



Human Relations
Department

Strategic Action Plan

2009-2011

**Juan Suarez, Chairperson
Human Relations Commission**

**Wanda Allen-Abraha, JD
Human Relations Department Director**

August 29, 2008
Reviewed and Adopted: Pending

**Winston-Salem Human Relations Commission
and Human Relations Department**

**Strategic Action Plan
2009-2011**

Vision: The creation of a city-wide environment that is a place where everyone is treated fairly.

Mission: The mission of the Winston-Salem Human Relations Commission (“WSHRC/HRD”) is to educate, create, facilitate, promote, anticipate, study, and recommend programs, projects, feedback, and actions for the elimination of discrimination in any and all fields of human relationships.

Duties: The duties of the Commission are to:

- a. study problems of discrimination in any or all fields of human relationships and encourage fair treatment and mutual understanding among all ethnic groups in the city;
- b. promote equality of opportunity for all citizens;
- c. provide channels of communication among all ethnic groups;
- d. encourage the employment of qualified people of all ethnic groups;
- e. encourage youth to become better trained and qualified for employment opportunities;
- f. anticipate and discover those practices and customs most likely to create animosity and unrest among racial and ethnic groups and by consultation seek a solution as these problems arise or as anticipated;
- g. hold such meetings as the Commission may deem necessary or proper to assist in carrying out its functions;
- h. make recommendations to the City Council for action it deems necessary to the furtherance of harmony among racial and ethnic groups in the City; and to perform such other duties consistent with the general law as may be assigned it from time to time by the City Council; and,

1. For purposes of this document, the Winston-Salem Human Relations Commission shall be referred to as “the Commission;” the Winston-Salem Human Relations Department shall be referred to as “the Department;” and the Commission and the Department shall be referred to jointly as “WSHR.”

- i. implement the provisions of the Winston-Salem Fair Housing Ordinance that makes it unlawful for an owner or any other person engaging in a real estate transaction, or for a real estate broker or salesperson to discriminate because of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex, against a person or a person residing with that person or of friends or associates of that person; and mentally or physically challenged persons and families with children.

Strategic Focus Areas: The strategic focus areas are in concert with the vision, mission and duties of the Commission.

I – Community Presence and Image

As a leadership entity, the Commission will be capable of:

- a. creating and promoting a citywide environment that is a place where everyone is treated fairly;
- b. fostering and facilitating communication, dialogue, and collaboration among all people; and,
- c. studying and taking a stance on any issue effecting human relations in the community-at-large.

II – Community Action

The Commission will be capable of:

- a. researching and anticipating problems of discrimination in all fields of human relationships for all people in Winston-Salem;
- b. identifying practices and customs that have the potential to create animosity and unrest among all groups;
- c. educating the community-at-large on all laws against discrimination, and their rights therein;
- d. seeking solutions to issues effecting all human relations in the community-at-large;
- e. providing and promoting opportunities as necessary for people to voice their concerns, ideas, and solutions to better the City; and,
- f. facilitating and preparing young adults for leadership roles related to the community and to the Commission's mission.

III – Commission Infrastructure

The Commission maintains an infrastructure that enhances the effectiveness of its vision and mission through:

- a. a standing committee structure designed to address issues either established by Ordinance, deemed necessary by the Commission, or identified by the community;
- b. periodic informative updates and recommendations to and inclusion of the City Manager, City Council, and the Mayor as requested, necessary, and/or assigned;
- c. annual appearance before the City Council to provide information on the pulse of the community-at-large;
- d. preparation of an annual report on Commission programs, projects, and activities related to the vision and mission; and
- e. active and ongoing communication between the Commission and Human Relations Staff involving advisement and technical assistance on all matters before the Commission.

Standing Committees: The work of the Commission is carried out through standing committees and any ad hoc committees appointed by the Commission. Standing Committees consist of a Chairperson, Commissioners, and interested members of the community-at-large.

