

Innovation, Collaboration, Practical Solutions.

MEMO

To: Comprehensive Plan Management Team

From: Education and Youth Success Policy Expert Group staff team:

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Subject: Feedback from the Education and Youth Success PEG

Date: June 13, 2013

The purpose of this summary memo is to convey key themes that have emerged from discussions of the Education and Youth Success Policy Expert Group (PEG) over the past 12 months. Also included is a distillation of the PEG's collective advice to guide staff as they revise draft Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, and as they update other elements of the Comprehensive Plan (including mapping, capital project lists, and implementing measures). Ultimately, the PEG's goal is to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan effectively promotes the physical and social well-being of children and youth, in addition to their academic success.

At the PEG's April 2013 meeting, member Karen Fischer-Gray asked, "How will the Comprehensive Plan change as a result of this PEG's efforts?" This memo, prepared by staff and affirmed by PEG members, strives to answer that question.

Background materials (PEG goal, assignment, membership and topics from each meeting) are appended to this memo.

PEG Charge

The Education and Youth Success (EYS) PEG met monthly between June 2012 and May 2013 to:

- Review Comprehensive Plan background materials and analysis to understand issues related to education / youth as addressed in the Comprehensive Plan
- Work collaboratively to explore issues and provide advice to City staff on policy, concept mapping and key map designations

The EYS PEG has consistently taken a holistic view of youth success, recognizing that both the built and natural environment can contribute to the physical and social health of children and youth. Stable housing; economic opportunity; complete neighborhoods; and access to nature,



recreation, healthful food and technology are among the issues addressed in the Comprehensive Plan that directly and indirectly support children and youth success.

The EYS PEG discussed issues and concepts that may apply to all youth and all schools in Portland. PEG members heard presentations from staff from two of Portland's six school districts, Parkrose and Portland, as well as a presentation on 21st Century schools. At the May 20 (final) meeting, the PEG learned about and discussed 25-year growth projections citywide, then considered how these might play out for each school district.

While the EYS PEG will not comment as a group on Part 2 of the Comprehensive Plan Update (mapping and capital systems plans), PEG members are encouraged to participate in Part 2 and provide feedback as individuals.

Key Themes

Twelve key themes emerged from the EYS PEG discussions and are highlighted below. These should be considered by staff as they develop the Comprehensive Plan *Proposed Draft* that will be presented to the Planning and Sustainability Commission and reviewed in public hearings.

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Take steps to ensure the infrastructure that supports education and youth success is distributed equitably throughout the city. Proactively reexamine zoning codes and other land use and infrastructure investment decisions with an equity lens to ensure they promote investment and development that reduce these disparities. One example is improving neighborhoods in ways that avoid gentrification/displacement or other marginalizing effects on youth already living in those neighborhoods. A measure of success is that the persistent disparities in educational outcomes for children of different races or levels of family income are reduced or eliminated.

Youth Success

Promote youth wellbeing in and out of schools, and provide for a continuum from early childhood through higher education. Provide a learning context for all youth—with schools, community centers, parks, access to nature, other youth-oriented amenities/facilities, and jobs for youth.

Schools as Centers of Community

Facilitate the conversion of Portland's schools to centers of community and anchors for neighborhood livability. Welcome all Portlanders to visit a school, whether they know a student or not.

Coordination

Provide closer, sustained coordination with all school districts: track shifts in building activity and demographics related to school enrollment, and coordinate on shared use of recreational fields and planning for community uses in schools.

Growth, Incentives and School Funding

Consider school enrollment, capacity and funding issues in use of City levers to manage growth: zoning, infrastructure improvements and incentives. Coordinate urban renewal and other public / private financial investments to benefit and support schools.



Land Use Permitting and Development Standards Find opportunities to reduce time and costs of land use reviews and development standards for schools as they are upgraded or rebuilt. Districts need flexibility to build, upgrade and adapt facilities to fulfill an everchanging education mission, and these needs will need to be balanced with neighborhood expectations for notification and open processes. Portland should consider a new base zone or overlay zone to accommodate schools, along with streamlined development standards and quicker, less costly review procedures. *PEG members varied in their perspectives about this issue, particularly about how to strike this balance appropriately.*

Community Engagement

Engage the community (neighbors, neighborhood associations and other local area organizations and constituents) before making major changes to school facilities, including on-site community uses.

School Construction Bonds and Maintenance The current capital bond programs are great opportunities to learn from and be innovative and collaborative: school construction / renovation activity can promote environmentally healthy and sustainable construction, and provide contemporary communications infrastructure in new and renovated school buildings. Encourage school districts to provide timely, ongoing maintenance of school facilities.

Parks and Schools

Renew City efforts to develop and improve parks in underserved neighborhoods, and formalize joint use agreements with all school districts. Parks are indispensable assets to schools.

