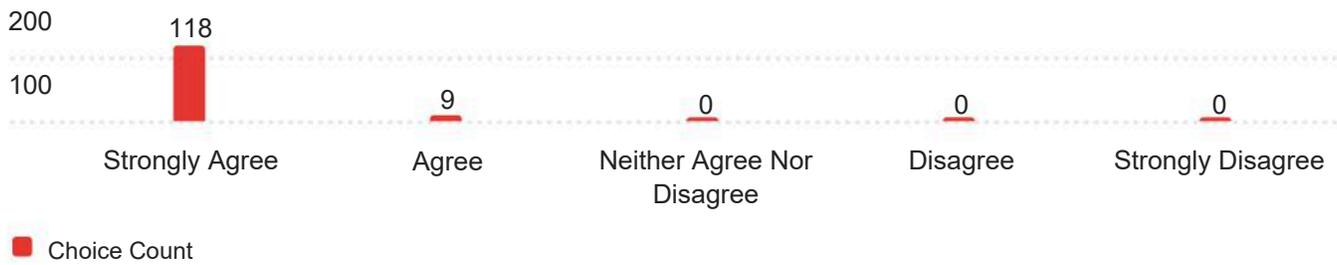


2025 Sanford Speaks - April 10 and April 29 Assessment Results

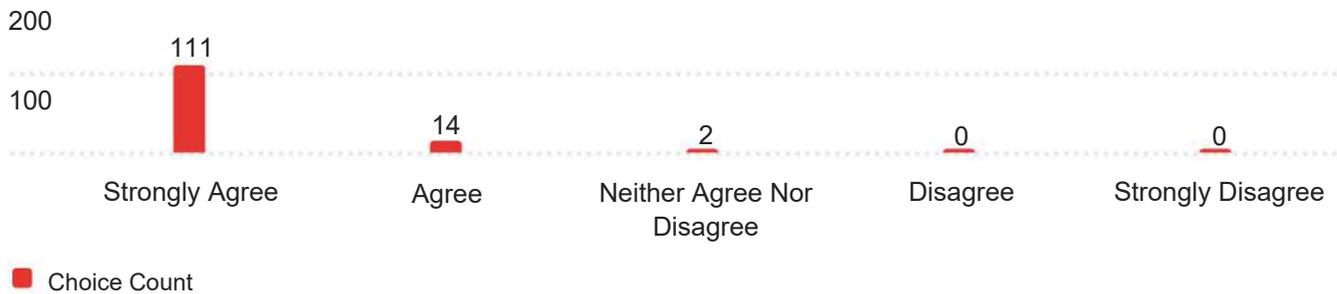
Q1 - I had a positive overall experience at tonight's dialogue.



Q2 - Tonight's dialogue felt inclusive and respectful.



Q3 - I gained new insights from the youth who shared their stories tonight.



Q4 - What stood out to you most from what the youth shared?

Listen to us as we have different views and perspectives. There was a teenager that had asked for sidewalks and I've driven past the construction everyday on my way to work seeing what she manifested.

What stood out the most to me was that adults have become so accustomed with not sharing information and how to handle situations with the younger generation to protect themselves that it becomes more difficult to empathize with each others' lived experiences.

What stood out to me is how the youth were able to confidently stand and speak their mind about how they think they can make the community better. Their thoughtfulness, insights and honesty. They want to truly be heard
How open they are, and how they are looking for change.

That we need to listen more and that kids can be stressed too.

What stood out most to me from what the youth shared is that they all felt empowered to speak freely and honestly. That kids are smarter than you think something that stayed with me was the adults should share more detail about their history, and experiences

Hearing words I didn't know I needed to hear. Give people more chances. Tell more stories about the past and experiences.

Allow the community safe spaces and listen to the community.
This is amazing. Good work.

What stood out to me most from what the youth shared was their honesty and their courage in naming something many adults often overlook, being unafraid to speak about issues that they see in their lives and generation.

Honest

Youth perspective

The need to respect their opinions and model better behavior

Their honesty was very admirable.

I appreciated hearing about their needs and being reminded that they are growing up in a different world than me.

We are in good hands with this youth

All the different opinions about one same topic

That they just want their voices heard

Their bravery in being here and speaking their mind. And their generation's lack of judgment of their peers choices.

Hearing the stories from others within the groups was insightful and enlightening as well.

The youth had different approaches to everyday life and every generation had a different perspective but in the end the expectation from all was understanding and respect

The importance of the youth voice being shared

The youths want understanding from the adults

They don't necessarily feel heard but are hopeful.

They need and deserve to be heard.

They have a voice that wants to be heard.

Variety of perspectives

Listen and share

Mirroring with youth helps them talk about what they are going through without conflict

How open they were

The need for easier Transportation in the younger generation

Better communication all around

The mirroring exercise

The discussion of wanting to hear about the past of other generations but the understanding how times have changed

They need encouragement towards things

The need for grace and understanding

Their views of the world

Just how much they need us to listen more and be more understanding.

That parents need to share their life experiences with their kids as well.

The youth have a lot to say

All of it

One of the things that stood out the most was when a young lady shared that one thing she would like adults to understand is that sometimes they have to let the young people do their own mistakes in their lives since that makes them learn and become a greater person.

That were not always looking for advice or for an answer, sometimes we just want to be herd.

The importance of diversity and inclusion

Youth asking to be listened to, need for mental health, fear of deportation or discrimination due to language and being black or brown , Hispanic...

The courage that it took to speak up and share their thoughts and points of view was admirable. I appreciate their openness and willingness to be part of this event.

