



To: Worthington City Council Members
From: Eddie Pauline, Chair, Community Relations Commission (CRC)
Subject: CRC Programming and Initiatives
Date: July 15, 2020
CC: Matt Greeson, Lori Trego

To fulfill its role and expectations from City Council and the public, The Worthington Community Relations Commission has created a new working group framework which will help organize its programming and increase opportunities for the public to engage in the commission's work. This memo is to inform the Council of this working group framework and share what each working group will be focusing on.

The three working groups that have been formed are Age-Friendly, Youth, and Racial Justice. The commission as a whole will also continue its traditional programmings such as the Good Neighbor Award, Neighborhood Grants, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. The commission will also dedication attention to increasing public awareness about its existence and work through marketing and communications enhancements.

Each working group will be led by two or more current commissioners and those working group leaders will invite community volunteers into their working group as needed.

Below is a summary of what you can expect each working group to be focused on for the remainder of this calendar year and most likely into 2021 given the challenges we still face with the pandemic. We recognize that we may have to pivot programming depending on what happens with the virus. We've already demonstrated this as it relates to our Neighborhood Grants Program because most of not all the funded programs always involved bringing people together in person. We've redirected that funding to support the Neighborhood Bridges organization. The Commission would be happy to entertain and feedback and suggestions from the Council about its planned activity.

Racial Justice

1. Educational Resource Distribution - The CRC can collect and disseminate information:

- Collection – Provide a list of suggested books, documentaries/films, and share relevant event links for individuals and families interested in exploring racial justice issues.
- Dissemination - Share information through a dedicated social media presence (e.g., CRC Facebook page) and the ability to update our City Webpage including photos, bios, a calendar of social justice postings, etc. The CRC will also share regular updates to other city social media channels.

2. Racial Justice Education – The CRC would work on a two-tiered approach to education:

Internal

- CRC Capacity Building - Receive joint or in conjunction with training city staff receives on diversity, inclusion, anti-discrimination, anti-racism, etc.

Community

- Learning Circles – Partner with the Worthington Library system to help organize learning circles, or peer to peer learning groups. Community members would come together (virtually) to learn about racial justice issues using Peer 2 Peer University <https://www.p2pu.org/en/>, with the support of the Worthington Libraries. The P2PU has been partnering with libraries since 2014. P2PU utilizes existing free online class resources and curricula.
- Education and Facilitation – Invite experts to educate the Worthington community on topics of interest and local and national significance and facilitate conversations/trainings, partnering as necessary, depending upon expertise:
 - Define the making of metropolitan inequality and Worthington’s role - workshop and discussion
 - Leverage learning circles to identify additional trainings/workshops/conversations ideas from the community. We could then develop content when local expertise is present.
 - Collaborate with local experts to bring additional educational programming to the Worthington community

3. Public Art and History Project(s) – The CRC can partner with the following organizations to build out public art and history projects, including:

- MAC – Work with the McConnell Art Center (MAC) for a possible virtual exhibit/ lecture series featuring the art and artists who created the protest murals downtown and a speaker to talk about BLM and racial justice.
- Worthington Historical Society – Continue support to the historical society on African American history project, including an African American history walk.
- Worthington Public Art Project – Work with MAC and the Worthington Historical Society to create a permanent public art project that makes visible the history of marginalized people in Worthington.
- Identification of other partners – Find and identify other partners such as the Wexner Center for the Arts (i.e., two Worthington residents work there including their new director).

4. Public Policy – The CRC proposes the city council consider the following policies and volunteers to help provide research, examples, and assist with drafting any legislation that results from a discussion around the following:

- Source of Income Anti-Discrimination ordinance – Develop this draft ordinance for council’s review.
- Land use policy – Explore granny flats (e.g., accessory dwelling units (ADUs))
- Emergency Call Diversion – Enhance Worthington’s Emergency Call system, similar to like Upper Arlington (UA) Cares, divert senior calls to help foster community relations, defer non-emergency calls to a pool of resources (beyond current nonemergency number) and partner with National Church/Stafford Village as a pilot project.

Age-Friendly

A three-pronged approach to Age Friendliness in Worthington: Service, Awareness, and Advocacy.

- In order to put some enthusiasm back into and start putting some action to the Age-Friendly Worthington Ordinance, we intend to highlight local businesses, organizations, and programs that are providing special services to older adults and those who are especially susceptible to COVID-19. We'll work with Worthington's Chamber of Commerce, the Worthington Partnership, the Economic Development Office, and Griswold to develop a list of businesses that can be made available online, through the Griswold Center, community center, and library; and highlight organizations and businesses online and in social media that are going above and beyond to serve older adults. We believe there is an opportunity to also co-develop and share an age-friendly curriculum. We will also encourage businesses to get Age-Friendly certified.

Youth

Core values of Worthington Youth Advisory Council adapted from National League of Cities Program Initiative “Authentic Youth Civic Engagement”

- 1) Treat youth as valuable partners and advisors in the work and space of community and local government
- 2) Prepare and support youth to take on **meaningful** roles in addressing important issues of community and local government
- 3) Respect, empower and listen to youth

Project progress:

- Connected with Jack Conrath of Gen Z in Worthington to avoid duplication of efforts/resources while also serving to elevate and amplify youth voice and effort in activism and community involvement
- Discussed Youth Advisory Council proposal with multiple principals in WSD, received support and offers of bridge programming at middle school and high school level including but not limited to linkage with student clubs, volunteer and internship hours, mentoring opportunities, and more
- Developed multiple participatory budget templates allowing for flexibility in pilot programming based on pending school and pandemic-related decisions

- Sourced multiple evidence-based protocols and program guides to support the creation and development of a Worthington Youth Advisory Council

Next Steps

- Decide on the pilot year timeline
- Identify Youth Advisory Council liaison within city government
- Discuss the application process with stakeholders

Marketing and Communications

The CRC will work closely with Worthington Communications leaders to help better promote the work and existence of the CRC and ensure the residents understand that the appointed commissioners can be resources of information and helpful “connectors.”

Specific Actions and Suggestions include:

1. “Get to know your CRC member”
 - a. Commissioner's bios and headshots will be shared with the public through Worthington's communication channels.
2. Update the CRC landing page on the city website to house more relevant timely content and explain how to get involved in CRC activities
3. Encourage the city to update its website and engage with as many communication channels as possible to communicate timely information to residents.
4. Explore the possibility of dedicated social media channel for CRC news and updates.
5. Better advertise CRC meetings through public and private social media channels.