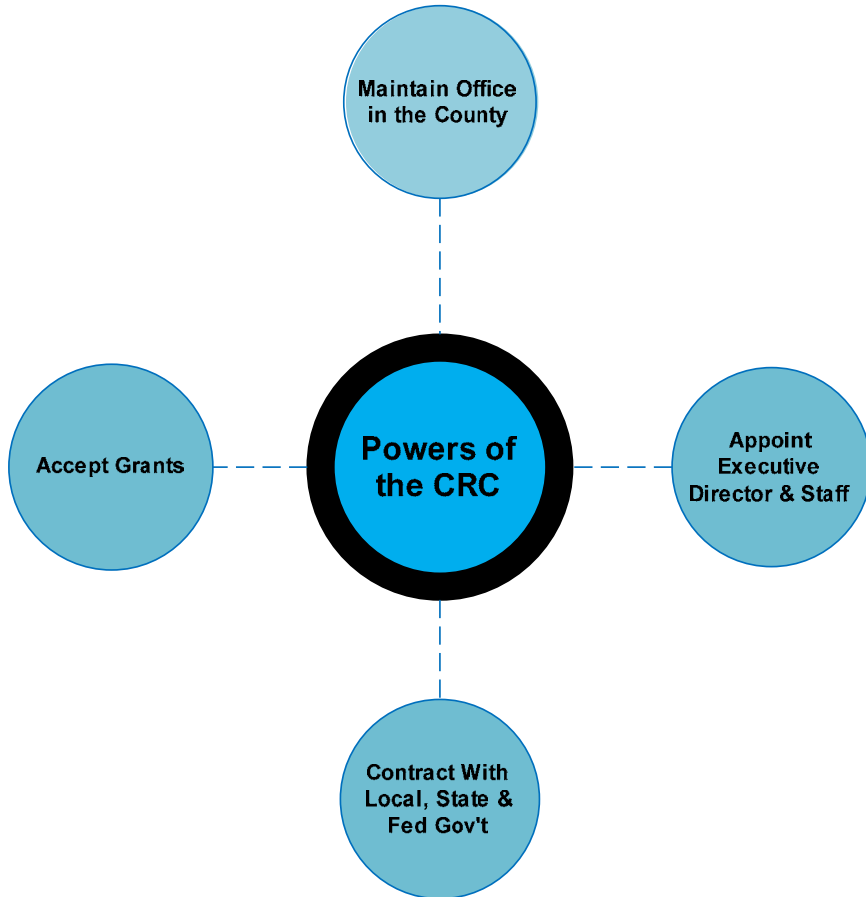


**Powers of the
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Community Relations Committee**





dare to be different

Powers of The Community Relations Committee *Administration*

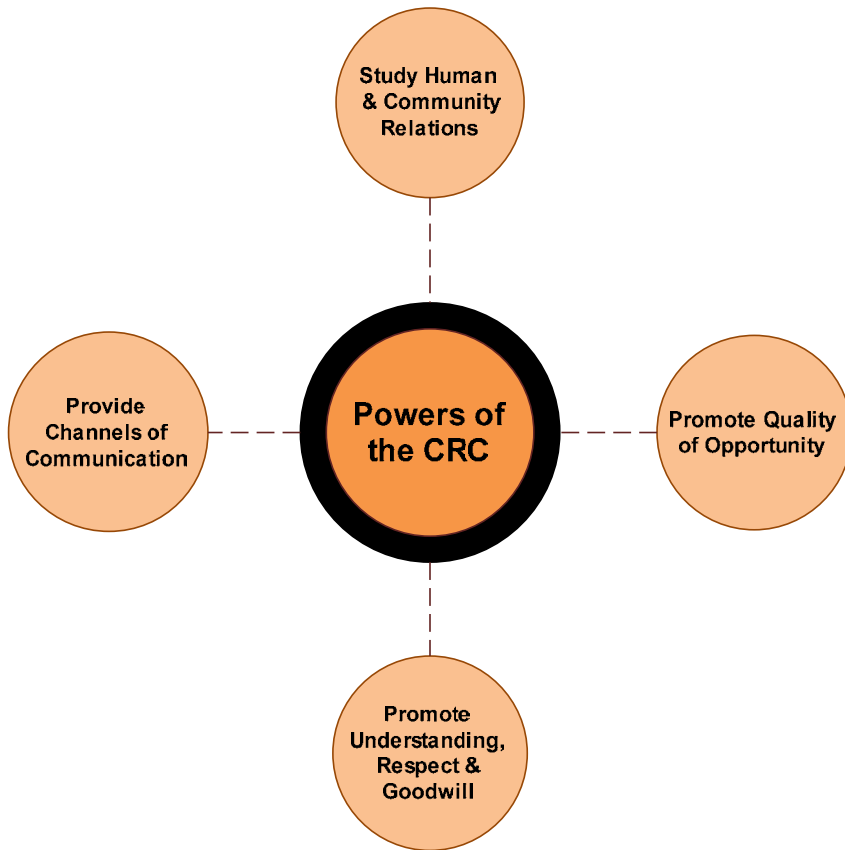
The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee (CRC) serves as an integral part of the human relations support system for the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County and is a statutory agency of the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, authorized by Chapter 12 of the Code of the City of Charlotte and a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and County dated July 7, 1969. Members and staff work together through four core service areas: inter-group relations, fair housing assistance program, police community relations and conflict management.

