Message from the Chair

As we make our way through these times of deep divide in our country, it is more important than ever to seek understanding, to really listen to those with different backgrounds, and struggles. To this end, the Community Relations Commission (CRC) has continued to reach out to a variety of groups to ask some fundamental questions: What do you like about Durango, what are your challenges, what are your thoughts on diversity and how can we help? We’ve also continued to support the “Diversity Dialogue”, a collaborative event that invites the community to come together and have thoughtful and candid conversations. The addition, this year of a Non-violent Communication component, made the gathering even more meaningful. If you haven’t attended in the past, please make an effort this next year.

We also felt it was important to ask our business community to show their commitment to social sustainability and have been working on proposing a Civility First Durango program (more on that elsewhere in the report).

It is a great pleasure to receive the guidance from City Manager Ron LeBlanc and Legal Coordinator Suzanne Sitter, as our trusty staff liaisons, as well as work with the thoughtful folks who make up the CRC. I know I speak for all of us in saying that our Youth appointee, Alden Spitzer, will be deeply missed as she makes her way out of high school and on to Fort Lewis College to pursue a degree in business. Her contributions, insights and enthusiasm have been invaluable.

Thank you for understanding the value of fostering and promoting our diverse community.

Sincerely,

/s/

Nancy Stoffer, Chair Community Relations Commission

Standing Left to Right: Commissioner Charles Spence and Vice-Chair Lexie Stetson-Lee; Seated Left to Right: Chair Nancy Stoffer, Commissioner Claire Attkisson, and 2017-2018 Youth Appointee Alden Spitzer.
2017 Summary of Outreach Event Responses

Most Frequent Responses from Survey Participants

1. **What do you like about Durango?**
   
   Sense of community; Acceptance; Relaxed; Access to a diversity of landscapes.

2. **What does living in a diverse community mean to you?**
   
   Safety; Promotes understanding; Everyone is welcome.

3. **What are the challenges/issues in Durango?**
   
   Affordability-cost; Predominately, affluent white population in positions of power; Lack of support for minority groups (especially transgender; LGBTQ and Indigenous people).

4. **Message for City Council?**
   
   You’re doing a great job; Thank you; Attract more diverse opinions at meetings; Invite those not like you to attend and put a budget towards events that promote inclusion.

Some highlights of the survey

1. That Durango is a multi-cultural town and it supports people of all backgrounds.
2. Very happy with Durango and the work of our City.
3. Believe this is an inclusive, friendly, and welcoming place to live.
5. Durango is unaffordable for many and those in power do not relate.
6. Durango does not have good support structures for those in minority groups.
2017 Diversity Dialogue

- Over 321 reflections with 59 participants at the event in 2017.
- CRC officially co-sponsors the event in 2015
- 286 participants since CRC began participating in 2014.

Volunteering at the 2017 Project Merry Christmas gift wrapping booth in the Durango Mall are; CRC Chair Nancy Stoffer and Commissioner Charles Spence.

Why Create a Civility Durango Pledge?

Here’s what the CRC is Proposing

One of the ways the CRC interacts with the community is by performing informal surveys at local events. CRC members use feedback provided by survey respondents to determine action steps that align with the Commission’s annual goals. This year, the CRC received strong feedback from the community that tourism, including tourists themselves, neglected to acknowledge the inclusive, multi-cultural community that makes Durango a great place to live. The CRC responded with the “Civility Pledge” initiative - a voluntary program for businesses and individuals in the City of Durango. Businesses can pledge to support civility, social harmony, inclusive practices and respect, and by doing so, will be a part of the Civility First Durango program. These businesses will be provided with a sticker and signed pledge for their store from the CRC.
Durango High School’s – PEAT

Durango High School’s Prejudice Elimination Action Team (PEAT) received a special banner acknowledging their participation for all ten years of the “No Place for Hate” initiative at Denver’s Sports Authority Field on April 13, 2018. Out of the 54 schools participating, DHS and three other schools received this special ten year designation.

In honor of the participating schools, Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper officially declared April 13, 2018 as “No Place for Hate Day”.

The student led PEAT has been a part of Durango High School for over 10 years and the group participates in the Anti-Defamation League’s “A World of Difference” peer training program annually. The two-day training provides students the opportunity to examine their own biases, learn how bias turns to prejudice and discrimination, and learn how to present this information to peers. By engaging in the training, peer trainers learn how to respond effectively when they hear racial slurs, name-calling and put-downs in the hallways, lunchrooms and classrooms. The goal is to eliminate the stereotypes that led to hate by teaching respect for humankind. Congratulations PEAT!

2018 CRC Goals

- Encourage and promote civic engagement and multiracial opportunities in the community.
- Gather information at local events and hear from residents and visitors.
- Increase community awareness of the CRC mission and work.
- Continue regional partnerships with other area community or Human Relations Commissions.
- Continue to invite Durango community organizations and civic programs to share their success and challenges during public comment portion of the meeting.

Contact Us

Community Relations Commission meets the 4th Wednesday of the month at 4:00 PM

Where: City Hall, 949 E. 2nd Ave, Durango, Colorado 81301 in the City Manager’s Conference Room

Share your comments: Join us at a CRC meeting

Call: (970) 375-5017
Email: citymanager@durangogov.org
Visit us on the web: www.durangogov.org/crc