Safe Routes to Schools (SRS)

Prioritize SRS improvements (such as sidewalks, pedestrian crossings and bike paths) to promote school use of parks and community use of schools. Safe routes are the top infrastructure priority for Portland schools.

Accountability, Partnerships and Follow-through Strengthen Chapter 8 (Administration and Implementation). Commit to follow-through, accountability and a plan for implementation, including a timeframe with incremental checkpoints. "If you measure it, it will happen."

Forge partnerships between the City, other public agencies and private institutions to successfully implement policy direction.

Acknowledge the relationship between Chapter 1 (Community Involvement) and Chapter 8 (Administration and Implementation); reinforce the concept that community members and other agencies are partners in decision-making and implementation.

Other PEGs

Integrate the work and recommendations among all Policy Expert Groups.

Conclusion

The staff team thanks the EYS PEG for the curiosity, ideas and enthusiasm they shared in the Comprehensive Plan Update policy-making process.



Appendix to Education and Youth Success PEG Summary Memo June 2012 - May 2013

PEG Goal

The Education & Youth Success PEG will consider policies related to educational facilities: how they can accommodate projected growth, flexibly provide multiple functions and serve as intergenerational community anchors. This group may also explore complementary community investments that will help advance the Cradle to Career partnership's strategies to support youth academically, socially and physically. (Implementing the Equity Framework and Thriving Educated Youth strategy of the Portland Plan)

PEG Assignment

Advise City staff on development of the Comprehensive Plan Update and related programs:

- Review Comprehensive Plan background materials and analysis to understand the education / youth issues to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Work collaboratively to explore issues and provide advice to City staff on policy, concept
 mapping and key parcel-specific map designations. If time allows, advise on refinements to
 the capital improvement project list and implementation tools (e.g., zoning);
- Attend monthly PEG meetings for one year, beginning in June 2012.

Members (see profiles: http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/400380)

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PEG DISCUSSION

This section provides a summary of key points offered in presentations and PEG discussions for each meeting / topic.

Schools as Centers of Community - July 16, 2012 and May 20, 2013

Schools / Role

The role of schools as "centers of community" needs to be better defined.

Community uses of schools must be compatible with educational objectives. Schools' primary role is to educate students.

The school districts fully embrace this principle and community use of schools is already high: 1.3 million users and 685,000 event hours in Portland Public Schools.

Broadening Uses

Impacts

School buildings accommodate a wide range of uses, and it's not possible to envision what the future will bring. Some longstanding community uses of schools are already not allowed under current zoning.

Emerging use of schools are legitimate and should be carefully considered: sharing facilities / resources with community colleges; school cafeterias used as commercial kitchens; school-based health centers; food banks; community gardens; satellite government offices distributing information on where to get services; worship.

New, remodeled and intact buildings vary widely in their suitability to accommodate community uses.

Mayor Hales appears interested in linking businesses into schools. This is intriguing (the EYS PEG did not discuss this in detail).

Impacts on neighbors vary by school location and surrounding uses.

Traffic and parking are the chief concerns for school neighbors. The City should carefully consider access issues for schools.

Community use of schools impacts school resources (facilities, equipment and personnel). With heavier use, school resources require more maintenance and wear out faster. Schools and community use sponsors need to resolve how to absorb these additional costs.

Community members who use school buildings will better understand and support school needs.

Another benefit of community use is natural surveillance—"more eyes on the building".



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School District Facilities Planning - August 20, 2012 and May 20, 2013

Land Use Permitting

Most schools are conditional uses (CU) in residential zones. The CU review and associated permitting requirements can pose a challenge and additional costs for school projects.

From the school district perspective, the CU process does not always improve outcomes, and is costly and timeconsuming. School districts have a short time window to adjust facilities to enrollment changes. It is challenging to notify neighbors and get permits, and complete construction by fall.

The City could create a new zone with schools as allowed uses or subject to specific development standards. The new regulations should address livability impacts to neighbors.

The City should look at areas around schools to promote complementary uses (community services, affordable housing, etc.) that may help to stabilize school enrollment

and funding.

Development Standards Focus development requirements for schools on the most

needed improvements rather than a laundry list.

Review City requirements that add significant cost to school

construction.

Bond Measures Recent passage of school construction bond measures

creates unprecedented new construction and renovation activity—and permitting challenges—for these school

districts.

Joint Facilities Agreements - August 20, 2012 and May 20, 2013

Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) has formalized joint Joint Use Agreements

use agreements with PPS, but not with the other districts.

Park Use Sports fields are in heavy demand and are scheduled

> centrally through PP&R. Lighting and artificial turf upgrades help to meet that demand, but require additional

cost and land use approvals.

Park Improvements PP&R is concentrating on developing parks in underserved

neighborhoods in East Portland, where there is a shortage of

parks suitable for school use, lacking covered spaces,

running water and bathrooms.

