DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
A G E N D A

JULY 22, 2014 - 5:30 P.M.

CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM
15 LOOCKERMAN PLAZA
DOVER, DELAWARE

Public comments are welcomed on any item and will be permitted at appropriate times. When possible, please notify the City Clerk (736-7008 or e-mail at CityClerk@dover.de.us) should you wish to be recognized.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. **Presentation - Dover Public Library Created Equal Project** ***(Margie Cyr and Michelle Hughes)***

2. **Development of DHRC 2014-2017 Strategic Plan**

3. **Discussion - DHRC Organizational Structure**

4. **Commission Members' Announcements**

5. **Adjournment**

/dd

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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

Dover Human Relations Commission Workshop, July 8, 2014

Purpose:

To engage the members of the Dover Human Relations Commission (hereinafter, DHRC)in the development of a strategic plan for the DHRC within the framework of its "purpose, powers and duties" as outlined in the Dover, Delaware, Code of Ordinances PART II - CODE OF ORDINANCES Chapter 58 - HUMAN RELATIONS ARTICLE II. HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION . **(See attachment 1)**

Strategic Planning Framework

Basically, this strategic planning process is meant to define the DHRC's strategy, focus and direction over the next three years (2014-2017) by answering these questions:

Where are we now?
Where are we going?
How will we get there?

Major Components of the Proposed DHRC Strategic Plan

The Dover Human Relations Strategic Plan 2014-2017 should contain the following components:

Mission statement the mission statement should be an overarching expression of the DRHC's purpose and aspiration, addressing both what the DHRC wants to accomplish and the manner in which the DHRC will act to accomplish it. It's a declaration of why the DHRC exists as an organization.

Vision statement: This short, concise statement of the DHRC's future should answer the question of what the DHRC will look like in three or more years.

Values statement or guiding principles: These statements should reflect the DHRC's enduring distinctive core beliefs. They're guiding principles that never change and are part of the DHRC's strategic foundation.

SWOT: A SWOT is a summarized view of the DHRC's current position, specifically its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Long-term strategic objectives: These long-term strategic focus areas should span a three-year time horizon. They should answer the question of what the DHRC must focus on to achieve its vision and the Commission's "purpose, powers and duties" as outlined in Section 58 of the Dover Code.

Strategies: Strategies are the general, umbrella methods the DHRC will use to reach its vision. Some strategies to achieve the DHRC"s "purpose" are already specified in Section 58-36 of the Dover Code.

Short-term goals/priorities/initiatives: These items convert the strategic objectives into specific performance targets that fall within the one- to three-year time horizon. They state what, when, and who; and, they should be measurable.

Action items/plans: These specific statements explain *how* a goal will be accomplished. They're the areas that move the strategy to operation within the framework of the DHRC's organizational structure which should also be defined in the plan.

Organizational Structure:

As part of the strategic planning process, the DRHC should also discuss its "organizational structure". Although the Dover Code centralizes decision making at the full Commission level it also suggests "intergroup cooperation"; and, it authorizes the Commission to "enter into agreements and build partnerships with other entities and organizations for the purpose of more efficiently and effectively carrying out its responsibilities". (Dover Code, Sec. 58-33 (f))

The Dover Code also mandates that the DHRC "seek the active assistance of the state human relations commission" in certain specified instances. (Dover Code, Sec. 58-36 (4))

Efficiency may also suggest, as in the Portland Strategic Plan, a "flexible structure that focuses on the core ongoing functions of the Commission" which distributes some of the DHRC's work to ongoing functional committees; and, a structure that allows the Commission to address "emerging issues through the creation of ad hoc committees". (See page 29 of the Portland Strategic Plan)

Resource Documents: In addition to the **Dover, Delaware, Code of Ordinances PART II - CODE OF ORDINANCES Chapter 58 - HUMAN RELATIONS ARTICLE II. HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION** DHRC members should also review the Updated 2003 U.S. Department of Justice's "Guidelines for Effective Human Relations Commissions" (attachment 2) as well as the Strategic Plan 2012-2015 of the City of Portland's Human Rights Commission. (Attachment 3)

Other examples of Strategic Plans that have been developed for Human Relations Commissions may be found by searching on Goggle under: Strategic Plans for Human Relations Commissions.

Another resource that the DHRC will find useful is the 2008 City of Dover National Citizen Survey. This can be accessed at http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/302432/The_National_Citizen_Survey_City_of_Dover_DE

This Survey is the product of a joint collaboration between the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), The National Research Center and the City of Dover. Although not current, the survey does provide a window to citizen opinion regarding Dover's local government and community services in 2008, with some comparison data for 2004-2008.Note especially, the data on "Community Inclusiveness" on pages 30-31.

Prepared by Eugene B. Ruane, member of the DRHC, June 16, 2014.

Acknowledgement: http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/strategic-planning-kit-for-dummies-cheat-sheet.html was used as the basis for the "Strategic Planning Framework" and the "Major Components" section of this outline.

ARTICLE II. HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Sec. 58-31. Purpose.

Sec. 58-32. Established; composition; appointment; representation; holding other office; removal from office; terms of office; vacancies; reappointments.

Sec. 58-33. Organization; quorum; meetings; rules of procedure; limitation of functions; agreements; compensation; legal counsel; reports.

Sec. 58-34. Expenses.

Sec. 58-35. Conflicts of interest.

Sec. 58-36. Powers and duties.

Sec. 58-31. Purpose.

The city council has deemed it to be in the best interest of the city to establish a human relations commission to include members who are broadly representative of the entire community and who are committed to a philosophy of inclusion, intergroup cooperation, and fair treatment that will effectively help the city meet the following needs:

(1) *Fairness, respect.* Promote and develop an environment of fairness and respect among its citizens;

(2) *Monitoring.* Develop ways to measure and monitor community relations, particularly those that are sources of intergroup conflict;

(3) *Intergroup relations.* Involve all segments of the community in understanding and appreciating the benefits of positive intergroup relations;

(4) *Issues.* Offer a range of programs and services that will help its residents and neighborhoods prevent and resolve issues of human relations; and

(5) *Intergroup conflict.* Develop ways of anticipating, preparing for, and relieving community tensions arising from intergroup conflict.

(Code 1981, § 2-16; Ord. of 2-11-2002; Ord. No. 2013-15, 9-23-2013)

Sec. 58-32. Established; composition; appointment; representation; holding other office; removal from office; terms of office; vacancies; reappointments.

(a)

Established. There is hereby established an advisory commission to be known as the "City of Dover Human Relations Commission," to carry out the objectives as described in this article.

(b)

Composition; appointment. The members of the human relations commission shall be appointed by the president of the council, based upon recommendations from and subject to confirmation by the council. The human relations commission shall consist of nine members, all residents of the city. Two members shall be selected from each council district and one member shall serve from the city at-large.

(c)

Representation. In selecting the membership of the commission, particular care shall be taken to ensure that the commission is broadly representative of racial, religious, gender and ethnic groups residing in the city.

(d)

Holding other office; removal. No member of the commission shall hold any elected or appointed office under the government of the United States or the state, county, or city. The city council president may remove members of the commission, with the concurrence of the city council, for substantial neglect of duty, or gross misconduct in office.

(e)

Terms of office; vacancies. A member of the commission shall be appointed for a term of office of three years and until his successor has been appointed . The appointees shall be appointed for staggered terms of office. When a vacancy occurs in the membership of the commission, it shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired portion of the term in the same manner as the original appointment.

(f)

Reappointments. Members may be reappointed.

(Code 1981, § 2-17; Ord. of 2-11-2002; Ord. No. 2010-23, 8-23-2010; Ord. No. 2013-15, 9-23-2013)

Sec. 58-33. Organization; quorum; meetings; rules of procedure; limitation of functions; agreements; compensation; legal counsel; reports.

(a)

Organization. The human relations commission shall annually elect its own chairperson to preside over its meetings and may create and fill such other offices and committees among its members as may be found necessary and proper for its effective organization.

(b)

Quorum. A majority of the membership of the commission shall constitute a quorum and, if a quorum is present, a vacancy on the commission shall not impair the right of the remaining members to exercise all the powers of the commission.

(c)

Meetings. The commission shall hold at least five meetings per year; one each quarter and one to be determined by the commission. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or three members of the commission.

All meetings shall be held at City Hall and in accordance with the Laws of Delaware regarding the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and City of Dover procedures. The commission will distribute its agendas and minutes through the city clerk's office.

