

The Colorado Springs  
**Human Relations Commission**



**Promoting People**

# History

- 1968: The original HRC was developed to address racial tension in the city.
- 1971-1993: Functioned as Colorado Springs' education, advocacy, and mediation agency.
- 1995: Disbanded.

# In the Past, the Commission..

- Mediated issues of equality in employment, housing, public accommodations, and education.
- Advocated for the poor and marginalized populations.
- Served a mainly Anglo American clientele.



# A City Without

- Colorado Springs ranks 47<sup>th</sup> among the nation's 100 largest cities.
- 80% of the nation's largest cities have a Human Relations Commission
- Colorado Springs is only 1 of 3 cities in Colorado with a 50,000+ population that does not have a Human Relations Commission.

# Today's Community Demographics

- White: 78.6%
  - Hispanic/Latino: 14.1%
  - Black/African American: 6.8%
  - Asian: 2.8%
  - American Indian/Native American: 0.9%
  - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.2%
  - Other: 6.4%
  - Two or more races: 4.3%
- Population: 414,658 (2009)

\*Based on 2009 Census data

# Poverty in Colorado Springs

- 78,000 or 19% of the population lives at or below the poverty level.
- 41% of the people living at or below the poverty level are made up of racial & ethnic minorities.
  - Hispanics & African Americans: 35%
  - Other minorities: 6%
- Anglo Americans make up the other 59% of the population living in poverty.

# A City in need of a Commission

15 Years later...

- Our city continues to grow and become more diverse.
- The expansion of the military installations will increase the population and the need for a mechanism to advocate for military families.
- Youth programs are becoming more vital to the community.
- The minority population is young and in need of representation and advocacy.

# The HRC will target issues such as..

- Conflict Resolution
- Poverty & Unemployment
- School Retention
- Homelessness
- Drug & Alcohol Abuse
- Mental Health
- Police/Community Relations
- Urban Development
- Services to Minorities



# Bringing back the HRC

Today the proposed Human Relations Commission will act to address all the aforementioned issues. It will...

- Provide assistance, mediation and reconciliation for all residents
- Ensure equality and a voice for the disenfranchised
- Perform informed advocacy
- Improve the quality of life for all residents of Colorado Springs.

# The Ordinance

The Colorado Springs Human Relations Commission will engage in conflict prevention and resolution through mediation and conciliation activities and through community outreach and communications programs. The Commission will promote acceptance and respect for diversity through educational programs, and discourage all forms of discrimination including, but not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, creed, economic condition, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital or familial status, military or veteran status, political affiliation, socio-economic class, resident or public assistance status, organizational membership, or physical or mental disability.

# Making it Work

- It will be a nine member City-Council appointed body of community residents that meet monthly.
- The committee will professionally inform City officials about concerns of the residents.
- It will not require a budget.
- It will not have enforcement powers; instead mediation will be employed to resolve concerns. Unresolved issues will be referred to the state's civil rights division.
- It will directly serve the city's 2008 Strategic Plan.

The Colorado Springs

# Human Relations Commission



The time is now.  
Increase the quality of life in our city.