Their openness about what they felt was important, mental health, a need to learn from their own mistakes, and how they communicate.

What stood out most was their understand of their needs. They don't need advice, they need understanding and a willingness for the adults in the room to listen.

The strength and courage they showed to speak their truth in sharing their story.

Their willingness to share difficult stories with new peeps!

Something it caught my attention from the youth, it was their need for support, for parents and surrounding to be more understanding of mental health, and the want for adults to communicate better

They are not being heard, and adult just need to slow down and be present with their youth.

Sharing of stories and information

Cell phone use conversations, and parents need to understand the difference of lifestyle where they were growing up

Finding a safe place for youth to go too. Ex. Community youth center that is open to all youth and have adults ready to practice the principles of how to treat each other.

Our young people need emotional support.

Their need to be heard. Also, they are very accepting of diversity. They feel it's the way things are and that the world they know.

Inclusion and communication

That voices need to be heard and mental health is very important.

Being heard and being included

The students that talked about the food pantry closing, and the student who talked about supporting the latino community more.

I got great insight from the youth on how they feel and how they want adults to treat them. I also loved the fact that one of the youth stood up and spoke out for the Hispanic community here in Sanford. They face barriers which include language, which limit their access to resources which are often times mainly in English.

Parents need to stop and listen before going off or judging.

Their Honesty and respect

They were incredibly vulnerable and they lead the way for the adults to reciprocate that behavior. They had great feedback and the adults were understanding and excited about bringing back their experience to their own families.

They want to feel heard and understood

I am impressed by the honesty and wisdom shared by the youth

That they face the same issues I felt as a youth

Their honesty, bravery and vulnerability

The different experiences that we all have.

The need and desire to be listened to and not just heard. To be acknowledged and not dismissed.

The need for adults to truly listen.

It really touched me that some of the youth expressed that they don't have a safe space to go when they can't go home. It broke my heart to see how some people don't have the safety everyone deserves.

Our youth are impressive! We often hear "kids today..." with almost a negative connotation but the speakers tonight had deep thoughts, big plans and deserve to be heard.

That youth want to be heard, without being given advice, but instead allowed the space to speak their feelings and truth.

What stood out to me the most is how we all may come from different places but have similar backgrounds and events that have changed us as people.

The youth volunteering to share their story so that the adults will have a better understanding of what life is like for them. A request for mental health was brought up a few times. That to me is a cry for help and the city should listen. What stood out to me the most was the variety of opinions from the youth. It is important to understand different views and know not all are the same.

Their point of view on the differences from what worked when I was raised to what is not working while raising my children.

Great space to share and to listen and understand each other

Speakers who shared

So much- it was amazing to have a space where we just repeatedly asked them if they had more to share and if we had heard them correctly.

The comment "I want this city to be the reason someone lives" in reference to teen suicide and mental health

Not feeling heard and taking mental health seriously

How they are mentally challenged everyday

The social awareness of today

Youth sharing their world and truth

We were allowed to speak on things that directly affected us

What the youth are going through and their different perspectives.

Their candor.

They think that the main issue with parents is that they do not take a moment to listen or understand, and focus on providing their insight without any context.

What worked for our parents doesn't necessarily work for us

That there needs to be mental health facilities for juveniles in the city.

How many other people feel the same way I do

The experience of how it feels to be different from everyone around you and how that can negatively impact growing up as a young person.

Need for attention to mental health: expanding the SCRP.

Need for mental health services.

that we need more youth centers and sidewalks

That the world is different today than it was before and we need to open our minds

Their perspectives on being heard & willingness to take part in change

The diversity of problems people especially the youth go through.

Interactions and statements made by the youth.

The youth being brought to speak

Great insight and experiences. We need to listen more.

The youth find inclusion and diversity most important

Gathering

I love how people open to help others and try to empathize with the others' problems

The overall experience of listening and understanding the youth

We don't listen to them, they have valuable insights and they are often overlooked

(: yeah

The conversation about supporting the Latino Community

How mature their thoughts and feelings were

Their feelings of not being heard

The diversity of opinions

Lack of mental health awareness in adults.

Mental health concerns

Willingness to share

They offered the most diverse perspectives and really led the conversation.

N/A

The diversity

Q5 - What do you think adults in the community can do differently based on what you heard from youth tonight?

Make more relationships with young people. Make places for them to share.

I think they can make time to participate a little more.

Adults in the community can be more empathetic in the way that they react to each other and be understanding that our behaviors are highly impressionable with the young people today.

I think they could ask more questions about youth and put their self in the youths situation.

Listening with empathy and thoughtfulness to the youth. Protecting youth from bullying and from gang violence.

Give the youth more opportunities to speak and share what's on their minds

"Listen!"

I think Sanford is on a great path

I think the adults in the community can take more time to really listen to our youths when they express a need or a want.

Conduct more youth speak outs

learn how to approach youth better, and also share details when giving advice so youth can know why they were giving the piece of knowledge

Be compassionate and listen to comprehend.

Practice the principles. They are a necessity in these challenging times and are fundamental in creating a just community.

Listen and support

Get out into the community and interact with others more, especially the youth

Listen more, give time and effort to understanding the needs and dreams of young people

I think we can practice the principle more of listening deeply to first seek understanding.

Listen and respect

Really listen and try to get a better understanding of where the youth is coming from and why they're acting/thinking that way.

More support and listen to our voices. Stop underestimating our mindset and believes.

Understand that the youths have a voice as well

Listen more and stop giving advice without listening.

