

ONI Budget Advisory Committee: Program Summary

Organization / Program title

Public Involvement Best Practices Program

Community Involvement Team, *formerly known as Neighborhood Resource Center*

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Briefly describe the program funded with city dollars

The Public Involvement Best Practices Program works to improve consistency & accountability across citywide public involvement processes. Established in Dec 2007, as an implementation of community recommendations made in Community Connect, BIP 9, and the Public Involvement Task Force, this program works to increase community impact on public decisions. This program has established and coordinates two major programs with the goal of creating a partnership between community and government.

The **Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC)** has been created as the first City of Portland standing advisory council addressing citywide public involvement guidelines. The goal of the PIAC is to strengthen and institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement by developing shared citywide guidelines that assist bureaus in creating consistent expectations and processes for public involvement activities. This group of 34 members is comprised of a broad diversity of community representatives and City bureaus staff working in partnership.

The **Citywide Public Involvement Network (CPIN)** is a series of networking and training sessions for public involvement staff across all bureaus. A different topic is explored at each session with the purpose of increasing competency amongst staff in working with the community. This is the only regular forum available to public involvement staff across the City, fostering peer networking, coordination and skill building.

Major activities and accomplishments during current budget cycle (ending June 30, 2011)

Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC): Retained and recruited a broad diversity of community representatives, including underrepresented groups to serve as members; Expanded and retained broad participation from 14 City bureaus; Successfully advancing work in three different areas by sub-committee. Successfully passing of PIAC's first recommendations at City Council to adopt:

- City's new public involvement principles, indicators and outcomes to set out what the public can expect from government.
- Requiring a new "Public Involvement Report" for all resolutions and ordinances considered at City Council. (starting 2011)
- Conducting a baseline assessment of public involvement across City bureaus.

PIAC sub-committees continue the development of recommendations in the following

areas:

- Recommend process improvements for 2011-12 bureau budget process. Based on evaluation of the 2009-2010 budget process, the group is creating best practices for the bureau's budget processes to increase consistency and accessibility.
- Increasing engagement of community based organizations and unaffiliated community members. Group is working on two initiatives including a central, online public involvement opportunities directory called *Pdx Civic Connect*; and an online, interactive public involvement best practices guide called *Equipedia* where community members and city staff can contribute to content on an ongoing basis.
- Implementation of new City Council Public Involvement Report & Baseline Assessment: Group will work with bureaus and council offices on successful tracking and implementation of these two new initiatives.
- Public Involvement language for City Charter and City's Comprehensive Plan "Goal 9": Group will review and suggest new language for these documents.

Citywide Public Involvement Network (CPIN): Training/networking sessions for City staff are planned on topics including: Engaging low income and homeless communities; new public involvement forms for City Council; Coalition of Communities of Color Report; State of Black Oregon; Leading Inclusive & Equitable Public Involvement processes (with Jeri Williams); Art of Framing Questions facilitation training (by Judith Mowry); What Public Administrators need to know (with PSU); Public Meetings 101 (with IAP2); Racial Impact Statements; Using the BIP 9 Public Involvement Toolkit; and Working with the Neighborhood System (with coalition staff).

Other Support Provided

- ❖ **For Bureaus:** Specialized training sessions on Diversity/Equity in Public Involvement. Fulfills the unique position as the only centralized public involvement program, and thus have begun assisting bureaus in connecting to one another and to the community; consultation on use of best practices and new models.
- ❖ **For Community Members:** Work with community members on frustrations of working with City bureaus (e.g. via Portland Plan); proactively working with District Coalitions and DCL groups to improve their interaction with City bureaus on public involvement processes; facilitating improved relationships between City bureaus and community for the goal of more meaningful involvement opportunities and ability for community to impact public decisions.

Summary of program budget and staffing

1 FTE for program coordinator = \$95,000 (Avg for NRC program coord including benefits and limited materials and services for program)

Partnerships with other organizations

- ❖ The **Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC)** is a partnership of 18 community organizations (eight of which are from underrepresented communities) and 14 City bureaus/ projects.
- ❖ The **Citywide Public Involvement Network (CPIN)** has had regular participation from 15 bureaus and 14 community organizations (who have served as presenters).