



## Phase III Public Participation Progress Report Executive Summary

**The foundation of a successful Portland Plan is the contribution and engagement of as many Portlanders as possible from as many diverse communities as possible.**

### Background

Portland Plan public engagement began with visionPDX, which gathered more than 17,000 comments from a diverse set of Portlanders about what they wanted the city to become. What emerged was a set of community values: community connectedness and distinctiveness, equity and access, and sustainability, environmental, social, cultural and economic. The ideas and values from visionPDX, combined with early outreach for the Portland Plan and extensive background research was the basis for Phase 1, which focused on getting grounded in the facts about Portland. Phase 1 began in late 2009 and wrapped at the end of March 2010. Phase 2 of Portland Plan public involvement, from April 1 to August 31, 2010, sought more targeted and interactive outreach approaches to engage typically under-represented communities than Phase 1.

### Outreach Approach to Phase III

Phase 3 of Portland Plan public involvement (Sept 1, 2010 – May 31, 2011) focused on partnering with organizations, especially the Diversity and Civic Leadership Partners, to team up on outreach; strived for a more targeted outreach to the business community and large employers; and provided forums for community discussion and information sharing to a broader range of Portlanders.

### Successes

Efforts to reach as many Portlanders as possible resulted in **close to 400 Portland Plan Inspiring Communities Series participants** and **nearly 375 Portland Plan Fair participants** in Phase 3, both the speaker series and community fair were new approaches to engaging the public.

From December 2010 to January 2011, hundreds of Portlanders attended the Portland Plan Inspiring Communities series, where experts in the fields of economic development, environmental justice, education, community health and sustainable systems shared fresh perspectives on what strategies have worked elsewhere. This series provided a forum for Portlanders to learn about these topics with national experts and local panelists. The presentations were broadcast live, streamed live on [www.pdxplan.com](http://www.pdxplan.com) and rebroadcast on Channel 30.

A higher number of Portland's communities of color participated in the Portland Plan Fairs more closely reflecting City-wide demographics in Phase 3 compared to the workshops in Phases 1 and 2. The four fairs offered a fun way to learn about and comment on strategies for education, economic prosperity and affordability, and healthy connected neighborhoods, as well as an equity initiative. Breakout sessions were available for those who wanted to have in-depth discussions about the strategies and initiative; and local food, music and dance made each of the four fairs unique.

Communication tactics **incorporated various media** (public access television, radio and social media) to broaden outreach and address the needs of different audiences. The February issue of the Curbsider was sent to all households with a two-page spread about the strategies and fairs, this newsletter was later translated into Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese. A large-print version of the handbill was created for the sight-challenged. Small handbills and 11x17 posters were

## **Portland Plan Phase III Public Participation Progress Report Executive Summary**

distributed around town to libraries, coalition offices and PCC campuses. Print ads were placed in community and cultural papers. Spots on OPB and KYRP Spanish language radio were purchased. Portland Community Media filmed at all the fairs and created a Phase III Recap video, which was posted on the website, Facebook page and the BPS YouTube channel. Media alerts and releases were posted and used for e-blasts to all partner public information officers for help getting the word out and from staff to their constituents and organizations. A major update of pdxplan.com included the strategies: reorganized and refreshed to make them and the supporting information easier to identify and access. An article on the Healthy Connected Neighborhoods strategy appeared in the April issue of Goodness Magazine.

City staff presented at **more than 105 small community meetings** where there were **approximately 1,740 attendees**. Included were the **five large employer-hosted presentations** that were added to the types of hosted presentations being sought out and conducted. These public involvement efforts focused on **maintaining and enhancing existing relationships, developing stronger business community outreach**, as well as, **cultivating newly forged relationships** with the Diversity and Civic Leadership Partners and collaborating on outreach activities together.

**Tabling at community-sponsored fairs and events continued in Phase 3; numbering at 19 for this phase.** Existing relationships with both partner organizations and community groups were strengthened, and new relationships were cultivated.

### **Areas for Improvement**

Phase 3 surveys were not included in the Curbsider newsletter in Phase 3, which partially speaks to the **low number of 217 completed surveys**, even though the surveys were posted on the Portland Plan website, at the Portland Plan Fairs and handed out at hosted presentations and community tabling events. These eight surveys were very long and dense and it's likely that people were overwhelmed.

Another reason for low survey responses could be burnout about the Portland Plan. Staff and CIC members note that many people feel as though their voice has been heard, each phase of the Portland Plan offered less and less new information as it was refined, and Portlanders are ready to move on to the Comprehensive Plan. It is important to thank the public for their contribution to date, while making a clear connection to the work that has already been done and the upcoming Comprehensive Plan Project.

### **Adjustments in Phase IV**

Feedback during Phase 3 is informing subsequent outreach and engagement strategies. For example:

- Simplifying the message to reach the largest number of Portlanders as possible. Many Portlanders do not know there is even a Portland Plan. Several creative communications suggestions have been offered during Phase 4.

### **Next Steps**

As the City prepares to roll out the draft Portland Plan, we have an opportunity to tell the whole story about it. No longer collecting and vetting facts, determining directions and objectives or vetting integrated strategies, we are now reaching the end of a multi-year process to create a 25-year plan for the city and its residents.

As a long range plan to ensure that Portland is an equitable, thriving, healthy and sustainable city, the Portland Plan is vast in scope and complex in nature with many layers of detail. The challenge – and

**Portland Plan  
Phase III Public Participation Progress Report  
Executive Summary**

the opportunity – is to communicate to as many Portlanders as possible what it is, why it's important and how it was created in collaboration with the community.

Over the summer of 2011, staff will be out in the community again at street fairs and special events, as well as, meeting with various neighborhoods, businesses, interested-based organizations and cultural and faith-based groups with information about the draft Portland Plan. Summer outreach will be about providing information on the draft Portland Plan, as well as, educating the public on the plan, as the process transitions into a more formal phase where the public engages directly with City decision-makers. Outreach will involve guiding the public to submit written testimony or attend and testify at one of the Planning and Sustainability Commission hearings during the fall of 2011.