Listen more carefully and try to be more receptive to what is being said.

Try to listen more and understand more

Listen

Practice taking our time and understanding the youth.

Listen more and get involved with youth in some capacity.

Listen

Be more active in these events and meeting and giving (knowledge) to the youth.

Listen oprnly

Be open and think on their own childhood/young adulthood before speaking

Listen and share

Listen

Listen

Listen and provide support for the younger generation

Listen more

Utilize the mirroring exercise

We can be more calm and understanding allow minors to educate us about their lived experience Listen more to youth Listen more, talk less Listen Just listen and talk more, not talk down or back but have a constructive conversation. Talk about their experiences and create the bridge for communication. To listen to young people Listen more One thing that adults can do differently is to better understand mental health and be more comprehensible with the youth.

Take a step back and listen more instead of always blaming the youth for the wrong things there doing but instead come to an understanding and work together instead of against each other.

Understand that everyone has different struggles

Listen and restate what is heard and asking if that's what the person meant, is there more?

Listen more, reach out to marginalized groups to hear about their needs and visions.

Listening without judgment or the need to give advice is key.

Listen, listen, listen. Listen not to reply but to understand

Listen intentionally and deeply to the youth in the community because they have a strong voice that needs to be heard. Also, to check their biases, assumptions, and judgments when listening to youth.

Listen patiently without bias, let youth fail (without putting them in danger of course), involve them in adult activities (like local government) as much as possible and treat them the same when they do as the adults.

Something i think alduts can do differently is become more welcoming, have better body language, create places where youth can hang out at. also alduts become more aware of the need of safety

Be more receptive, and listen

Listen more and don't Judge

Have their ears open to hear more from kids and not judge them and also make room for their kids to make mistakes

The adults in the community practice what hear what the youth are saying.

Create spaces where late teens can gather and have positive experiences with each other and be supported.

Perhaps adults are the ones that have problems with diversity and inclusivity. The young people don't see it the same way.

Listen

Listen to the youth more and actually take in and understand what the youth today are saying to make them feel more heard and understood.

Adults need to listen and and try to understand what the are saying.

Create functions, invest in growing activities to deal with these issues.

Work harder to include EVERYONE in their outreach efforts and support efforts. Ensure they focus on listening to youth and connecting with them, and less on "teaching".

What adults can do differently, is to be more careful about mental health.

Listen to the youth and don't assume they know the answers

Listening to the youth will change everything. They are so much wiser than we give them credit for and can teach us so much about our own community, families and work places.

Yes, giving the youth and future leaders of this next generation the attention and resources they need to grow

Hear the youth and value them

Always active listen, and know everyone is trying their best

Listen fully for understanding

Talk less

The adults in the community can just make sure they're hearing out what the youth have to say.

Self examine their own biases and acknowledge they do have bias. Attempt to listen and not always attempt to fix.

Offer opportunities for informal counseling/ support services.

Just listen to young people. Try to understand their point of view and empathize with the struggles they face everyday.

Listen deeply and give respect

Adults can work on hearing and listening what is being said instead of imposing their own thoughts/opinions/biases.

Hear what is actually being said, instead of what we think is being said.

I think that we could give more support to kids/teens and adults as a whole and try to branch out to each other more.

Listen and respect that the youth are trying to figure out life.

I think adults can learn to listen more and accept that they may be wrong at times. Learn to open their minds to opinions from the young.

Listen and not judge or offer advice. Just letting them know they are heard.

I think adults need to listen and create empathy before offering an advice that worked for them before which their time and circumstances were different

Be available to listen

Give them more space to share without advice in return. Give them spaces for safety and community

I think adults can treat youth more as equals and not lesser.

Support the youth and realize that this is also their first time at life and that it is hard.

Listen to younger people, listen to what we have to say but don't just listen, hear.

Listen more

Continue to have their forums and commit to actually hearing the youth

Be still and listen, then you can speak. Communication is key between youth and adults to solve issues.

Give young people credit for being sincere.

They can listen more than they give advice, prioritize centers where kids can feel safe away from home, and give them space to grow into themselves.

Listen intentionally

They can bring these ideas up to the board and have our voices heard

Listen to the youth without judgement or trying to fix things. Try to empathize with them and treat their problems the same you would ab adults problems.

Adults should view the younger one's opinions as important just as important as their own opinions are wearing that's them opening up to struggles or making suggestions.

Practice and internalize the Principles

Listen better and empathize with youth

be more open to kids opinions and feelings

Make more events youth focused and keep the youth engaged and welcomed

Listen to youth and include them in the process were change.

Adults can listen more instead of solely focusing on their views and advice.

Listen

Learn from the youth instead of teaching.

Provide more places and opportunities for gatherings

Adults can not only listen but understand what the youth are trying to express

Listen

Let the youth make errors so that they can solve it and learn from mistakes

Communicate and be willing to listen first

Slow down and listen,

listen

They can understand more and gain insight and knowledge from todays youth

Listen more

Don't always give advice but just listen

Absolutely

Be quick to listen, slow to speak.

Help the youth

Listen more

The adults in the room made the conversation seem mechanical and disingenuous

I think that they can listen without interjecting.

Nothing it was great

Q6 - In a few words, describe your vision for a Sanford where all can thrive.

Diverse and inclusive.. learning various cultures, history, music, food et al

A community filled with compassion and less aggression where we can teach and learn from each other

More inclusivity, having empathy for others that are in a difficult situation, and having the courage to speak truthfully as to the needs of the residents, regardless of age.

Where there is no discrimination or disrespect to people that don't deserve it.