Bike paths, sidewalks and crossings to schools and parks are important. These "safe routes" promote safety, healthy

activity, and shared use.



Conditional Use Permit Requirements - September 17, 2012 and May 20, 2013

CU Requirements

The current CU requirements are designed to protect neighbors. However, school districts need more flexibility. The situation is dynamic; changes occur continuously.

Consider shifting school uses from the CU category to an allowed use. Situations include adding students to a school (in response to population / enrollment growth); changing educational delivery models, and adding or changing community use of school buildings.

New review thresholds should be considered: number of students; grade level; transportation needs / access. Adding buildings or square footage per se does not create impacts.

Neighborhood Impacts

Significant neighborhood impacts related to schools include traffic and parking, setbacks, building heights, and compatibility with neighborhood character. High schools have greater impacts: bigger, more intense use, longer days, more community use, and older students who drive cars.

Some neighborhood impacts might be better addressed through development standards.

Neighbor Communications

Schools should inform and involve neighbors, neighborhood associations, community partners and other constituents. A good community process is more important than regulations.

Data and Trends that Affects Schools and Districts - October 15, 2012

Populations Trends

Portland is growing, younger than the U.S. average, and

slightly more diverse.

There are significant income disparities. Half of Portlanders' total incomes are earned by one-fifth of the families. Earnings and educational attainment are strongly

correlated.

Schools East Portland's population trends younger than the rest of

Portland, and the schools are more diverse.

Riverdale is significantly different from Portland's other school districts: much smaller, wealthier, less diverse—and with uniformly outstanding educational outcomes (e.g.,

100% high school graduation rate).



<u>City / School District Coordination - October 15, 2012</u>

Coordination

The City of Portland has coordinated closely with PPS for many years, but only recently with the other school districts. Other districts could benefit from a similar relationship.

There should be a shared agenda for City / school district coordination: for Safe Routes to Schools and other supportive infrastructure investments; joint use of school buildings; school use of City parks; planning / zoning / permitting; housing policy; urban renewal; SUN schools.

Involvement at all levels is important: elected policymakers, top managers, middle managers and staff. Connections must be built "like a spider web".

Equity (November 19, 2012)

Goals A goal is to have race and income produce no discernible

effect on educational outcomes.

Trends Children of color comprise more than half of Portland

students. This change isn't happening—it has happened.

Race has an effect on student achievement, community well-being and many other measures. On average, students of color are lagging further behind the white community. There are stark disparities in education outcomes by race, and the achievement gap widens as students move through

the grades.

Equity problems are real. Some people don't have the

resources to choose neighborhoods or schools.

The 1980 Comprehensive Plan contains no references to

equity.

Gentrification and Displacement - December 17, 2012

At-Risk Neighborhoods

Undervalued neighborhoods are becoming more desirable—and less affordable—due, in part, to community investments.

The most at-risk areas are close-in SW and SE, inner N/NE and St. Johns.

Low income families -often renters—are displaced as property values climb.



Growth Patterns

There's a link between these trends, school enrollment, changing school boundaries and the "tipping point" in parents' perceptions about "good and "bad" schools.

With the anticipated influx of population and jobs, more information is needed on the impacts of growth on schools.

About half of Portland meets the standard of frequent transit service and "complete" neighborhoods. Deficient areas are in SW (lack sidewalks) and East Portland (lacks transit service and parks).

School enrollment varies significantly: .26 students per household in PPS, .36 in Parkrose, .45 in David Douglas. K-12 enrollment is projected to be flat in Parkrose, increase 40% in PPS, and double in David Douglas.

School funding issues need to be considered in allocating growth—especially for David Douglas.

Urban renewal and other public / private investments should be coordinated to benefit and support schools.

Working Draft - January 22-March 18-April 15, 2013

Accountability

The Planning and Sustainability Commission is well-positioned to act as a watchdog and assure accountability.

Coordination

This is an opportune time for the City of Portland and school districts. PPS, Parkrose and David Douglas recently passed school construction bond measures.

Intergovernmental coordination should consider the fiscal health of school districts and other partners.

The City and school districts can collaborate to leverage opportunities. The Comprehensive Plan should be directive about these partnerships.

Youth Success

The Comprehensive Plan should highlight youth success issues beyond schools—for transportation, community centers, parks, public safely—and provide for a continuum from early childhood through higher education.

The Plan should highlight the role of the community, and the need for a sense of ownership among the majority of Portlanders, who do not have kids in schools.

Our city should provide a learning context for all youth. "Pattern areas" in every part of the city should include schools as well as community centers, parks, and other youth-oriented facilities and amenities, and jobs for youth.

Many education / youth priorities are susceptible to budget cuts—e.g., SUN schools.



Other PEGs

The Education and Youth Success PEG's work should be coordinated with other PEGs.