CRC Staff and Office in Mecklenburg County since 1968:

- **Executive Director (1)**
- **Community Relations Managers (2)**
- **Community Relations Specialists (7)**
- **Administrative Officer I (1)**
- **Office Assistant IV (1)**

Contracts and Grants:

- **State of North Carolina – DSP Grant, Medicaid Contract, Dependency Mediation, IOLTA**
- **U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development – FHAP Grant, HDS Study**
- **City of Charlotte – General Funds (Administration)**
- **Private Sector Funds – PCRA, Crossroads,**
- **Three Full Time Positions & Program Administration (DSP & FHAP)**



Powers of The Community Relations Committee *Community Harmony*

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee (CRC) serves as an integral part of the human relations support system for the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County and is a statutory agency of the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, authorized by Chapter 12 of the Code of the City of Charlotte and a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and County dated July 7, 1969. Members and staff work together through four core service areas: inter-group relations, fair housing assistance program, police community relations and conflict management.

The following are specific programs and examples of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee exercising its authority to *promote quality of opportunity; promote understanding, respect and goodwill; provide channels of communication; and study human and community relations:*

- **Housing Discrimination:** CRC obtained \$117,000.00 in Federal grant revenue from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Funds were used to enhance enforcement of the City and County Fair Housing Ordinances, including a full-time staff position, a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to support home ownership, and general support for comprehensive fair housing education and outreach efforts.
- **Housing Discrimination:** CRC received for processing 61 fair housing complaints this year. A typical case takes 100 – 200 hours to investigate. 40 cases were closed (84% within 100 days in FY09; the HUD standard is 50%), including 11 carry over cases as follows: 13 cases were no cause; 12 cases were conciliated with \$5,544.00 in settlement fees for complainants, corrections of design, provision of reasonable accommodations, and contractual relief; 7 withdrawals (3 with resolution); 2 failure to locate; and 6 failure to cooperate. The bases of the 40 complaints were: 16 national origin; 5 race; 6 disability; 3 race and sex; 3 race and disability; 1 sex; 1 national origin and family status; 2 family status; 1 race and family status; 1 national origin and disability; and 1 national origin and sex.
- **Testing For Discrimination:** In FY05, CRC received an HDS 2000 grant from HUD to conduct an aggressive fair housing testing program and an intensive education and outreach campaign to the Hispanic/Latino community in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The work for this grant continued through December of FY09. Bilingual staff assisted over 938 Spanish language customers (a 25.4% increase over the previous year) and assisted with presenting education sessions to 25 groups and over 400 individuals, many of whom represent Hispanic/Latino families. The new Spanish language fair housing brochure continued to be distributed throughout the community.

Conflict Resolution: The Community Relations Committee's Dispute Settlement Program processed 2177 referrals, including worthless checks for mediation and conciliation. 552 mediations were held and 88% were successfully resolved. 457 worthless check cases were conciliated. These services saved Charlotte-Mecklenburg an estimated \$203,200.00 in court costs and approximately 2032 hours of court time. In addition, approximately 2000 individuals did not have to go to court or pay legal fees to have their cases disposed of. Area merchants recovered over \$75,000 through the Worthless Check Settlement Program. The DSP program staff also provided 22 conflict resolution trainings to 534 persons. CRC received over \$89,000 in grant funding to support the Dispute Settlement Program.