A safe space for all. A community supportive of each other.

A place where all races, ethnicities, genders, etc. are respected and honored.

We have to be honest as to what is the problem. When you see a situation speak up to try and bring a peaceful resolution.

Sanford is turning into a great place (not that it isn't already)

My vision for a Sanford where all can thrive is for people to come together and embrace our differences instead of fearing them or making assumptions.

We have to stop fighting at City Commissioner Meetings. The kids are watching this unruly behavior. Set the example leaders.

I think sanford should find a way to put out there community events/ festivals so they are more visible to the community, events like this sanford speaks should be more visible

Continue to provide safe spaces for people to gather and talk.

Safe, warm, loving

How can we empower youth with life skills to help them cope with life challenges and bring awareness about community resources

Sanford can thrive once we spend more time interacting with each other, in particular, those from differing backgrounds and situations

My vision includes opportunities for people to interact in various locations and situations so that we all can understand each other's points of view more.

I see a Sanford that can really bring together everyone no matter the background. This way our youth can grow up in a community that is inclusive and supports them.

Working on ending the separation. So much truth in that statement. Thank you!

No judgement, just acceptance and spreading love to one another

Diversity

Have more events like this at different venues in the city

A place where we acknowledge and celebrate our differences and how we can make each other stronger.

I believe being inclusive and treating everyone fairly and without judgement is my vision for a future Sanford

A community with intentional belonging and community

Inclusion and acceptance of others.

More opportunities like this one and outreach to people who are not being heard.

All people are treated as individuals, not ethnic groups or nationalities.

A community as 1, not this section or this neighborhood. Just ALL neighbors

Open dialogue, more diverse spaces, opportunities for all residents to have clean water, safe shelter and non violent communities

Have more events like this monthly

Gathering opportunities

Unity

Community

One community

Come together for each other.

A community where all all voices matter

One where we listen and then are able to find resources where our community can thrive

We need to be more united as a community and not have diversity towards things or people

A respectful inclusive community

Vibrant, inclusive and safe

Just come together as a community and have more inclusive events like this.

Keep having conversations like these so we can understand one another.

All voices are represented

To keep building together

The Vision is to strengthen our community by strengthening our communication.

More inclusion of the Hispanic heritage and other cultures. Whether through festivals, through food vendors or through setting up events where they people of the community can come and learn about different cultures.

We can all open up to each other and support each other

Relationships and places to gather in all areas of Sanford; Midway, Goldsboro, Georgetown, downtown Sanford...

I envision a community that provides services to people of all ages with a focus on the needs of young people.

Intergenerational experiences are powerful and hope inspiring. I hope there will be more opportunities to interact with people throughout the community.

If we dispense school funding across the board where everyone receives no more because of zip code than another, that would be a tremendous boost.

People think that the opposite of being treated as "other" means we should all be treated the same. That's not true.

The opposite of othering is belonging. A place where we all belong and celebrate the understanding of our differences is the place where we will thrive.

My vision of Sanford is that each community feels safe and supported equally. Currently, we are seeing a rise in ICE raids in Sanford but little support to the communities mostly impacted by it. Schools, churches, and community centers can hold informational workshops for the undocumented community. The ICE raids don't only impact the undocumented individual but also their U.S. born children who are in school and are in fear of their parent being deported. Causing a rise in truancy and mental health issues.

Hold more events that bring our DIVERSE community together. CONTINUE teaching history while we still can!

My experience tonight was very humanize, i got to speaker and listen to storys and also share my experiences. they should do this more often

I definitely see Sanford already in the works of being a better Sanford, as long as they keep adapting and improving with the current times, I think Sanford can thrive

Sanford is a beautiful community I love living here with my family we moved from New York 8 year ago and we love it here. Improve on the water, less property taxes, more mental health awareness center for teenagers

I believe kids of this and future generations are more tolerant to diversity than their predecessors and institutions should promote this positive change

Having different location through sanford where youth can go to and be able to feel safe and speak to someone without judgement. A place where they can mentally wind down during the business of life.

A welcoming city where people believe they have opportunities to thrive emotionally, economically, physically, etc while experiencing a sense of belonging and community.

Continue listening to one another.

Include Jesus Christ who's father sent his son who died for us and rose again 3 days later and defeated death and for whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

The vision I have for Sanford is for everyone to come together and that every voice can be heard.

A city where everyone is included regardless of race creed or color

A trusting environment. Where people all trust one another, that are different from one another.

A community where we all can find comfort in the people around us and where we all support each other how we need to be supported.

Spreading more the Gospel....Events, concerts, etc...

We must respect different cultures

A community that is comfortable being vulnerable with each other can thrive. A community that feels empowered and encouraged when they share the most authentic version of themselves.

A community that is accepting, receptive proactive and open to change and adaptation of this new developing culture

I envision respect for all so they feel invested in the community to help it thrive.

For our city leaders to not be at odds with each other. It breaks my heart that our leaders fight and show anger. It's like watching your parents fight and we should not see that. All people disagree but to do it publicly shows that our city is not together. I wish for everyone to work out their differences and serve the people

A town where people are safe in every neighborhood and there are resources for those struggling with food scarcity, home instability or physical/mental health challenges

Different neighborhoods in Sanford are separated mainly by the amount of money that neighborhood has. I think that by working on certain initiatives to make the problem of Sanford all feel equal and appreciated, the city will become a better place.

My vision for Sanford is one that supports non for profit outreach organizations.

