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## Budget Equity Assessment Tool

### CITY POLICY

This Budget Equity Assessment Tool is a general set of questions to guide city bureaus and their Budget Advisory Committees in assessing how budget requests benefit and/or burden communities, specifically communities of color and people with disabilities. As noted in Portland's 25-year strategic plan, the Portland Plan, Goal-Based Budgeting, and page 102:

When fully implemented, the new budget approach will direct City of Portland bureaus and offices to:

- Use an asset management approach to achieve more equitable service levels across communities and geographies.
- Track and report on service levels and investments by community and geography, including expanding the budget mapping process
- Assess the equity and social impacts of budget requests to ensure programs, projects and other investments to help reduce disparities and promote service level equity, improve participation and support leadership development.
- Identify whether budget requests advance equity, represent a strategic change to improve efficiency and service levels and/or are needed to provide for basic public welfare, health and/or meet all applicable national and state regulatory standards.

This is a critical part of the City of Portland's commitment to ending inequity. The mission and charge of the Office of Equity is to focus on ending inequality based on race and disability, and this document addresses these two specific populations.

However, it is the policy of the City of Portland that no person shall be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination in any City program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or source of income. Additionally, the City's Civil Rights Title VI program guidelines obligate public entities to develop systems and procedures that guard against or proactively prevent discrimination, while simultaneously ensuring equitable impacts on all persons. Therefore, City bureaus are encouraged to use this document to assist in evaluating equitable impacts on all residents.

It is recommended that all managers and others who work on the budget for the bureau use this tool. Bureau Equity Committees may also be a resource in its completion. The Office of Equity and Human Rights is also available for discussion/training/consultation regarding the use of this document.

Portland Bureau of Emergency Management  
BUREAU/OFFICE/DEPARTMENT

## **SECTION ONE: ADVANCING EQUITY**

### **1. How does this budget request increase, reduce, limit or eliminate programs or services that are vital to communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities and/or people living with a disability?**

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Management's 2015-2016 budget maintains funding for several key programs/capabilities that support services to communities of color, non-English speaking residents and people living with a disability. PBEM's requested budget also includes decision packages that will expand or improve services to people living with a disability and other vulnerable populations. Among these add packages are projects that fund: ADA upgrades to the West Side Operations Center, a limited term Program Coordinator to assist bureaus update their continuity of operations (COOP) plans, and a limited term Assistant Program Specialist to support the Basic Earthquake Emergency Communication Node (BEECN) program.

PBEM is responsible for maintaining capabilities/systems to disseminate emergency alerts and warnings to residents (and the public) impacted by an actual or imminent emergency. PBEM is currently soliciting requests for proposals for a new Community Emergency Notification System (CENS). Among the most important CENS feature is the ability to register and transmit translated emergency messages in safe harbor languages.

The Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) program promotes social resilience by training residents to provide immediate emergency assistance, life saving and life-sustaining interventions within their neighborhoods after emergencies. In the aftermath of disasters such as earthquakes, more than 90 percent of rescued persons are aided by their neighbors, not law enforcement officers, firefighters or EMTs. In June 2013, PBEM compiled demographics on active NET members from our volunteer management database. An overwhelming 89.6% of NET members self-identified as White, non-Hispanic and approximately 7% of NET volunteers self-identified as having a disability. PBEM will increase outreach to communities of color, prioritize their recruitment into the NET program, and work with community-based organizations to reach other underserved populations.

The ADA upgrades to the West Side Operations Center will reduce physical access barriers for employees with accessibility needs that work at this facility as well as residents that attend NET training classes and meetings. The COOP Program Coordinator will assist city bureaus in completing business continuity plans that meet or exceed FEMA standards to ensure the continuity of essential city services to all residents. The Assistant Program Specialist will help expand neighborhood emergency preparedness and response capabilities via the BEECN program. A BEECN is a place to go after a major earthquake to ask for emergency assistance if phone service is down or to report damage or injury. There are currently 48 BEECNs geographically dispersed throughout the city; however, most BEECN sites lack adequate volunteer teams to

support them and some BEECN equipment caches have been stolen. This budget request ensures all parts of the city have equal access to this neighborhood emergency resource.

## **2. What considerations were taken into account in this request to maximize equity?**

The BEECN program aligns with the Portland Plan's goal of complete neighborhoods. BEECN sites are located at schools, parks and other community facilities using the 20-minute neighborhood model. Borrowing from the Portland Plan's aspiration of pedestrian access to amenities like grocery stores, transportation and parks, PBEM's goal was to provide residents with equitable access to means of emergency communications.

One of our most important projects is the update of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP). This five-year update will integrate social equity as a prominent component of neighborhood natural hazard mitigation. The NHMP update will provide neighborhood specific hazard information to improve local understanding of hazard impacts and greater awareness of, and community engagement in, the implementation of neighborhood risk reduction strategies. To this end, PBEM has increased its outreach to immigrant and refugee communities, non-English speaking populations and other underserved communities via partnerships with IRCO, supporting joint efforts with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement City/County Additional Needs Registry, increasing our presence at citywide Fix-It Fairs, and providing emergency preparedness information in multiple languages. PBEM is collaborating with several bureaus on the NHMP update including the Office of Equity & Human Rights, Bureau of Planning & Sustainability, and Bureau of Environmental Services.