- **Diversity:** CRC staff provided 30 diversity trainings in FY09 and trained 2654 individuals. In addition, CRC staff serves as the ADA Coordinator for the City of Charlotte. In FY09 we investigated 13 ADA/Title II complaints and successfully conciliated 11 (85%) of those complaints.
- **Discrimination Training:** CRC worked with over 20 community organizations, including housing providers, to provide 43 fair housing trainings for 1000 individuals during FY 2009. CRC's partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that CRC takes steps to affirmatively further fair housing and this is done through outreach and education, including fair housing training.
- **Police Community Relations:** CRC planned, coordinated and implemented the 30th Annual Police Community Relations Awards Program. A record 332 (a 47.6% increase over the previous year) officer nomination forms were received from citizens, neighborhood groups, local businesses and others who wanted to recognize the outstanding contributions of officers to the improvement of police community relations. 35 successful partnerships were forged, over \$11,000 was raised to cover costs, 15 officers were honored and over 250 persons attended a public awards ceremony and reception in May 2009.
- **Access, Equity, Inclusion and Trust:** CRC has been actively involved in Crossroads Charlotte, a civic engagement project designed to increase access, equity, inclusion and trust in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. CRC began implementing its initiative, the development of a Community Theater Teen Production, in October 2008. \$70,700 was raised from the private sector and GO1 to underwrite costs associated with this initiative. The production premiered in May 2009. Four productions were implemented with over 300 in attendance.
- **Police Community Relations:** CRC received and processed 13 complaints of police misconduct, processed 2 appeals and attended 91 scheduled Chain of Command Hearings as a voting member of the process. One police community dialogue was held.
- **Community Dialogues:** In FY09 CRC worked in conjunction with the Community Building Initiative (CBI) and Mecklenburg Ministries to conduct three community dialogues around access, equity and inclusion. The first of the three dialogues addressed the ability of our community to talk with one another after the presidential election and the divisive tactics,

including race-baiting, used by some national politicians and their supporters to cause division in the community. The second dialogue addressed the ability of the community to address the economic crisis and how it is impacted by race and ethnicity. The third dialogue, which was held on June 30, 2009 at Little Rock AME Zion Church, explored whether we can talk to one another about meeting basic human needs in difficult economic times. The meeting drew more than 200 people, which filled the room beyond its seating capacity. This dialogue generated widespread community interest in developing a community-wide strategic plan to address human services in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. In FY10, CRC will work with elected officials, community organizations, the business community and citizens to develop and implement this vision.

- **Inter-Racial Relationships:** CRC partnered with the Latin American Coalition to plan, develop and implement the “African American Latino Unity Summit” at Friendship Baptist Church. Approximately 180 people attended the conference. The purpose of this event and process was to develop a better understanding of inter-racial relationships and to address perceptions of mis-trust between Blacks, Hispanics, Whites and other racial and ethnic groups in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
- **Family Resources Toolkit:** The Collaborative has worked to develop a Directory of Family Services in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The directory has been edited by the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee and it contains information current through April 30, 2009.
- **Fatherhood Town Hall Forum:** A Town Hall Forum was conducted in partnership with Urban Restoration, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, and the Charlotte Bobcats in November 2008. The forum consisted of several activities leading up to a facilitated panel discussion with local leaders, before the game. 1661 students participated in an essay writing contest to talk about the importance of fatherhood.
- **Report on Parenting in Charlotte-Mecklenburg:** The Collaborative has completed a report designed to help understand the complex issues impacting effective parenting in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The report includes recommendations to increase the capacity of and improve and support all parents in our community.
- **The Gang Prevention Coalition:** CRC staff and members of the have worked with the Gang Prevention Coalition (GPC) to develop a strategic plan to address youth and gangs in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The work of the GPC was shared with the Charlotte City Council on March 2, 2009, and the Mecklenburg County Commission on March 3, 2009. The work was also

presented to the Mecklenburg County parks and Recreation Board, the Children's and Family Services Board, and other community organizations. In conjunction with Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health and CMPD – Gang of One, we awarded \$95,000 to local agencies to help eliminate gangs. We held a news conference on June 12, 2009 to announce the awards.