A safe space with no discrimination where everyone can feel comfortable no matter how different we are from each other. God loves us all equally, why can't we do the same thing?

I would like to see our schools here improved and the expectation that our children will perform at or above the district averages, not below.

A Sanford that celebrates all its residents. Mirroring what many said tonight, I do think there needs to be a safe third place for young people to go that is not getting in trouble. As a young adult, the only place to go at night in Sanford is a bar, which does not work for teenagers.

Stronger, and Caring

Inclusive and diverse in communities and programming.

I have a vision of connection, liberty, and coexistence. A place where all people from all backgrounds can come together, live in harmony, and truly express their authentic selves.

To transition some of the empty buildings into housing for the homeless. Offering skills and job training as well as addiction treatment. Teaching our youth how to break the cycle.

Having more courses , training for adult a youth and more space like this

To have a safe place for displaced children

Sanford is a wonderful community. I think there were things were heard from youth tonight that have influenced my vision of what is needed. Safe and welcoming space for youth and their voice

A place where history is revitalized, and the future of our city (which is the youth) is protected through outlets such as food banks, safe spaces, and mental health resources.

Sanford is thriving very well in my opinion, there is great events like this one, there are more and more diverse people coming to the city, the commissioners are listening to the citizens, the police are doing a great job, the city is getting more and more beautiful every day. The city is getting better day by day and needs to keep doing what it's doing.

more mental facilities, inclusive and safe spaces, and mental help centers

I like how artistic Sanford is, and hope that can explode and the impacts be felt beyond city lines

Togetherness in Peace and Unity. Sanford Strong!!!

I feel we should have more youth tutoring and educational programs

A community where we eliminate all ugly stereotypes of Sanford and we embrace the rich historic culture that's in this community.

Take time to get to know diverse people.

A place where different groups and communities come together, rather than sticking to what they find comfortable.

Respect, communication, learning from people different than you

My vision for Sanford is for it to become a place where you can have fun and a place where you can feel safe.

A Sanford that maintains its unique community where diversity is embraced. A Sanford with strong infrastructure to support its people and that provides help for all its people regardless of ethnicity, age, or anything else.

Bringing awareness to the youth that struggle with different aspects of life such as bullying, mental health, and cultural difficulties.

Expanding the SCRP each year.

Intentional events, activities and space to interact with other diverse groups of people.

I think Sanford will grow tremendously with more sidewalks, youth centers, and greenery areas

normalize talking to strangers and having these types of interactions

Hosting more forums like the one tonight.

Respect. Continuing and furthering the respect of both people and the historic community.

I would like to see mental health services that are geared towards the youth.

I believe that the adults should be more motivated and taught the importance of mentoring the next generation for the future of the city.

Small. Medium and large group gathering places for spontaneous and planned interactions

Safe spaces for the less fortunate and more programs for kids that struggle with mental health

Going the right direction

A incredible community that inspired me to create this kind of events in Orlando

We are the vision now and continue to keep it going

Positive growth, fix infrastructure and lack of leadership at city hall

(: yeah

Support, Inclusivity, Understanding, Compassion

Inclusive and diverse city that is open and welcoming

More affordable housing and more mental health for our youth

A community where everyone feels safe and a part of.

Unity

Continue doing well

Food pantries, public gardens, free lounges

I think that the Sanford Civic Center can do more food drives, clothing drives, and literacy nights for children.

I see sanford as an inclusive and supportive community

Q7 - What is one action you are inspired to take as a result of this evening?

Invite young people to speak Join groups

Come to more of these events and be more present in the community.

I am inspired to keep working with the young people in my county with mutual aid to make the world a better place for everyone.

To talk about the community and diversity in a group.

To continue to come to Sanford speaks.

Talk to my coworkers about more youth forums

Telling others about this in service.

Listen more

One action I am inspired to take as a result of this evening is to attend more Sanford Speaks events and become more involved.

Listen to the youth and engage in their events

share more

Continue coming out to events and talking with my community,

An action I am inspired to take is to continue to be there as a listener to whoever needs it, whether they are young or older, everyone needs a listening ear.

I learned new ways to open dialogue and learn about others

Volunteering with organizations that allow for more one on one communication with others instead of just large functions

Listen more deeply

I want to go home and have open and honest conversations with my children.

Speak to more of the younger people daily and encourage the elders to do the same.

Go to more of these events so I can understand more perspectives.

Talk more about how I feel

Practice mirroring technique

Offer to host one of these events at the zoo.

I am inspired to communicate more and to share experiences that will be impactful to others.

Attend more meetings and share more

Continue to attend Sanford Speaks events

Mentoring youth

Start attending Sanford city commission meetings.

Listening to all youth and protecting them.

Participate in more events like these.

Listening fully

Mirroring conversations

Talk with others now openly

Mirroring with my kids

Reach out to a young person

Be open to others

Listen to my daughter more using the mirror exercise

As a Millennial to act as a bridge for understanding both older and younger generations to explain how things have happened so fast

Listen to other more

Have more diverse connections

Listen more

To listen more and not assume. Also to ask questions.

Ask my parents more about what life was like for them, and how their experiences have shaped their outlook on life.

To listen closer to young people and what they have to say

Keep coming back to the event

My church

Be more active in my community.

Im going to start opening up more to people

Invite more people to come to

Next session...look for ways to involve more young people...share their voices , perspectives, ideas, thoughts

I am inspired to try the mirroring experience with my family and students.

More interaction with the youth in the schools.

Listen deeply

See about gathering resources to provide to our communities.

Share

The "Mirroring" challenge

Spend more time with kids and listen

Practicing mirroring when someone is talking.