New Horizons Fair Housing Committee

Community Relations Committee

Hispanic Relations Committee

Student Relations Committee

Interfaith Relations Committee

Executive Committee

Strategic Goals and Objectives by Focus Areas

Goal(s)	Objectives/Strategies	Responsible Committee and/or Persons	Time Frame for Reporting or Completion
I-PROGRAM PRIORITIES			
1. Landlord/Tenant Mediation Program	1a Consult with city officials and administrators.	Exec. Comm./Staff	Ongoing
	1b Continue as one of two lead city departments for the Neighborhood Improvement Plan and L/T video.	Exec. Comm./Staff	Ongoing
	1c Continue partnering with City Attorney's Office, Legal Aid, and Court officials (judges, attorneys, clerks, magistrates) for the ARM mediation program and L/T trainings.	Exec. Comm./Staff	Ongoing
	1d Continue partnering with Board of Realtors.	Exec. Comm., Partners	Ongoing
	1e Present Mediation (ARM) program to City Council and for ordinance.		04/07
2. Enforce Fair Housing Ordinance	2a Increase advertising/outreach	New Horizons Comm., Staff	Continual
	2b Continue partnership with Board of Realtors for Fair Housing Expo		Continual
	2c Continue timely intake, investigations, mediations, hearings, and enforcement	HRD Staff/ Hearing Board	Continual

3. Student Programs	3a Continue Student HR Awards Banquet each February	Student Human Relations, Community Relations	Annual
		Committees and Staff	Annual
	3b Partner with the Winston-Salem Youth Council on at least one major program per year	Student Human Relations	Annual
	3c Partner with the WS/FC school system to set-up a Student HR Commission at each high school	Student Human Relations	6/09
	3d Assist with Mix-It-Up at Lunch at middle and high schools	Student Human Relations	11/09
	3e Establish peer mediation at each middle and high school	Student Human Relations	1/10
	3f Establish annual participation from high school and college student interns to assist staff and HRC on programs.	Student Human Relations	12/09
	3g Promote an “In the Know” program or “Cultural Festival” among the youth to enable different cultural/racial youth groups to partner with another one to learn and broaden cultural perspectives and to foster new friendships.	Student Human Relations, Community Relations	6/11

4. Other	<p>4a Continue Black History month events each February</p> <p>4b Continue Race Equality Week events each Fall</p> <p>4c Work with the City Council on choosing a citizen to award for exemplifying MLK principles</p> <p>4d Work with Mayor on an annual Interfaith program</p> <p>4e Raise awareness for homelessness through programs such as the Homeless March for Children.</p>	<p>Standing Committees and Staff</p> <p>Standing Committees and Staff</p> <p>Interfaith Comm.</p> <p>Interfaith, Community Relations Committees</p> <p>New Horizons Comm.</p>	<p>Continual</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>Continual</p> <p>As needed</p> <p>Annual</p>
II – COMMUNITY PRESENCE AND IMAGE			
1. To continue the positive public relations marketing strategy to increase public awareness of the role and relationship of the HRC to the community-at-large.	<p>1a. Continue exposure in English and Spanish on TV 13, cable, and radio.</p> <p>1b. Maintain HRC web site to include HRC calendar and newsletter.</p> <p>1d. Continue the Annual HRC Awards banquet each February.</p>	<p>Exec. Committee and Staff</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Committee(s)</p>	<p>Continual</p> <p>Continual</p> <p>Annual</p>

2. Build a constructive and ongoing relationship with City Officials and City Commissions.	2a. “Adopt” a City Council member to garner support for the Commissioners’ goal to increase collaborative efforts with City officials in order to unite and partner on community programs and events.	Executive Committee and Staff	Continual
	2b. Establish and implement methods for periodic informative contact with City Council to educate on HRC activities, and to obtain input on concerns in their wards.	Commissioners and Staff	Continual
3. Participate in city government-wide programs and initiatives	3a Continue participation in the City’s Operation Impact program and assist, as needed.	New Horizons Comm.	Continual
	3b Continue partnership with H/NS Dept. on Neighborhood Improvement Plan	New Horizons Comm.	Continual