(d)

Rules of procedure. The commission is also authorized to adopt rules of procedure for the conduct of its meetings.

(e)

Functions limited. The commission shall not involve itself in activities or functions already assigned by law or decree to other governmental bodies.

(f)

Agreements. The commission may enter into agreements and build partnerships with other entities and organizations for the purpose of more efficiently and effectively carrying out its responsibilities.

(g)

Compensation. Members of the commission shall receive no compensation.

(h)

Legal counsel. The city solicitor shall provide legal counsel to the commission and shall be the legal representative of the commission in connection with its duties hereunder, on a case-by-case basis, or determine that outside counsel is needed and obtain such outside counsel for a particular matter.

(i)

Reports. The commission shall report to the city council on a quarterly basis regarding its affairs. An annual report of its accomplishments and a summary of its recommendations shall be provided to the mayor and the city council.

(Code 1981, § 2-18; Ord. of 2-11-2002; Ord. No. 2013-15, 9-23-2013)

Sec. 58-34. Expenses.

(a)

Budget. The city council may appropriate a budget for the city human relations commission to provide for necessary expenses and expenditures.

(b)

Other funding. The commission may also receive funding from other governmental, philanthropic or private organizations for the exclusive purpose of carrying out its responsibilities.

(Code 1981, § 2-19; Ord. of 2-11-2002; Ord. No. 2013-15, 9-23-2013)

Sec. 58-35. Conflicts of interest.

If any member of the human relations commission concludes that they have a conflict of interest with respect to a matter which is pending before the commission, that member shall disqualify themself from participating in any deliberations, discussions and decision making processes of the commission.

(Code 1981, § 2-20; Ord. of 2-11-2002; Ord. No. 2013-15, 9-23-2013)

Sec. 58-36. Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the human relations commission shall be to:

(1)

Recommendations. Review city programs, activities, functions and ordinances, and make recommendations to the city council for new, amended or changed programs, functions, activities or ordinances which would support inclusiveness and civility among city residents and enhance communication and understanding among residents of the city;

(2)

Intergroup conflicts. Inquire into incidents of intergroup conflicts and disputes within the city and take such action as may be designed to alleviate such conflicts and disputes;

(3)

Intergroup cooperation. Promote and encourage communications between and cooperation of all groups interested in bettering human relations in the city;

(4)

Complaints. Seek the active assistance of the state human relations commission in the solution of complaints of alleged discrimination which fall within the jurisdiction of the state commission;

(5)

Research, education, etc. Engage in such research, education and advocacy as, in the judgment of the commission or the city council, may be needed to improve human relations in the city;

(6)

Programs. Develop and maintain programs that build positive relations among communities and enhance problem-solving skills among residents throughout the city;

(7)

Other functions. Do all other acts and deeds necessary and proper to carry out and effectively accomplish the objectives, functions and services contemplated by the provisions of this article.

(Code 1981, § 2-21; Ord. of 2-11-2002; Ord. No. 2013-15, 9-23-2013)

Guidelines for Effective Human Relations Commissions



Revised September 1998

(Updated March 2003)

What is Human Relations?

The mission of human relations is to promote ways in which people in communities learn to get along and to safeguard equal opportunity for all. Human relations activities help communities become more harmonious, respectful, and cohesive. Human relations uses the tools of fact finding, staff training, information sharing, community education, mediation, cultural literacy, hate crime response and conflict management.

Foreword

Communities in America are made up of a people from varied backgrounds. Our neighbors and coworkers are from many different races, cultures, faiths, experiences and traditions. We have different interests, fears and ways of doing things. Some are newcomers, immigrants and refugees. Others are from families, several generations in the United States. We have different preferences in music and food. We have different arrangements in our living situations, and in our domestic and social relationships. Our differences sometimes enrich us and at other times are a source of conflict.

As a nation, unique in being formed by people from many different countries, we have experimented and fought to resolve our differences and make our diversity work. We have a history that houses many examples of difficult challenges regarding differences of race, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, language and other important aspects of our diversity. These have often been complicated and highly charged struggles.

For people of different backgrounds and interests to get along, it is useful for local government to set up places and programs that have the responsibility to help people develop better understanding of each other and to solve differences that might arise. Human Relations Commissions are the most common organization created to help manage relationships between people. Having an organization with the responsibility to examine intergroup relations and promote work that brings people together improves a community's prospects for harmony.

Guidelines for Effective Human Relations Commissions



Revised September 1998

(Updated March 2003)

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Introduction

In an effort to help communities resolve disputes and conflict based on racial discrimination and denial of equal rights, the Community Relations Service encourages the establishment of human relations commissions.

An effective commission plays a vital role in promoting community understanding and open communication. As an instrument of private and local government, a commission is helpful in resolving conflict, settling complaints of discrimination, and promoting cooperation within the community.

This brochure provides guidelines for local officials and civic leaders in establishing a local commission and shaping policies and programs to improve its effectiveness.

Citizens with an interest in improving community relations can work toward establishing a human relations commission.

ESTABLISHING A HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Illustrating the need for a commission is a crucial first step. The need can be shown through studies of discrimination complaints, the impact of demographic changes, and incidences of hate crime, public controversies, and disturbances. These factors are available from community organizations, governmental agencies, and local colleges and universities. Studies such as surveys and polls are good ways to demonstrate the need for a commission. Another important approach is to talk with key individuals in key organizations, public and private agencies, and schools to collect opinions and views regarding the need for a human relations commission.

Establish the Commission as a Component of the Local Government

The active support of governmental officials is essential for the establishment of a commission. Local elected officials will need a clear explanation of the benefits of a commission, and how a commission will help address specific human relations needs.

Establishing a commission by local ordinance will give it a firm legal status as an official unit of government. A commission can also be established by executive order or administrative action.

Secure Specific Responsibilities and Powers

To clearly define the commission's responsibilities and authority, an ordinance should address the following:

- It should prohibit discrimination in specific areas (i.e., employment, housing) and identify the groups that will be protected.
- It should establish a policy of equal opportunity in the civic, economic, political, and social aspects of the community.
- It should charge the commission to study and recommend to the local government programs and policies that enhance communication and understanding among all residents of the community.
- It should charge the commission to develop and maintain programs that build positive relations among communities and enhance problem-solving skills among residents throughout the community.
- It should promote policies and practices by all units of local government that support inclusiveness and civility among residents.

- It should outline the specific authorities of the commission, including areas of enforcement, subpoena power, hiring, and acceptance of public and private grants and contributions.

- It should define how each commissioner will be appointed, detail their authority and length of service, and outline the commission's jurisdiction and relationship with other governmental units and advisory bodies.

Secure an Adequate Budget Through Local Government Appropriation and/or From an Assured Source of Private Financial Support

An adequate budget can make the difference in the success of a commission's program. The size of each commission's budget varies, depending on the extent of human relations needs and support from government officials. Cities, counties, and states must provide adequate funding for a commission to undertake its responsibilities. Additional resources may sometimes be warranted to support specific responses to new problems. Many commissions have found it useful to be designated to receive funding from other sources.

A commission is an indispensable resource in all communities. Smaller jurisdictions may encounter a greater challenge in securing funds, and it may be necessary to arrange volunteer service from civic leaders and community representatives. Their work may be coordinated by a single official, namely a Director of Human Relations.

Representatives from businesses, churches, and community organizations join together with members of advocacy, civic, and legal groups to form an official human relations commission.

ORGANIZING A HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Organization of the Commission

Each commissioner should be committed to the philosophy of inclusion, equal opportunity, and fair treatment. Membership of the commission should include representation from the entire community, and have the respect, confidence, and trust of its citizens. Members should also be familiar with and sensitive to historical, social, economic, and cultural dynamics of local communities.

Commissioners with ties to local government, civic organizations, and educational and religious institutions can help give the Commission visibility and public support. The careful selection of its members signals to the public that the commission is competent, fair, and inclusive. Members should serve staggered, limited terms so that good continuity and provision for new leadership on the commission. Most commissioners serve three to four year terms.

The size of each commission varies. It must be large enough to conduct work in committees and task forces, yet small enough where it can operate efficiently. Most commissions have an average of seven to fifteen members.

An organized committee structure is useful and should be based on the magnitude of work and available staff support. The establishment of administrative committees that deals with financial and personnel matters allow program committees to focus on particular areas such as education, hate crime, criminal justice, employment, and housing.