Listen

Practice listening and mirroring with my family members.

Communicate and listen instead of jumping and not hearing the others side

Every one is different and has different stories and background but everyone should be heard for and heard out and understood no matter where they come from

Protect my latino coworkers and make them feel safe

Focus more on listening with my own kids.

Listen before judging

Not to quickly judge youths

I need to get to know my coworkers better and I plan to take these things into account when I have my own children.

More involvement in the young community

Listen to the youth

Active listening and mirror

Listen more

Become more involved in the fight for inclusion and equality.

Listen Try to bond with youth in my community. Stop judging so much and slow down a little to listen to what people is going through. Not being so mad about the cell phone that is constantly attached Mirroring conversations like in the exercise. Branch out and just be a better listiner than ever Mirror listening! I am inspired to incite more conversation such as the ones had today. Active listening To listen to youth and understand their feeling and create empathy and learn and let them find their own advise by encouraging them to be themselves —

Format

To practice more of the listening and dialogue techniques we were trying out

One action I'm inspired to take is advocating for myself as a youth member.

I want to be a better listener

to bring up the idea of more mental institutions in sanford

Attend more events like these and reach out to others about it

Create more forum for youth and adult interactions

Continue to come to these events

Listening first than speaking

Listening.

I want to look into ways to bring the community together for conversations like this again.

Listening to young people more

The mirroring act

Speak out more on how I feel and what should be changed.

Better my communication skills, I learned the proper way to make someone feel heard and I want to apply that to every aspect of my life

Listening

Listen and respond to assure that I heard the other person without bias.

engage with others of all ages more

i will be more vulnerable

Stay involved in community youth activities

Listen to people more

Listening

To speak to others

More discussion opportunities

Practicing mirror listening

Water and snacks

The mirror activity

The youth asking for more events

Slow down and listen

listen

Support the Latinos

To listen more

Listen more

Conform to adults more often instead of keeping to myself.

Help the community however I can

Come to more community events.

Listen without judging

Not judging others

Q8 - What is one thing you would recommend the City Commission do to support youth and inclusion?

Card games, craft and poetry nights.

Working towards bridging the divide between the different areas to make everyone feel welcome and wanted.

Have more events where everyone in the community can communicate with each other.

Address bullying and gang violence in the community.

Provide more opportunities like this by looking at a variety of venues where these events can be hosted

Give them more opportunities to come together and share.

I believe they are doing great things already

Set the example and stop fighting at Commission Meetings

Continue to provide experiences for people to gather and talk to the community as well. Provide experiences for youth to grow such as public speaking at these events and understanding politics and the importance of how that shapes the community.

Continue to support programs like Sanford Speaks where there is honest and authentic conversation.

City of Sanford you Are Awesome! Continue to do what you do and staying ahead hosting events like these and supporting youth. I work with youth and I'm a collaborator and will continue to do it. Thank you!

Give them chances to speak their thoughts and share their ideas, possibly town hall type meetings geared to them, maybe by going directly into the schools

Provide spaces and places for young people to share their ideas, etc.

I think continuing to have community events where they can have a voice matters and makes a difference.

Sponsor/promote these multigenerational meets

Exactly this. Keep on giving us an opportunity to speak our truths with no filter so that we can really be honest and help one another improve.

More events like this

Have more event cater towards the youths

Being more open and receptive to the needs of the youth in the community and provide opportunities for growth.

Provide an opportunity for feedback and really listen

Have more events like this.

Show up at more youth oriented events.

Put their needs, requests, wants, into action

Continue outreach in schools

Listen to EVERYTHING that is being said and think before responding

Regular sharing events

More events like this

More dialogue like this

Having more discussions like this where children and adults are in a safe place to discuss

listen to them

Keep listening, keep doing more events like this

Open more venues

Include them more in the community.

Publicize opportunities for the youth more, because I know they exist already but I don't know what they are and how to access them.

Offer more youth/ adult activities - more activities for high school kids -

More events like this

Be more included and more helpful towards community.

Incorporate more groups and organizations

Help the young people who recently took many of us on the Black History walk through Georgetown to be able to make it a reality for more people to be able to participate...for young people to learn their perspective history of Goldsboro, Midwysy

More places for youth to gather

I like the safe space that was mentioned.

Take more opportunities to understand the needs and perspectives of the people who will be taking the lead soon.

Take everything that was shared from the youth today and act on it. Make Sanford walkable, safe space for undocumented folks, mental health resources.

Understand them as a person and not compare their situation to yours

Support programs like reei

Programing that supports older youth of all genders, races, ethnicities.

There needs to be more places where young people can hang out that don't cost money and that are safe. Need more parks and green spaces.

Provide more mental health facilities and more mentorship and youth bondings

Pass better rules in schools to deal with inclusion and trusting one another that are different.

Work to ensure kids all all ages, backgrounds, and languages have access to programs which support their, and their family's success.

More transportation

Attend the Speak outs in person

They need a youth center and a way to anonymously communicate their feedback on how things can improve. This is a great start.

More recourses for entrepreneurship and mentorship programs.

To value them and get them to participate in these events to improve the city

Lead by example and not lead with anger or resentment. The youth watch and pay attention. Change is a beautiful thing but we shouldn't force change with anger

Continue to foster open discussion between diverse generations

More events like Sanford Speaks.

Support the companies who main focus is youth. Hold hearings frequently.

Advertise these Sanford Speaks more.

Listen to the youth

Provide more activities and events geared towards youth, especially our teens.

