



CITY OF KIRKLAND
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033
425-587-3000

MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Jim Lopez, Deputy City Manager for External Affairs
Erika Mascorro, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Manager
Daniel Lazo, Senior Community Engagement Coordinator

Date: March 5, 2026

Subject: **2026 National Arab American Heritage Month Proclamation**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Mayor, on behalf of the City Council, proclaims April 2026 as “Arab American Heritage Month” in Kirkland.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- National Arab American Heritage Month celebrate the Arab-American community’s diverse histories, traditions, and achievements.
- This proclamation aligns with Kirkland’s City values and strong commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB).
- This proclamation is part of the City Council’s adopted 2026 proclamation schedule.

BACKGROUND:

April is designated to recognize and celebrate the Arab American community’s diverse histories, traditions, and achievements in Kirkland and beyond through its vibrant culture, resilience, and remarkable contributions.

The Arab community encompasses individuals with ancestries from the 22 countries that make up the Arab world, primarily located in the Middle East and North Africa. Those countries include Algeria, Bahrain, the Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

The contributions of Arab Americans are woven into the story of our community through tradition and culture in different industries including entrepreneurship, community activism, literature, art, and music.

Arab America and the Arab America Foundation¹ launched the National Arab American Heritage Month initiative in 2017, with a growing number of states recognizing the initiative.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

This proclamation aligns with Kirkland's City values and strong commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). Council has adopted legislation supporting these values, including:

- **Resolution R-5240** (2017) declaring Kirkland a safe, inclusive, welcoming community for all people;
- **Resolution R-5434** (2020) expressing commitments to improving the safety and respect of Black people and approving the framework to create a community committed to examining and dismantling interpersonal, institutional, and structural racism in Kirkland;
- **Resolution R-5548** (2022) adopting the City's DEIB 5-Year Roadmap;
- **Resolution R-5686** (2025) declaring Kirkland as a welcoming, inclusive, and safe city for the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual Plus (2SLGBTQIA+) people and recognizing their human rights and well-being; and
- **Resolution R-5693** (2025) reaffirming the City's commitment to being a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community where all people belong.

NEXT STEPS:

The mayor will be issuing this proclamation.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – 2026 National Arab American Month Proclamation

¹ <https://www.arabamerica.com/who-started-the-movement-for-national-arab-american-heritage-month-history-and-legacy/>



A PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND

National Arab American Heritage Month April 2026

WHEREAS, April is designated to recognize and celebrate the Arab American community's diverse histories, traditions, and achievements in our city through its vibrant culture, resilience, and remarkable contributions; and

WHEREAS, Arab America and the Arab America Foundation launched the National Arab American Heritage Month initiative in 2017, with a growing number of states recognizing the initiative; and

WHEREAS, the Arab community encompasses individuals with ancestries from the 22 countries that make up the Arab world, primarily located in the Middle East and North Africa. These countries include Algeria, Bahrain, the Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen; and

WHEREAS, all Kirkland community members are encouraged to visit the website arabamerica.com which contains many resource links and highlights the rich past and current accomplishments of Arab Americans that build a better nation and a better world; and

WHEREAS, by celebrating Arab American Heritage Month, the City reaffirms its commitment to honoring diversity, promoting unity, and ensuring that Kirkland's Arab American community is recognized for their contributions to our shared history and future prosperity.

NOW, THEREFORE, Mayor Kelli Curtis, on behalf of the City Council, proclaims April 2026 as National Arab American Heritage Month in Kirkland, and encourages our community to celebrate and reflect upon the contributions of Arab Americans to our community.

Signed this 7th day of April, 2026

Kelli Curtis, Mayor