Goal(s)	Objectives/Strategies	Responsible Committee and/or Persons	Time Frame for Reporting or Completion
III – COMMUNITY ACTION			
1. Foster communication, dialogue, and collaboration among the community-at-large by addressing problems, rights under the law, and to prevention of breakdowns in human relationships.	1a. Collaborate with various city departments, groups and entities of the community for feedback and information on issues, concerns, needs, and ideas through public forums, town meetings, and open houses.	Commissioners, Standing Committees, and Staff	Continual

	<p>1b. Establish proposed citywide cross-cultural/faiths organizational events for Commissioners and staff to actively participate in and/or co-sponsor.</p> <p>1c. Sponsor 2-4 public town meetings/forums per year on topic of community interest or need.</p>	<p>Commissioners, Standing Committees, and Staff</p> <p>Commissioners, Standing Committees, and Staff Standing Committees</p>	<p>Continual</p> <p>Continual</p>
	Objectives/Strategies	Responsible Committee and/or Persons	Time Frame for Reporting or Completion
<p>2. Develop partnerships with young adults to increase leadership potential and involvement in human relations issues in the City.</p>	<p>2a. Place at least one young adult leader or an organization representative of this age group on each standing committee, as needed.</p>	<p>Standing Committees</p>	<p>Continual</p>
<p>3. Ensure that all public facilities are accessible and usable for persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>3a. Review appropriate agency's methods of compliance with laws that govern accessibility and usability of public places by people with disabilities.</p> <p>3b. Establish rationale and implement timetable for random checking to ensure compliance with laws based on review.</p>	<p>New Horizons Comm.</p> <p>New Horizons Comm.</p>	<p>Continual</p> <p>Continual</p>

Goal(s)	Objectives/Strategies	Responsible Committee and/or Persons	Time Frame for Reporting or Completion
IV – COMMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE			
1. Each standing committee establishes operating procedures.	<p>1a. Review mission statement and goals.</p> <p>1b. Establish activities for one year; to include at least one workshop as a Commission or in collaboration with other groups or organizations.</p> <p>1c. Provide progress report on committee’s activities at each meeting by each committee.</p>	<p>Standing Committees</p> <p>Standing Committees</p> <p>Standing Committee Chairperson or representative</p>	<p>6/09</p> <p>1/09, 1/10</p> <p>Continual</p>
2. Periodic review of Strategic Plan to assess progress and/or need for revisions.	2a. Addressed once a quarter and at the annual retreat.	Commissioners and Staff	Annual

Goal(s)	Objectives/Strategies	Responsible Committee and/or Persons	Time Frame for Reporting or Completion
<p>3. Provide order, structure, and teambuilding for meetings and the work of the Commission.</p>	<p>3a. Facilitate order and structure of Commission work for presentation to the full Commission.</p> <p>3b. Establish and implement monthly Commission meetings, except in December.</p> <p>3c. Establish one yearly “open house.”</p> <p>3d. Research grants to foster the work of the Commission.</p> <p>3e. Participate in annual retreat.</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Commissioners and Staff</p> <p>Commissioners and Staff</p>	<p>Continual</p> <p>Continual</p> <p>Continual</p> <p>Continual</p> <p>Annual</p>
<p>4. Increase community representation and numbers as members of the Commission.</p>	<p>4a. Work with the Mayor to identify and select new members to the Commission representative of the community-at-large, as needed.</p>	<p>Commissioners and Staff</p>	<p>Continual</p>

Goal(s)	Objectives/Strategies	Responsible Committee and/or Persons	Time Frame for Reporting or Completion
5. Accurate and timely reporting to the City Manager, City Council, the Mayor, and relevant City agencies.	5a. Present Annual Report to the City Council. 5b. Prepare and distribute annual report to appropriate audience by October of each year.	Chairperson or representative Staff	Continual Annual