The number, composition, and size of committees are determined by available resources and staff. Good staff support assists in carrying out the committee's programs and projects. Commissions in smaller jurisdictions may need to focus on fewer committees and tasks because of limited staff.

Build Partnerships and Involve Communities

A commission can increase its impact by working closely with other human relations organizations and agencies. The possibility of additional resources, new initiatives, and cooperation is enhanced by bringing together organizations in joint human relations efforts. A commission should work to help communities understand and value cooperative relations among diverse groups and neighborhoods.

Commission Staffing

A competent, paid staff should direct the day-to-day planning and the operations of the commission. The size of the staff should be based on the challenges and work demands

of the community. Salaries should be comparable to those in other governmental agencies and sufficient enough to recruit and retain qualified personnel.

In smaller jurisdictions, a single position in local government may be established. As the Director for Human Relations, this person should possess strong leadership qualities to motivate volunteers with assisting the commission. Basic staff qualifications should include:

- Education: A degree in areas related to social work and/or intergroup relations is preferable. Degrees in social science, education, law, journalism or theology are acceptable.

- Experience: Prior experience in intergroup relations, community service, and/or community relations.

- Skills: Strong oral and written communication skills, and ability to analyze social issues and develop community programs.

- Other Qualities: Objectivity, maturity, honesty, good-natured, leadership, and commitment.

Adopt Clearly Defined Goals

Clearly defined goals are vital for an effective commission. Every effort should be made to help the community understand that its objectives are in the interest of the entire community.

The objectives of a commission should be:

- To promote and assist in developing an environment of fairness and respect among citizens by ensuring that responses to acts of exclusion, bias, and discrimination are meaningful and consistent.

- To develop ways to measure and monitor community relations, race relations, and civil rights issues, particularly those that are sources of intergroup conflict.

- To involve all segments of the community in understanding and appreciating the benefits of positive intergroup relations.

- To offer a range of programs and services that help communities prevent and resolve issues of human relations, race relations, and civil rights.

- To develop ways of anticipating, preparing for, and relieving community tensions arising from intergroup conflict.

THE WORK OF A HUMAN RELATION COMMISSION

Make the Commission the Recognized Authority on Human Relations Needs

When the commission is recognized as the expert source of information, it can become a valuable resource to the media, government, and members of the community. There are a variety of resources a commission can access, including law enforcement agencies which compile data on incidences of conflict and hate crime. Many colleges and universities conduct research in local communities. Newspaper and other media are also useful sources for information. A commission can also do its own data gathering through research, hearings and interviews. Data and information should be carefully collected and analyzed. Keep in mind that its purpose is to help bring understanding and focus to a particular issue.

Establish a Working Relationship with Local News Media

Reliable data is one of the most important tools available to a human relations commission. Accurate information improves understanding and provides a foundation to resolve the issues and conflicts. Newspapers, radio, and television are important media outlets to disseminate important information to diverse audiences.

Information can be provided to the media through conferences, forums, workshops, and briefing papers. Data can be shared for the purposes of publication or as background and context. Reporting can then include perspectives that will more clearly define the issue or problem, which can result on a consensus for a plan of action.

Involve Community Members and Groups in Commission Programs

Public trust and confidence in a commission are fundamental to its effectiveness. By building relationships with diverse groups, organizations, and neighborhoods, the commission can promote intergroup cooperation. In circumstances where this relationship already exists, there is more timely and efficient response to issues and exchange of information.

The level of organization in a particular community helps determine how much effort is necessary to reach certain groups. In well established communities, long standing civic organizations make contact easier. In nascent communities, the lack of community organization may require a more deliberate effort. An assessment of how the community is organized is an important step to understanding the dynamics of a particular community.

Work for Meaningful Intergroup Relations

Communication and understanding are the heart of an effective commission. The commission can provide a bridge among various groups by offering a neutral environment in which to interact.

Communication should be open and candid. It requires skill, innovation, and patience. Without effective communication, meaningful advances in community relations cannot take place. When successful, communication improves understanding and cooperation among diverse groups.

Mediation, Conciliation, Conflict Management

When there is controversy and intergroup conflict, human relations issues receive the greatest public attention. Conflict is a natural occurrence. Intergroup relations are affected according to how the conflict is managed and resolved. Unresolved conflict can escalate and lead to serious community disruption. A commission can play an important role by providing services in mediation, conciliation, and conflict management.

Helping disputants cease hostile actions is a prerequisite to problem solving. Successful conflict management cannot take place until violence has ended. Human relations seeks to move from conflict to resolution. Actions to diffuse tension, identify the basis of the conflict, establish ground rules among disputants, and engage them in the process of mediation and conciliation are important steps in conflict management.

The entire process requires a great deal of time, effort, and patience. When there is community conflict, a commission is an important resource because it can build partnerships with other agencies and organizations to form an organized system of conflict response and management.

Working Relationships and Partnerships

A commission should establish a strong liaison with a wide range of community organizations--- chambers of commerce, churches, civic organizations, civil rights organizations, and other community-based organizations. It is important that the commission inform and update various organizations on the commission's objectives and programs, and provide training and other support to encourage their involvement in human relations, human rights, and race relations issues.

A commission can call on government agencies and departments with human relations interests. Local schools, police departments, district attorneys, libraries, parks and recreation, probation departments, and community development agencies are often strong partners in human relations work. Federal agencies such as the Community Relations Service, U. S. Department of Justice; Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission; and U.S. Commission on Civil Rights are important human relations allies. At the state level, there are often human relations commissions available to work with local commissions.

A commission can help the media realize the full impact of their reporting. When reporting is accurate and objective, understanding is improved and prospects for conflict resolution are enhanced. Establishing working relationships with the media, particularly those that serve special neighborhoods and groups, is a important human relations tool.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSIONS

Government

- Encourage government agencies to review policies and practices to ensure that services are available to all communities. Develop in-service training, bilingual materials, and collaboration with community organizations to build strong relationships between government and citizens.

- Review local ordinances affecting race relations issues, including hate crime, and make recommendations for strengthening efforts.

Criminal Justice

Relationships between law enforcement and community members have a significant influence on community relations. Poor relations increase the potential for mistrust, conflict, and violence. Effective community oriented policing builds public confidence, reducing the potential for conflict and tensions. A commission can assist in building strong relationships and understanding between neighborhoods and law enforcement.

- Urge police agencies to consider developing written agreements with local community organizations. These agreements should outline specifics of the relationship, such as how they will help each other and work together, especially during times of community tension.

- Assist police departments in developing training programs which address community relations and other issues, including those involving race, color, national origin, and other protected groups.

- Encourage law enforcement agencies to develop ties with local schools, businesses, and community organizations. This can be accomplished by regular communication with parents, students, media, and other community organizations, and include the formation of partnerships to address issues such as hate crime.

- Encourage law enforcement officials to create informational workshops, forums, and panels on race and hate crime prevention with local schools and other institutions.

- Encourage the development of relationships between youth and police by organizing community-wide police-youth task forces.

Conflict Management

A commission has the ability to play a key role in conflict management by creating a coordinated system for conflict management. This system should include city officials, law enforcement, counselors, clergy, community organizers, and mediators.

- Identify and gather the skills and resources required to respond efficiently to the various phases of conflict management. Establish working relationships and systematic procedures among these individuals, organizations, and groups in order to respond efficiently to conflict situations.

- Identify ways to anticipate community tensions, based on analyses of areas and issues vulnerable to conflict.

- Develop and provide materials and training in conflict management and mediation.

- Assist in developing plans for responding to and managing community conflicts and disruptions. Encourage contingency planning by schools, government agencies, and businesses. Commissions can also assist in planning for the overall response to serious civil unrest.

Hate Crime

An effective response by human relations agencies to hate crimes is crucial because such crimes can heighten anxiety and tension throughout the entire community.

- Review the local response to hate crime, including adequacy of hate crimes ordinances, assistance to victims, police investigation and reporting, and prosecutions.

- Encourage reporting of hate crime by educating and training law enforcement and schools and the general public.

- Organize a network of community organizations, law enforcement, and other agencies to monitor and plan a coordinated response to hate crime.

- Establish a board or commission to review and analyze hate crime activity, create public service announcements, and recommend measures to counter hate activity.