Have a place for teenagers to be able to go that is not school or work or home.

Give more time for the teens to try the youth council

I would recommend reaching out to youth organizations both in and out of school for help connecting with the youth. It is often easier for young adults to hear from other young adults.

More access to mentoring and mental health resources

To create more space like this to train us in diversity not only physical also different mentality we can be united without changing each other to what I consider is good

Sidewalks in Sanford

Keep listening to diverse voices.

One thing I recommend the city commission does to support youth is to find a way to more effectively support youth mental health.

Have more local youth programs.

to make more foundations were the specific topic is discussed

Have safe areas for youth, even if that's a shelter they can stay in if they aren't safe at home

Give them more of a voice to be heard and loved and valued

Continue to have these forums and spread the word

More of these events where youth can speak their mind on pressing matters

Youth concerts.

Host a lot of events, fun free things for kids to partake in and feel comfortable in their city.

See above

Continue to have these meeting and hear out the youth

Host more events like this and spread awareness of what the youth need

Expand the SCTP.

Mental health services.

youth centers

youth focused activities to get them involved!!

Expand the youth council to include middle school n elem voices

Create mental health and listening groups for the youth.

Continue programs like Sanford Speaks

To keep them included

Places and events with transportation

Try to get more in touch with students through schools

Listen to the Children

Try to help people that have been suffering from the deportation situation. Instead try to help to feel those people safe

They are already doing a great job

Take time to listen to them and not speak over them

(:

Support the people of color

Start a youth mentoring program or support more outreach focused on youth mentoring

Listen and be fair to all regardless of race

More community centers for the youth

More places for the youth

Mental health institutes

Allow for genuine conversations rather than pre-planned ones. It is okay if it goes awry, the mistakes are part of the conversation.

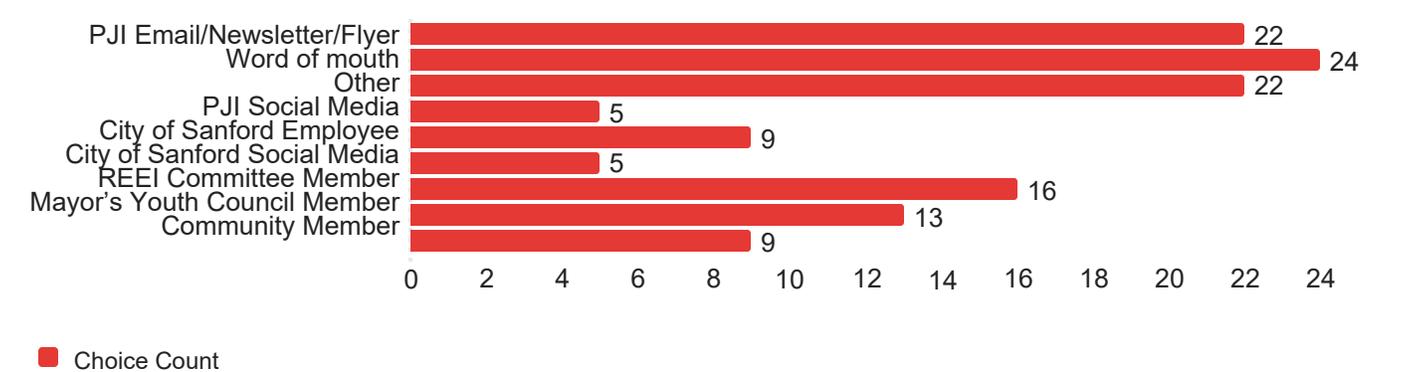
Offer more scholarships

More events like these

Q9 - Have you attended Sanford Speaks in the past?



Q10 - How did you hear about Sanford Speaks? - Selected Choice

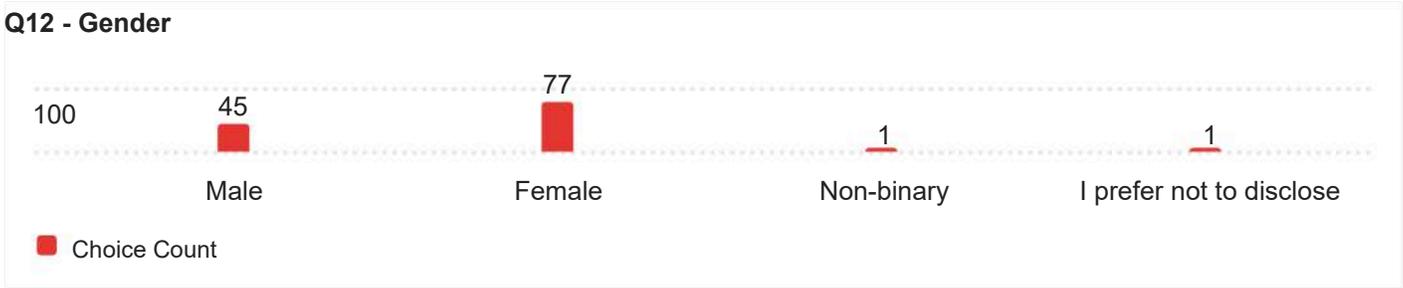
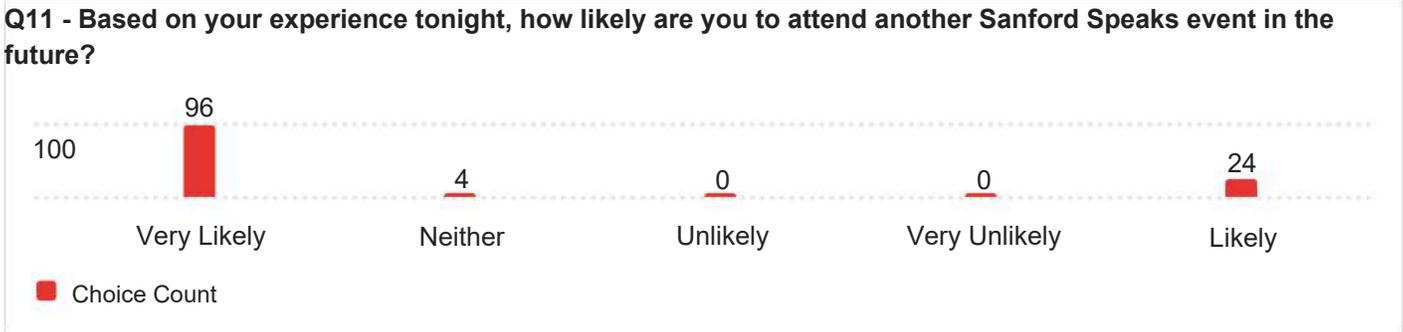