- **The Teen Mentoring/Teen Violence Court Committee:** The Teen Mentoring/Teen Violence Court Committee is a community collaboration led by District Court Judge Rickye McCoy-Mitchell. The committee is comprised of court and community stakeholders who seek to share information and develop strategies and maximize existing efforts to address the need for teen mentoring and reduce the incidence of teen violence in our community. CRC has been instrumental in creating a directory of mentoring and violence prevention services for the collaborative; and in developing a strategic operating and work plan.
- **The Accountable Man – Men's Conference:** CRC staff has been working with a group of committed husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles and friends, of all ages, who understand that their involvement to improve the community is a vital and complex life-long responsibility of protecting, nurturing, teaching and loving current and future generations of young men in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. CRC staff has taken on a major role in developing this work group and strategic plan to assist young men. A community conference for men was held on Saturday, June 20, 2009 at the Marriott Hotel on Westpark. Over 80 persons attended the conference.
- **Urban Restoration:** CRC staff has worked with the Director of the Urban Restoration, Colin Pinkney, for about a year to address issues around fatherhood and getting men more involved in their children's lives. Urban Restoration's vision is "to see Charlotte's urban families strengthened and restored to rebuild their homes and communities."
- **Youth Employment:** The Collaborative supports the current mission of the Mayor's Youth Employment Program to create, year-round, meaningful opportunities for youth to gain a greater understanding of career demands, skill sets and qualifications for employment through internships with local government, business and industry. The program currently runs out of Charlotte's Economic Development Department.

- **Mentoring:** CRC staff supported existing efforts within the Mayor's Office regarding mentoring. Charlotte Mecklenburg has a gap of 6700 mentors according to a 2007 report by the Mayor's Mentoring Alliance. The Alliance (MMA), which was created in 1995, is a coalition of existing mentoring organizations, including the Business Volunteer Council. The Alliance represents approximately 9811 mentors.
- **Charlotte Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition:** CRC staff meets regularly with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition to address issues of alcohol and drug usage with young people in our community. We have co-sponsored several community meetings and town hall forums to address this issue.
- **Families First Information & Referral Work Group:** CRC staff works with Families First Information and Referral Work Group to identify and better meet the informational needs of new parents. A recent survey described in the January 2009 issue of *Zero to Three* had 2540 mothers of children birth to four years old to respond to survey questions related to mothers' perceptions of their young children's challenging behaviors.
- **The Winners Plus Agency:** CRC staff has been working with the Winners Plus Agency to involve fathers in the formal education of their children by getting dads to take their children to school and visit the child at school on a regular basis, including lunch, sporting activities, academic activities, and teacher's conferences and volunteering to assist at school functions. The Winners Plus Agency is a non-profit organization established in 1998. Their mission is to provide guidance, assistance, clarity and knowledge to parents, in co-educating of our children. The organization is made up of parents who advocate for parents through information, education, and establishing professional co-partnerships with the institutions that educate our children.
- **The Youth in Transition to Adulthood Initiative:** CRC staff has been working with Ann Morison and the Youth in Transition to Adulthood Initiative to define a comprehensive approach to filling the void that exists in resources for young adults on their own, during the critical ages of 16-24. Many of these persons have aged out of foster care, group homes, mental health programs and the juvenile justice system. They have no family, community or other support. The cornerstone of this effort

will be a resource center where young adults can develop an individual plan, based on a comprehensive assessment, and be connected to resources and community supports to enable their productivity, social contribution and self sufficiency. The resource center will also serve as a physical space and information clearinghouse for the young adult [population – and more importantly, will serve as the community pulpit for issues affecting Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s young adult population.

- **Strong Men Pushing Reading:** CRC staff has been working with the YWCA Youth Programs Department to assist in recruiting male volunteers to read to kids in various afterschool enrichment programs; and to be more actively involved in their own children’s lives. Research shows that when fathers are actively involved in the lives of their children, the children perform better in school and exhibit healthier behaviors.