Education

- Encourage local schools to organize human relations programs. Promote class discussions on human relations, race relations, and civil rights to help students understand issues of diversity and tolerance.

- Provide training on conflict resolution and multicultural awareness to support school personnel and students in addressing tension and conflict.

- Urge parents, students, and faculty to form committees to plan for improved human relations on campus.

- Help schools develop conflict management policies and plans. Schools that are aware of potential conflicts and develop plans to manage them are more likely to avoid serious conflict on their campuses.

- Help schools create a climate of tolerance and appreciation for the diversity of their student bodies. Support activities and plans that build relationships and understanding among different student populations.

- Sponsor projects, such as art and essay contests, that encourage students to give attention to human relations, race relations, and civil rights issues.

Business

- Make presentations to local business organizations on human relations issues. Support businesses that offer human relations programs, diversity training, and dispute resolution activities. Form an advisory committee which acts as a liaison between the business community and the commission.

- Assist and encourage business investment and involvement in human relations programs in the media, schools and local neighborhoods.

Economic Development

- Get involved with community development programs and encourage study of their impact on different communities, especially whether these plans ensure fair access and participation.

- Bring together local bankers, realtors, appraisers, insurers, and others involved in the home mortgage market area to reduce barriers to home ownership.

Employment

- Provide training resources to help businesses adopt work place policies that address workforce and customer diversity.

- Create a committee to assist businesses practice fair employment and to resolve discrimination complaints.

Communication and Information

- Publish newsletters, brochures, booklets, and reports to keep everyone informed on commission activities, emerging human relations issues, race relations, and civil rights challenges.

- Create a directory of human relations and conflict management agencies, resources, manuals, calendars, and intergroup dialogues.

- Publicize the work of the commission by using public service advertisements on television, radio, and newspapers. Share important human relations materials with churches and community organizations for use in their newsletters.

- Sponsor public forums for residents to air their concerns and ideas regarding community relations and the work of the commission. This keeps open the lines of communication among the citizens and the commission.

- Develop strong working relationships with media, particularly media which reach minority groups and neighborhoods.

- Arrange a human relations telephone hotline which can respond to community relations concerns and handle rumor control in times of community tension and crisis.

- Develop an Internet website. The Internet is a good way to disseminate information. Update the site with special features and be sure to answer electronic inquiries.

Media

- Provide information and guidance which encourage the media to report on news involving all of the groups and neighborhoods in the area.

- Help the media report on issues involving less visible communities. Reporting on diverse groups helps build understanding and fuller participation in civic affairs.

- Involve the media in programs and projects that encourage good community relations, tolerance, and understanding.

- Bring together a cross section of the media to explore how they can work together to understand the perspectives and concerns of all groups and communities.

Research and Data Collection

- Encourage demographic studies by local colleges and universities to increase awareness of the impact of population changes on community relations.

- Collect, analyze, and report data on community relations indicators, such as hate crimes.

Human Relations Report Card

Help develop an understanding of the state of human relations by use of indicators to assess human relations progress. Such measures could include housing, education, employment, hate crime, demographics, social services, and recreation. Share the report card with officials and the general public.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE

The Community Relations Service (CRS), a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, is a specialized Federal conciliation service available to State and local officials to help resolve and prevent racial and ethnic conflict, violence and civil disorder. When governors, mayors, police chiefs, and school superintendents need help to defuse racial or ethnic crises, they turn to CRS. CRS helps local officials nad residents tailor locally defined resolutions when conflict and violence threaten community stability and well-being. Created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, CRS is the only Federal Agency dedicated to preventing and resolving racial and ethnic tensions, incidents, and civil disorders. It assists State and local units of government, private and public organizations, and community groups in restoring community racial stability and harmony.

CRS OFFICES

Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
600 E Street, NW, Suite 6000
Washington, D.C. 20530
202/305-2935 202/305-3009 FAX

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Regional Offices

Region I (New England)
(ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI)
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Boston, MA 02110
617/424-5715
617/424-5727 (FAX)

Region II (Northeast)
(NY, NJ, VI, PR)
26 Federal Plaza, Suite 36-118
New York, NY 10278
212/264-0700
212/264-2143 (FAX)

Region III (Mid-Atlantic)
(DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)
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Philadelphia, PA 19106
215/597-2344
215/597-9148 (FAX)

Region IV (Southeast)
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Atlanta, GA 30303
404/331-6883
404/331-4471 (FAX)

Region V (Mid-West)
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Chicago. IL 60603
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Region VI (Southwest)
(AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)
1420 West Mockingbird Lane, Suite 250
Dallas, TX 75247
214/655-8175
214/655-8184 (FAX)

Region VII (Central)
(IA, KS, MO, NE)
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Region VIII (Rocky Mountain)
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713/718-4861
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(May 2002)

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Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice

Customer Service Standards

Our goal is to provide sensitive and effective conflict prevention and resolution services. CRS will meet the following standards:

- We will clearly explain the process that CRS uses to address racial and ethnic conflicts and our role in that process.

- We will provide opportunities for all parties involved to contribute to and work toward a solution to the racial or ethnic conflict.

- If you are a participant in a CRS training session or conference, you will receive timely and useful information and materials that will assist you in preventing or minimizing racial and ethnic tensions.

- We will be prepared to respond to major racial or ethnic crisis situations within 24 hours from the time when your community notifies CRS or CRS becomes aware of the crisis.

- In non-crisis situations we will contact you to discuss our services within three days of when your community notifies CRS or when CRS becomes aware of the situation.

(August 2001)

City of Portland

Human Rights Commission

Strategic Plan 2012–2015



Approved at the
Human Rights Commission meeting
of July 11, 2012

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City of Portland Human Rights Commission

The Human Rights Commission advocates for and takes positive action toward eliminating discrimination, racism, and bigotry; strengthening inter-group relationships; and fostering greater understanding, inclusion, and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel, and play in the City of Portland. The work of the Commission is guided by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international, national, state, and local principles of human and civil rights.

The Human Rights Commission is appointed by the Portland City Council. Members are volunteers who work without compensation. Current members are:

Allan Lazo, Chair
Kyle Busse, Vice-Chair
Moloy K. Good
Emily G. Gottfried
Ashley Horne
Héctor López
Abdul Majidi
Stephen Manning
Donna D. Maxey
Christine Rontal
Damon Isiah Turner
Donita Fry
Deyalo Bennette
Mayra Arreola
Aimee Krouskop

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Executive Summary

The Portland Human Rights Commission works to eliminate discrimination and bigotry, to strengthen inter-group relationships, and to foster greater understanding, inclusion, and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel, and play in the City of Portland. In doing so, the Commission is guided by the principles embodied in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Since its inception in 2008, the Commission has taken an active role in promoting dialogue about human rights and in shaping public policies and government practices concerning human rights. In addition to Commission actions, two committees—the Community and Police Relations Committee and the Committee for Inter-Group Understanding—have been powerful advocates for change.

In April 2012, the Commission embarked on a strategic planning process to define its strategy, focus, and direction over the next three years. The strategic planning process was built on the foundation of participation and capitalized on the Commission's strengths, opportunities, and aspirations.

The Strategic Plan is organized around four primary strategies:

Discovery Strategy — The process of discovery is composed of the collective efforts to identify and assess human rights issues in the City of Portland. Discovery uses the tools of formal assessment: aggregating and synthesizing existing data, monitoring the community landscape, and convening communities to gather information about human rights issues. The Human Rights Commission, in partnership with the community, will prioritize and act on the findings of this discovery strategy to strengthen human rights in Portland.

Visibility Strategy — Visibility is a strategy that coordinates efforts and activities that promote and communicate an understanding of human rights issues in the City of Portland and the role, activities, and accomplishments of

the Human Rights Commission. Visibility as a strategy is a coordinated and systematic approach to using principles of marketing, communications, social media, and public relations with the goal of promoting human rights and the Human Rights Commission. Visibility also includes using personal and organizational connections and partnership development to leverage the collective voice for human rights in Portland.

Education Strategy — Education as a strategy includes all Human Rights Commission activities that create deeper understanding of human rights issues in the City of Portland and that endeavor to effect change in community and public institutional norms. Education is a proactive and priority-driven approach to building and changing the knowledge, attitudes, programs, and policies of the community related to specific human rights issues.