Q10 - TEXT

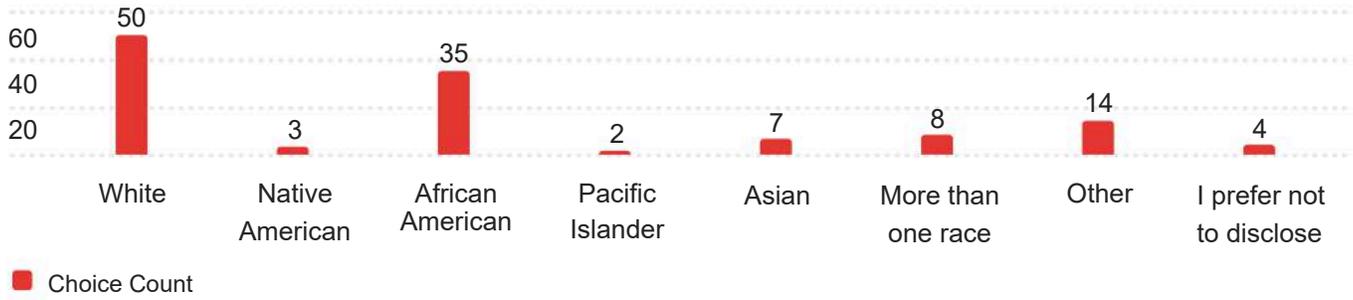
LWVSC

A police officer

- Friend
- Barbershop
- Conversation
- Britt Henderson invited me
- League of Women Voters
- Church
- Church
- Mom
- Church
- Pastor
- Barbershop Conversation
- Podcast
- Pastor
- Tony Hernandez
- Email
- My Pastor
- My university School teacher
- The pledge central Florida School club



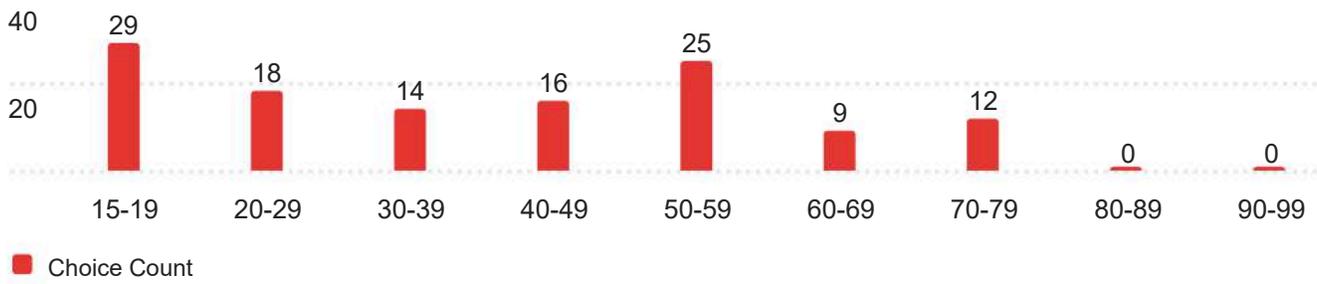
Q13 - Race



Q14 - Ethnicity



Q15 - Age



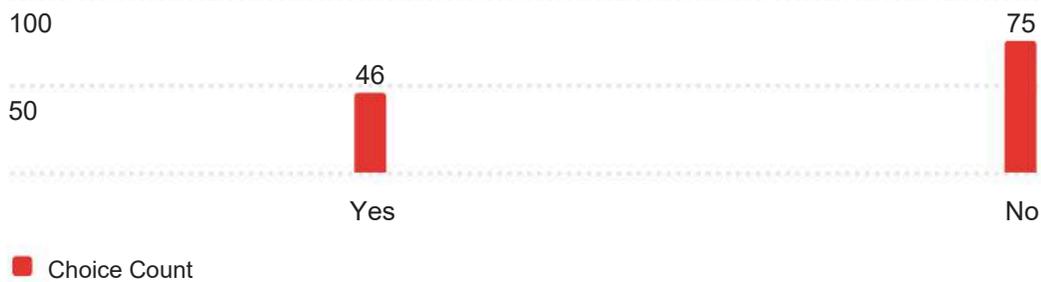
Q16 - I am a resident of the City of Sanford



Q17 - I am a resident of the City of Sanford and I also work in Sanford



Q18 - I am a resident of the City of Sanford and I also work in Sanford





All People. All Voices. All Matter.

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