### **SECTION TWO: PERSONNEL**

See Workforce Demographics by Bureau [here](#) or by visiting our website at [www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr)

**(It is understood that final demographics resulting from any staff reduction or increase may not be known at the time of the budget request. However, it is important to monitor the demographics of any layoffs or staff reductions to assess the specific impact to people of color and people with disabilities, if known. Human Resources can be a resource to bureaus.)**

## **3. What is the impact on employees of color?**

There is no impact on employees of color. However, the bureau continues to advance its hiring practices through advertisements in minority focused publications, evaluating/reviewing job position descriptions to remove language biases, and encourage employees to attend equity or diversity training events or conferences.

## **4. What is the impact on employees with a disability?**

The Sears ADA upgrades request will benefit employees with a disability by removing physical access barriers at Sears Hall, bringing that city-owned building into compliance with ADA requirements.

### **SECTION THREE: PROGRAMS/SERVICES**

**If your bureau or office has multiple programs, please address the budget request for each program or groups of programs.**

#### **5. How does this program or service align with the goal of advancing equity?**

Disasters tend to magnify existing inequalities, impacting people with fewer resources more significantly. To improve the City's disaster response capabilities, PBEM will adopt strategies to ensure emergency plans are consistent with the U.S. Department of Justice requirements for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and assess emergency plans against the ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments. ADA upgrades to the Sears facility will allow for the occupancy of this now vacant building.

As previously noted, the city's new Community Emergency Notification System will enable residents to register for, and receive, emergency alerts in languages other than English.

A shared outcome of the NET and BEECN programs is to improve social resilience so that all residents will be more prepared at the individual and neighborhood levels to respond to disasters in a more coordinated fashion and support the needs of the vulnerable members in their neighborhood.

#### **6. Identify the impacts of the budget request on specific geographic areas: (Citywide/Regional; Northeast; Northwest; North; Central; Northeast; Southeast; Southwest; East; Central City; or Unknown)**

PBEM's programs/services have citywide impact. Site and building improvements to Sears Hall that will enable the use of this facility as a west side operations center will ensure immediate emergency response on both sides of the Willamette River.

#### **7. What areas of the city will be impacted by your program or service and is there a larger than average population of people of color in those areas?**

PBEM's programs have citywide impact – we do not target specific areas of the city; however, we have recently started to bring the NET training program into neighborhoods (New Columbia Apartments, Linnton, King) to ease the burden on those with limited transportation options (currently all NET training takes place at Fire Station 2 on NE 122<sup>nd</sup>) and offer assistance with childcare arrangements.

As part of the update of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, PBEM will provide hazard-specific information based on the unique hazards (landslides, flooding, wildland urban interface fire, liquefiable soils) across different parts of the city.

To help you answer this question, the following map link shows where communities of color are greater than average for the city of Portland.

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/508117>

This next link provides information on overall vulnerability, including maps of communities of color, lower income households, renters, and level of educational attainment. Together these four components are indicators of at risk populations.

<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/66107>

#### **8. Identify potential impacts on people living with a disability. (See Attached Worksheet)**

People with disabilities are more vulnerable to the negative impacts of disasters than other residents. Therefore, the program/services take into consideration the needs of people living with a disability, e.g. for receiving emergency messages in alternate formats, for receiving assistance with evacuations. We use existing standards and best practices in developing these types of plans. Partnerships with Portland Disability Program are being developed to allow NET volunteers to contact person with disabilities in their service areas and become aware of specific needs they may have during a disaster, or if they would need assistance from NETs in an evacuation.

#### **Section Four: EQUITABLE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

#### **9. How does this budget build community capacity and power in communities most impacted by inequities? (e.g., improved leadership opportunities within BAC, community meetings, stakeholder groups, increased outreach, etc.)**

PBEM is piloting a new community resilience program that will complement the update of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The pilot will encourage neighborhoods to take a leadership role in advancing their disaster resilience. As residents learn about their unique hazards, they will also participate in a public engagement process that nurtures the creation of a neighborhood-level vision of disaster risk reduction. PBEM will leverage the expertise of the Office of Equity & Human Rights in designing a culturally competent public education and engagement strategy that will empower communities to successfully prepare for, and recover from, disasters.

#### **Identifying Impacts Worksheet –**

Once you have identified the populations/communities impacted, use the following chart to name the potential burdens and benefits.



**OFFICE of EQUITY  
and HUMAN RIGHTS**  
CITY OF PORTLAND

Realizing Equity. Enhancing the City of Portland.

**Commissioner in Charge:**  
Charlie Hales, Mayor

**Bureau Director:**  
Dante J. James, Esq.

Populations Impacted	Potential Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts
Persons with disabilities	Residents will receive emergency alerts and warnings in alternate formats; removing physical barriers will provide people living with disabilities opportunities to attend NET training at Sears Hall.	Persons with disabilities may not want to self-identify as having additional needs.
Communities of color	Strengthen hazard awareness and community resilience capacities within communities of color.	None identified
Immigrant and refugee communities	Strengthen hazard awareness and community resilience capacities within immigrant and refugee communities. Increased ability to disseminate emergency messages in safe harbor languages.	None identified; however, we have limited capacity to translate real time emergency information for languages other than the safe harbor languages.

Carmen Merlo  
Name of Bureau Director

February 2, 2015  
Date

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