Advocacy Strategy — Advocacy as a strategic focus for the Human Rights Commission has the clear purpose of creating systems change. Advocacy represents collective actions to identify political and policy solutions to address human rights issues. Advocacy, whether initiated from within the Commission or driven by the community, will become increasingly more important as a measure of the effectiveness and strength of the Commission.

Organizational Structure

As part of this strategic planning process, the Human Rights Commission examined best practices of other citizen commissions in search of organizational and practice improvements. Out of this process came a redesign the Commission's operating and committee structure to promote efficiency and accountability.

The history of the Human Rights Commission suggests that the effectiveness of the Commission is based on its ability to respond rapidly to emergent events and to create a flexible structure that adapts to a rapidly changing environment. Further, one of the core strengths of the Commission is the convening of commissioners and community partners with complementary cross-disciplinary skills. For example, convening a team that includes

members with legal expertise, political savvy, communications skills, and community organization skills led to an effective focus on human trafficking, and that focus is moving from awareness and education to policy recommendations.

In this context, moving away from a hierarchical committee structure and toward a functional committee structure will strengthen the effectiveness of the Commission. Borrowing concepts from the literature on matrix management, the Commission structure centralizes decision making at the Commission level and distributes the work to functional committees.

Accountability and Transparency

The Human Rights Commission has a commitment to acting with a high degree of accountability and transparency both to the Office of Equity and Human Rights and to the community. To this end, the Commission will provide: (1) routine communications to the community; (2) semiannual public briefings for citizens, community leaders, media, elected officials, and City office and bureau staff; and (3) annual reports to City Council.

The Strategic Plan that was approved at the HRC monthly meeting on July 11, 2012.

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I. Background

HRC History

Portland has a history of having a human relations entity. The first commission was founded in 1948 as the Inter-Group Relations Commission and later became the Portland Human Relations Commission. In 1978, the Portland Commission became the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission (MHRC) when its jurisdiction was expanded to include Multnomah County. The MHRC saw its ups and downs until its final demise in 2003, when, as a program of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, it was cut from the budget.

In 2006–2007, research was conducted to assess the need for a new commission and to recommend a model for the reconstitution of a human relations entity for the City of Portland.[1] Subsequently, the City passed Ordinance No. 181670 to create the Office of Human Relations and the Human Rights Commission (HRC) in March 2008. The HRC was first convened on November 5, 2008. Then-Mayor Tom Potter described the work of the Commission as "critical to the success and well-being of our community."[2]

Ordinance No. 184880, effective September 21, 2011, reorganized the Office of Human Relations and created the new Office of Equity and Human Rights (OEHR). In part, the establishment of the OEHR was driven by the Portland Plan's "Framework for Equity."[3] Quoting from the document, "The Office of Equity and Human Rights will be a critical implementer of the Portland Plan and will work closely with the Portland Commission on Disability and the Portland Human Rights Commission throughout the implementation of the Portland Plan."

HRC Accomplishments in Brief

Since its inception, the Human Rights Commission has taken an active role in promoting dialogue about human rights and in shaping public policies and government practices concerning human rights. In addition to Commission actions, two of its committees have been powerful advocates for change.

The Community and Police Relations Committee (CPRC) convened in July 2009 and continue to bring together members of Portland's diverse communities and its police officers to improve community and police relations, further an authentic community policing culture, and promote dignity, understanding, and respect in police and community interactions.

The Committee for Inter-Group Understanding (CIGU) was inspired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu's lifelong work on reconciling communities. CIGU worked to build peace and understanding among groups that have had deeply rooted conflict and honored the need for healing the historic and current harms of injustice and oppression.

The following timeline presents the major achievements of the Human Rights Commission.

HRC Timeline

2009 Accomplishments

The HRC provided human rights policy analysis for City Council on the human rights implications of the DREAM Act for Portland citizens and possible actions of local jurisdictions.

The HRC cosponsored a public forum and media event titled "Speak Out Against Hate." This forum was in response to a school-based hate crime.

The HRC began work on the Inter-Group Dialogue Program, leading to a successful series of events focusing on fostering understanding among different cultural communities.

The HRC convened to further authentic community policing and has been successful in shaping department policies and procedures.

2010 Accomplishments

The CPRC gathered information from the Portland Police Bureau and the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, and held a public hearing on the interplay between local law enforcement and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Recommendations have been distributed to the Sheriff and City Council. Members of the CPRC will continue to meet with the Sheriff to assist with implementation.

The HRC provided testimony against passing the Sidewalk Management Ordinance, based on principles in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The HRC participates in ongoing evaluation of the impacts of this ordinance.

The HRC provided human rights policy analysis for City Council on the human rights implications for Portland citizens of Homeland Security's Secure Communities Program and the interplay between local law enforcement and ICE.

On behalf of Commissioner Randy Leonard's office, the HRC provided member representation on the Police Oversight Stakeholder Committee, convened to provide additional recommendations on police oversight in developing City Ordinance No. 184880.

The HRC provided a press statement read at the Secure Communities Initiative press conference in support of the National Day of Action Against SB 1070, requiring local law enforcement agencies in Arizona to enforce federal immigration law.

The Oregonian published an HRC op-ed piece on freedom of religion, highlighting support of Somali Americans and Muslims in our community and the importance of community dialogue. This was part of the HRC's participation in the international celebration of Human Rights Week.

2011 Accomplishments

The HRC coordinated a public hearing on issues regarding Portland's participation in the Joint Terrorism Task Force to make a recommendation to City Council.

The CPRC provided a detailed report to the Portland Police Bureau, outlining recommendations for improving the Bureau's use-of-force policy.

The HRC provided member representation on the Office of Equity and Human Rights' Creation Committee about restructuring the OEHR and selecting a new director.

In partnership with the United Nations Association of Portland, the HRC cosponsored a Human Rights Day event, engaging community members and local policy makers on local legislative issues relative to human rights.

The CPRC established a seven-member subcommittee to plan a Portland Police Bureau–wide, multisession training about systemic racism and its impacts.

The HRC's CIGU hosted a forum on reconciliation, "Touchstones of Hope: Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation as a Way to Address Historical Trauma."

The HRC provided substantive analysis of the Portland Plan draft and presented recommendations to the Portland Plan committee.

2012 Accomplishments

The HRC's HTTF continued to raise the profile of human trafficking in Portland by cosponsoring a community forum to raise awareness of the issue.

The CIGU hosted a series of Race Talks and cosponsored a Human Rights bus tour to help the community understand the history of human rights issues in Portland.

II. Summary of the 2012 Strategic Planning Process

After a competitive Request for Proposal process, the Human Rights Commission selected Facilitation & Process, LLC, to assist in facilitating a strategic planning process to define the strategy, focus, and direction of the Commission over the next three years. The strategic planning process was designed on the foundation of participation and built on the Commission's strengths, opportunities, and aspirations. The planning process included the following stages conducted over an intense twelve-week period:

- **Discovery**

  Through one-on-one interviews, an online survey, a review of historical Human Rights Commission documents, and a review of strategic plans of Human Rights Commissions in other cities and states, a broad outline of strategic priorities was developed. A summary of the assessment was presented to Commission members.

- **Design**

  Following the discovery process, a one-day HRC retreat was held to begin designing this plan. Over the course of the day, through subsequent online surveys, and at a second meeting of the Commission, the Commissioners designed a program framework and developed a supporting operational structure to serve as a basis for the plan.

- **Development**

  Over the next eight weeks, the Commission developed a formal written Strategic Plan that was approved at the HRC monthly meeting on July 11, 2012.

III. Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan

The Compelling Social Need

A compelling mandate called into existence the current Human Rights Commission, as the opening words of the "Findings and Recommendations Report: Creation of a Human Relations Entity" suggest:

> In Portland, Oregon in 2007, we have no human rights entity that holds us accountable for fulfilling our commitments under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The year 2008 is the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and it is also the 60th anniversary of the founding of Portland's first human rights entity—the Portland Inter-Group Relations Commission. It is fitting that in 2008 the City of Portland recognize these two important events and accepts its responsibility for ensuring human rights for all, by creating the Human Rights Commission of the City of Portland.[4]

Following the "Findings and Recommendations" report, Portland's elected officials made the Commission a reality. The Human Rights Commission was established to address the compelling lack of focus on human rights in public policy. Today, nearly three years later, the Commission continues to advocate for human rights in the policy conversations about Portland's present and its future.

Over the past three years, a collaboration of more than twenty municipal, regional, and community agencies and organizations, with extensive community input, developed a vision for Portland that spans the next two decades. The 164-page Portland Plan was adopted by the Portland City Council through Resolution No. 36918, as amended, on April 25, 2012. Equity serves as one of the foundations of the Portland Plan, and the compelling social need to foster and work toward equity is stated at the outset of the report:

> **Advancing equity must be at the core of our plans for the future.** Portland is becoming a more racially, ethnically and age diverse city with more newcomers. At the same time, Portland's diverse communities have not had, and many still do not all have, equitable access to opportunities to advance their well-being and achieve their full potential. Greater equity in the city as a whole is essential to our long-term success. Equity is both a means to a healthy, resilient community and an end from which we all benefit.[5]

City Ordinance No. 184880, which established the Office of Equity and Human Rights, recognizes the Portland Plan as providing a guiding principle for the Human Rights Commission. Identifying equity as core to Portland's future is to be applauded, as is the inclusion of a specific action plan to address the inequities that are present and endemic. However, the concept of civil rights appears in the Plan on only four of its 164 pages, and human rights as a specific construct is absent from the document. Also absent from the Portland Plan are any references to human rights issues that the community has been wrestling with, including police use of force, racial profiling, human trafficking, and gender and sexual orientation bias and violence. Equity and civil rights are a subset of concerns addressed by a human rights agenda.

It must be underscored that the absence of human rights as a focus of the Portland Plan highlights the compelling need for a strong, independent Human Rights Commission.

This Strategic Plan is organized to identify, frame, and appropriately address the human rights concerns of all citizens who live, work, study, worship, travel, and plan in the City of Portland. The Commission identifies that the work of promoting equity is a crucial part of the promotion and protection of human rights, but as a construct it is not fully comprehensive of human rights. Furthermore, Portland will be prosperous only as it identifies, prioritizes, and addresses the root causes of inequity, many of which are grounded in human rights lapses and violations. Therefore, moving forward, the Human Rights Commission seeks to establish an aggressive mission, priorities, and supporting strategies to promote the Portland Plan's "Framework for Equity,"

as well as to promote current human rights issues not mentioned in the Plan, above and beyond compliance with legislated civil rights mandates.

Moving forward, the Commission will establish an aggressive mission, priorities, and supporting strategies to expand the Portland Plan's "Framework for Equity." This Strategic Plan is organized to identify, frame, and appropriately address the human rights concerns of all citizens who live, work, study, worship, travel, and play in the City of Portland.

HRC Mission

The Human Rights Commission works to eliminate discrimination and bigotry, to strengthen inter-group relationships, and to foster greater understanding, inclusion, and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel, and play in the City of Portland. In doing so, the Commission is guided by the principles embodied in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[6]

HRC Vision

The Human Rights Commission envisions our collective action that creates equity, justice, and human rights for all as part of the core fabric of our community.

HRC Model of Change

The Human Rights Commission embraces four priority strategies and organizes its collective efforts to develop, implement, and evaluate core activities that will assist our community to build peace and end discrimination (Figure 1). Each of the priorities and supporting activities is designed to address one or more of the components of the HRC mission, specifically: eliminating discrimination and bigotry, strengthening inter-group

relationships, and fostering greater understanding, inclusion, and justice for all of our community.

The following section of the Strategic Plan details the four strategies and activities that operationalize the model for change. It is recognized that the delineation of separate strategies is artificial and that all four strategies are interrelated and build upon each other. To ensure success, the Commission will create a flexible organizational structure that is project-based and adaptive to the changing community environment.

Figure 1. Human Rights Commission Model for Change

HRC Core Strategies

Discovery Strategy —

The process of discovery is composed of the collective efforts to identify and assess human rights issues in the City of Portland. Discovery uses the tools of formal assessment, aggregating and synthesizing existing data, monitoring the community landscape, and convening communities to gather information about human rights issues. The Human Rights Commission, in partnership with the community, will prioritize and act on the findings of this discovery strategy to strengthen human rights in Portland.

Rationale

As the Portland Plan and other data sources amply illustrate, the data related to racial disparities in our community are staggering. Further, under-reported data on various topics—police use of racial profiling,[7] the disproportionality of young people of color in the justice, child protective service, and foster care systems,[8] and human trafficking,[9] to name but a few—are all human rights issues that transcend the data in the Portland Plan. To have a significant impact on promoting and protecting human rights, we need to actively identify human rights issues, develop an understanding of them, and prioritize and act on them.

Priority Activities

- Systematically collect and synthesize data related to community-based human rights issues, and create a framework for prioritizing the issues to support the allocation of resources (time, money, and human capital) to address emerging priority issues.

- Create an ongoing and proactive forum that encourages community-driven human rights issues to be brought to the Commission, and develop strategies to address them.

- In partnership with Office of Equity and Human Rights and other community stakeholders, develop and implement a systematic discovery process for areas where substantive gaps in data exist.

Progress Measures and Outcomes

- Track and report on the outcomes of data collection and other discovery activities such as position papers written, policies advocated, and education and outreach developed.

- Report on the growing inventory and curating of data relevant to monitoring human rights issues for the City of Portland.

Visibility Strategy —

Visibility is a strategy that coordinates efforts and activities that promote and communicate an understanding of human rights issues in the City of Portland and the role, activities, and accomplishments of the Human Rights Commission. Visibility as a strategy is a coordinated and systematic approach to using principles of marketing, communications, social media, and public relations with the goal of promoting human rights and the Human Rights Commission. Visibility also includes using personal and organizational connections and partnership development to leverage the collective voice for human rights in Portland.

Rationale

The absence of the substantive inclusion of the Human Rights Commission in the Portland Plan is emblematic of the lack of understanding on the part of policy makers, community partners, and the larger community. It is clear that too many in our community do not know about the Commission or what role it plays in fostering an understanding of and advocating for policy change related to human rights. Creating community awareness of the Commission and an understanding of its role is the first step in creating a stronger

leadership role and voice for the Commission. Increasing the visibility of the Commission is the precursor to substantive action to promote human rights.

Priority Activities

- Create and implement a comprehensive communications plan that includes both ongoing and rapid response communications that address branding, messaging, technology, and communications platform, as well as supporting policies and procedures for managing communications.

- Create a process and supporting tools to make the work of the Commission transparent and accessible to the community including: a web-based hub of information and resources, a supporting social media presence, and community-centric and place-based meetings of the Commission.

- Strengthen the regular meeting structures that proactively engage civic leaders, elected officials, community leaders, and the broader community.

Progress Measures and Outcomes

- Track and report on the number and types of media coverage of the Commission and its programs.

- Demonstrate a quantitative increase in the number of community members and organizations engaging with the Commission through outreach, education, and social media (such as Facebook and Twitter), and supporting HRC advocacy initiatives.

Education Strategy —

Education as a strategy includes all Human Rights Commission activities that create deeper understanding of human rights issues in the City of Portland and that endeavor to effect change in community and public institutional

norms. Education is a proactive and priority-driven approach to building and changing the knowledge, attitudes, programs, and policies of the community related to specific human rights issues.

Rationale

As Brazilian educator Paulo Freire taught, true education is meaningless unless it is the basis for action and change.[10] Since its inception, the Human Rights Commission has held a strong practice base of engaging the community through dialogue and education, as evidenced by the successful inter-group dialogue process that has been adopted by several community-based organizations and the Office of Equity and Human Rights. In this Strategic Plan, the Commission will not only maintain a focus on educating the community through dialogue and training events but will seek to engage the community in the process of systems change. By building a critical consciousness about human rights issues, the Commission will be positioned to partner with the community in a servant-leadership role advocating for change.

Priority Activities

- Create and implement an internal education process to assist in building a strong understanding of human rights within the Office of Equity and Human Rights, within other City offices and bureaus, and among elected officials and their staff members.

- Create and implement an external education process to assist in building a strong understanding of human rights in the community, with a specific focus on working with communities and community leaders capable of leveraging education in the process of advocacy and change.

- In partnership with the Office of Equity and Human Rights and other community stakeholders, establish and maintain a centralized knowledge base of community resources, events, tools, data, avenues for involvement, and other materials that support the self-education of citizens related to human rights issues.

Progress Measures and Outcomes

- Track and report on the number and types of community outreach and educational events sponsored or cosponsored by the HRC.

- Create and report case studies of community or institutional change resulting from the community outreach and educational events.

Advocacy Strategy —

Advocacy as a strategic focus for the Human Rights Commission has the clear purpose of creating systems change. Advocacy represents the collective actions to identify political and policy solutions to address human rights issues. Advocacy, whether initiated from within the Commission or driven by the community, will become increasingly more important as a measure of the effectiveness and strength of the Commission.

Rationale

Although the Portland Plan includes several direct action areas related to equity and supports a human rights agenda, there are large human rights issues for which the Human Rights Commission must serve as the convener, facilitator, and voice for change. Advocacy as a strategy will at times mean working in partnership with the Office of Equity and Human Rights and with elected Portland officials, or if the civic leaders are reluctant to pursue change, they will find the Commission aligned with the community to speak truth to power. Without change, all of the efforts of the Commission are a diversion of scarce time, money, and human capital. This reality makes the pursuit of advocacy paramount to this Strategic Plan.

Priority Activities

- Referencing both the Portland Plan and other human rights issues, routinely monitor data and community events to ensure that the focus of the Commission remains on defined, priority human rights issues.

- Create and implement strong internal and external partnerships with civic leaders, elected officials, community-based organizations, and citizens for the purpose of mobilizing a broad coalition of support to advocate for policies that support significant systems change related to priority human rights issues.

- Identify proactive and measurable human rights policy objectives, and create supporting advocacy campaigns to achieve the objectives.

Progress Measures and Outcomes

- Track and report on the number of community partnerships in which the Commission participates for the purpose of advocating for policy change.

- Track and report on the number of policy initiatives undertaken and the resultant changes in public policy and/or changes in government organizational policies and/or procedures.

IV. Organizational Structure

As part of this strategic planning process, the Human Rights Commission examined best practices of other citizen commissions in search of organizational improvement strategies. This review led to a redesign of the Commission's operating and committee structure to promote efficiency and accountability.

Operating Structure

Core to the strategic planning process, several changes have been incorporated into the operational design of the Commission. These include:

- **Recruit committed citizens representing the diversity of Portland.**

  As the Human Rights Commission is only as strong as the members serving on it, there is a need to ensure that recruitment efforts strive for community representation. In addition, a strong new member orientation program is needed, and must include leadership development and mentoring opportunities.

- **Focus the Human Rights Commission's efforts on doing fewer things, and doing them well.**

  Rather than creating an operational structure that addresses every facet of human rights in our community, the Commission has created a flexible structure that focuses on the core ongoing functions of the Commission and addresses emerging issues through the creation of ad hoc committees.

- **Create a partnership between Human Rights Commission members and the Office of Equity and Human Rights staff members.**

  To be successful, the Commission must develop a proactive partnership with the Office of Equity and Human Rights staff. Creating stronger

partnerships is being driven by the reorganization that resulted in the creation of the new OEHR.

- **Strengthen governance and decision making.**

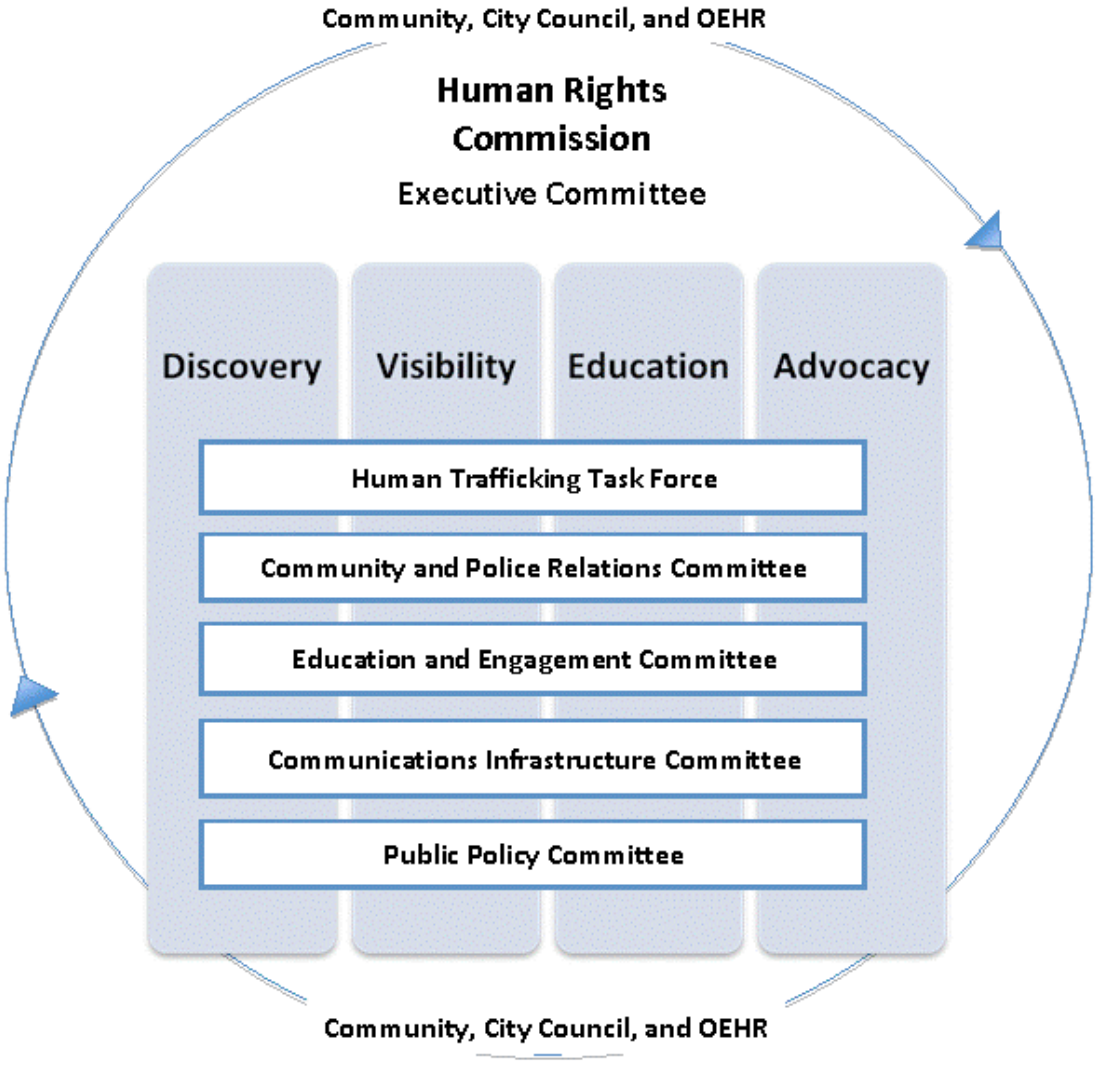
  The final practice that informs the reorganization of the Commission is to consider how the work of the Commission is managed by decentralizing governance and decision making through the redesign of the committee structure.

Based on these practices and principles, the Commission will create an organizational structure that can support the development of strategic priorities and activities to promote a robust human rights agenda for Portland.

Commission Structure

To support the implementation of this Strategic Plan, the Human Rights Commission will require a redesigned organization of members into stronger functional committees. The organizational structure of the Commission will include the support of an Executive Committee and functional committees that meet on a regular basis to develop, implement, and monitor strategic focus areas, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Human Rights Commission Organizational Structure



Rationale

The history of the Human Rights Commission suggests that its effectiveness is based on its ability to respond rapidly to emergent events and to create a flexible structure that adapts to a rapidly changing environment. Further, one of the core strengths of the Commission is the convening of commissioners and community partners with complementary cross-disciplinary skills. For example, convening a team that includes members with legal expertise, political savvy, communications skills, and community organization skills led to an effective focus on human trafficking, and that focus is moving from awareness and education to policy recommendations.

In this context, moving away from a hierarchical committee structure and toward a functional committee structure will strengthen the effectiveness of the Commission. Borrowing concepts from the literature on matrix management,[11] HRC structure centralizes decision making at the Commission level and distributes the work to functional committees. As a general rule, the functional committees develop and execute workplans, as well as provide analyses and recommendations related to the HRC functions. These committees are advisory, not decision-making, bodies and convene to execute tasks and serve the strategic decision-making needs of the Commission.

The functional committees are adaptive and are granted the ability to shift priorities and strategies in response to the changing environment. The core to the functional committees is that they convene, act, and then disband when they are no longer relevant or needed.

They also may include outside advisors, citizens, and OEHR staff members to more effectively develop and execute their plans. The size of committees and frequency of their meetings will expand and contract as their focus and workload change. It should also be noted that the functional committees are designed to incorporate a focus on the four priority strategies of the Human Rights Commission—*discovery*, *visibility*, *education*, and *advocacy*. Based on the nature and operating procedures of the functional committees, careful attention will be paid to ensuring that the committees are transparent and accountable to the Commission, the OEHR, and the community at large.

The Community, City Council, and the Office of Equity and Human Rights

The metaphor that embodies the ethos of the Human Rights Commission is one that places the community, elected City officials, and the Office of Equity and Human Rights as the circle of accountability that surrounds the Commission. This circle suggests that the community informs the actions of the Commission and that the actions of the Commission inform the community's actions. This cycle will be successful when founded on a spirit of partnership and driven by a compelling agenda for progress designed to promote peace and end discrimination.

The Human Rights Commission is a volunteer commission whose members are appointed by the Portland City Council. Currently fifteen members serve on the Commission and represent a broad cross-section of Portland's diversity. The Commission receives administrative and program support from the Office of Equity and Human Rights (and did from its predecessor, the Office of Human Relations). The Commission meets the first Wednesday of every month, 4:00 to 6:30 p.m., at the Office of Equity and Human Rights, 421 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 500, Portland, 97204. The meetings are free and open to the public, and fifteen minutes of each meeting are reserved for public comment.

The HRC Executive Committee is currently composed of the Commission Chair, Vice-Chair, and the chairs of all ongoing functional committees. This group meets to plan and discuss the work of the Commission. These meetings are closed to the public. To implement this Strategic Plan, the Executive Committee will take a stronger role as a liaison to the Office of Equity and Human Rights, to elected City officials (and their staff members), and to key community leaders. In addition, the Executive Committee will continue its focus on providing leadership and continuity to the Commission.

Functional Committees

The strategic planning process identified several *existing* and *potential* functional committees to implement the strategic priorities of this plan. An Organization and Operations Ad Hoc committee will be responsible for identifying and operationalizing a final committee structure to address the strategic priorities of this strategic plan.

The work of the Organization and Operations Ad Hoc committee will include considering the design of functional committees to address the needs of the Human Trafficking Task Force (HTTF) and the Community and Police Relations Committee (CPRC), as well as emerging needs to coordinate activities related to education and engagement, communications, and public policy.

Organizational Priority Activities

- Establish the Organization and Operations Ad Hoc Committee to design and implement functional committees to address the strategic priorities of this plan.

- Create a process of dialogue with the Office of Equity and Human Rights to negotiate appropriate staffing, fiscal, and other resources required to facilitate the implementation of this Strategic Plan.

- Create an ad hoc committee to align the Human Rights Commissioner job description, Commission bylaws, and Commission operating procedures to effectively implement the changes in organizational structure and operational priorities of this Strategic Plan.

- Create an ad hoc committee to develop a process to measure the performance of the Commission in implementing and achieving the goals of this Strategic Plan.

Progress Measures and Outcomes

- Negotiate and maintain the annual memorandum of understanding with the Office of Equity and Human Rights to govern the collaboration and available resources that support the Commission.

- Update and publish online the revised bylaws and operating procedures for the Commission.

- Create and maintain archives of all relevant documents (such as meeting minutes and HRC reports) related to the operation and governance of the Commission.

- Implement the accountability and transparency measures.

V. Accountability and Transparency

The Human Rights Commission is committed to acting with a high degree of accountability and transparency both to the Office of Equity and Human Rights and to the community. To this end, the Commission will establish the following practices:

- **Routine communications to the community**

  As embedded in the activities of this Strategy Plan, the Commission will create regular communications channels, such as through the improved use of technology and a greater focus on regular meetings with the community and community leaders. This increased communication will be supported by the ongoing open access to public meetings and the timely distribution of agendas, meeting minutes, and other resources.

- **Semiannual briefings**

  The Commission will host semiannual public briefings for citizens, community leaders, media, elected officials, and City office and bureau staff members to provide an update on Commission activities, progress, and accomplishments. These meetings will be held in venues accessible to the community and will provide a forum through which the Commission might solicit advice.

- **Annual reports to City Council**

  On an annual basis, the Commission will provide a written report on Commission activities, progress, and accomplishments. This annual report will be disseminated to the community and will be accompanied by a briefing to the City Council.

VI. Conclusion

The Commission was premised on the fact that Portland needed a "permanent entity that plays a proactive role in affirming human rights and is charged with addressing discrimination and strengthening inter-group and interpersonal relations so that Portland can truly embody its values of diversity and inclusion."[12] However, it is acknowledged that the HRC operational structure will periodically change based on the shifting political landscape of the City. This Strategic Plan was written during the transition within City government to the newly established Office of Equity and Human Rights. This Plan is designed to bring stability and forward thinking to the Commission. The clear purpose of the Plan is to increase the focus of Portland on both equity and human rights as twin drivers that will decrease discrimination and bigotry, strengthen inter-group relationships, and foster greater understanding, inclusion, and justice for all of our community.

Organizations, with Abbreviations and Jurisdictions

CCFC	Commission on Children, Family, and Community (Multnomah County)
CIGU	Committee for Inter-Group Understanding (Portland HRC; reorganized to EEC)
CIC	Communications Infrastructure Committee (Portland HRC)
CPRC	Community and Police Relations Committee (Portland HRC)
DREAM Act	Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (Federal)
EEC	Education and Engagement Committee (Portland HRC)
—	Human Relations Commission (Portland; reorganized to MHRC)
HRC	Human Rights Commission (Portland)
HTTF	Human Trafficking Task Force (Portland HRC)
—	Inter-Group Relations Commission (Portland; reorganized to Human Relations Commission)
MHRC	Metropolitan Human Rights Commission (Multnomah County; disbanded)
OEHR	Office of Equity and Human Rights (Portland)
—	Office of Human Relations (Portland; reorganized to OEHR)
ONI	Office of Neighborhood Involvement (Portland)
—	Portland City Council
PPB	Portland Police Bureau
PPC	Public Policy Committee (Portland HRC)

Notes

1. "Findings and Recommendations Report: Creation of Human Relations Entity for the City of Portland," submitted January 3, 2007, Frances Portillo & Lew Frederick, available at http://www.portlandonline.com/equityandhumanrights/index.cfm?c=50680&a=227364.

2. Mayor Tom Potter, "Human Rights Commission to Hold First Meeting," Press Release (November 5, 2008), available at http://www.portlandonline.com/equityandhumanrights/index.cfm?c=50680&a=217321.

3. "Making Equity Real: A Framework for Equity," Recommended Draft, March 2012, available at http://www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan/index.cfm?c=56527&a=392035; see page 18.

4. "Findings and Recommendations Report," note 1, page 3.

5. The Portland Plan was adopted by City Council through Resolution No. 36918 on April 25, 2012. The Plan, including information about its development and continuing evolution, is available at http://www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan/; see page 4.

6. The United Nations' "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" begins, "All human beings are born with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms." It was adopted by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) on December 10, 1948, and is available at http://www.un.org/events/humanrights/2007/hrphotos/declaration%20_eng.pdf.

7. For more information, see Portland Police Bureau, "Plan to Address Racial Profiling" (January 2009; updated August 2009), available at http://www.portlandonline.com/police/index.cfm?c=29870&a=230887.

8. A concise overview was prepared by the Multnomah County Commission on Children, Family, and Community, "Disproportionality in Oregon" (no date), available at http://web.multco.us/sites/default/files/ccfc/documents/disproportionality_in_oregon.pdf.

9. For more information, see "Modern Slavery in Our Midst: A Human Rights Report on Ending Human Trafficking in Oregon," prepared by the International Human Rights Clinic at Willamette University College of Law (June 2010), available at http://www.willamette.edu/wucl/pdf/clp/redacted.pdf.

10. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*, trans. Patrick Clarke (Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).

11. See, for example, Robert C. Ford & W. Alan Randolph, "Cross-Functional Structures: A Review and Integration of Matrix Organization and Project Management," *Journal of Management* 18, no. 2 (June 1992), 267–294, doi:10.1177/014920639201800204.

12. See "Findings and Recommendations Report," note 1, page 4.

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City of Portland

Human Rights Commission

Building Peace
Ending Discrimination

Office of Equity and Human Rights

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