

Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Community Involvement Committee

Charter and Operational Agreements

Updated: July 7, 2020

Preamble

As members of the Community Involvement Committee, we are committed to authentic, transparent and equitable public engagement processes. Our intent is to challenge traditional thinking and move the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) toward its own stated and admirable goals in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan (2018) and Racial Equity Plan (2015). We volunteered for this role because we believe the Bureau can do better for the City's residents – especially those who are traditionally underrepresented in planning processes.

Our work officially started in 2018 when the City of Portland finalized its 2035 Comprehensive Plan. A committee brought together to advise the city on the development of the Comprehensive Plan recommended convening and staffing a standing committee to guide its' implementation. That advice resulted in the Community Involvement Committee but our purpose still needed clarity.

In late 2019 with the support of Equity and Engagement Strategist and Committee Coordinator, Nikoyia Philliips, Program Assistant Natasha Gaskin and consultants Anne Pressentin and Sofia Alvarez-Castro of EnviroIssues, we participated in a six-month re-chartering process that involved; training and experiential learning around land-use planning, racial equity, bias-awareness and consensus decision-making, various interviews with both past and current stakeholders and practical project application using popular education methods while we explored our vision and mission. The re-chartering and visioning process provided us with clarity on our scope of responsibility, guidance on how we will operate and shaped the development of this charter.

Overview

This document serves as our character statement for the Community Involvement Committee. It was developed collaboratively with both past and present members, community partners and BPS staff to guide the scope and operation of this committee. This document includes the following:

- Vision, mission and guiding principles
- Committee authority, advice and accountability measures
- Bylaws, including committee structure and operational agreements

Vision and Mission

We are a committee of engagement stewards who collaborate with BPS staff and other advisory bodies to amplify and advocate for the voices of Black, Indigenous and People of Color, people experiencing

disabilities both visible and invisible, people identifying across the spectrum of gender and sexuality, parents of small children, people across the age spectrum from youth to elders, those underemployed, self-employed, working and retired, people with formal and informal education and many others not traditionally heard in planning processes.

Our mission is to partner with BPS staff and community partners to implement the 2035 Comprehensive Plan and advance racial equity in the Bureau's public engagement and decision processes. To do this, we gather information and data from BPS staff, subject matter experts, and community members with professional and lived experience. During interactive learning sessions we ask hard questions and analyze successes and challenges in our work. We collaborate, discuss and dialogue before giving our direction on how to move projects forward to create better outcomes for the many communities that live, work, play and worship in the City of Portland.

Guiding Principles

As a committee, we aim to:

- Apply new, independent and creative thinking.
- Be goal and outcome oriented.
- Use data and evaluation tools to measure progress.
- Model inclusion and equitable representation in CIC meetings, by considering access, language, meeting times and location, among other factors.
- Consider best practices for community engagement identified in the Bureau's Community Engagement Manual to create inclusive, comfortable and welcoming environments for all.
- Consider everyone's concerns, perspectives and opinions, even when they conflict.
- Recognize and apply the Bureau's goals in the Strategic Plan and Racial Equity Plan.
- Document and champion committee value and outcomes to community involvement processes.

Committee Authority

City Code calls for the convening of a Community Involvement Committee to advise City staff on the community involvement elements of projects that implement Portland's Comprehensive Plan. Chapter 3.132 charges the CIC with making recommendations related to ongoing and project-specific community involvement practices. Consistent with this charge, the Committee may use this platform to influence processes and decisions connected to or related to Comprehensive Plan implementations.

Committee Approach

We use a multi-faceted approach to conduct our work and to allow all members to fully participate regardless of their level of knowledge of the topic under consideration. We engage in interactive shared learning sessions with BPS staff to gain facts, data and an understanding of the project under development. We advise BPS staff directly during our committee meetings through our dialog and discussion. We inform other bureau advisory bodies and leaders of our recommendations including various stakeholder committees, the Budget Advisory Committee and the Planning and Sustainability Commission.

We recognize that consensus advice is more powerful to decision-makers. We strive for consensus when possible, while recognizing that consensus may not always be achievable. Written recommendations or memorandums that describe the range of CIC perspectives and considerations will be used when we want to convey formal advice to decision makers and record it for the community's use.

Committee Accountability

We will hold ourselves accountable by:

- Valuing the equal importance of lived and professional experiences to shape committee discussions and dialogs
- Preparing for, attending and actively participating in CIC meetings
- Applying lessons and learnings gained through previous committee meetings to current work
- Assessing the quantity, quality and effects of our work on an annual basis

Workplan and Project Selection

We will develop a yearly workplan that outlines priorities for committee work. The workplan will remain flexible to accommodate emergent community priorities, the adopted budget for BPS as well as the priorities identified in the Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Racial Equity Workplan and ongoing evaluations of how the CIC's recommendations have been working. The CIC coordinator will periodically review the workplan and determine if adjustments are appropriate. If adjustments are warranted, the CIC coordinator will work collaboratively with the committee to adjust the plan.

We will use a multifaceted approach to determine which projects we select for review annually including work sessions with the Sr. Principal Planner and/or Bureau Director that focus discussion on; project budget and bureau role, scope of the plan or project, potential to burden and/or benefit communities of color and low-income residents, potential public health impacts, and the likelihood of producing equitable outcomes that advance our racial justice goals.

Bylaws

Membership, Meetings, and Organization.

We are a committee established under city code. As such, we will follow the bylaws stated in City Code regarding how and when we meet, how we are organized and how membership is managed.

As stated in City Code, Section **3.132.020** (effective January 1, 2018):

The Community Involvement Committee members shall be appointed by the Commissioner-in-Charge of the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and confirmed by the City Council. The Committee will consist of at least 5 and no more than 12 members. The appointed membership shall be broadly representative of geographic areas and interests and from a reasonably broad spectrum of lived experience, particularly in under-served and under-represented communities. Members must live, work, worship or be enrolled in school within the City of Portland and/or volunteer for a nonprofit within the City of Portland.

- A. Appointments and Terms. The Commissioner-in-Charge of the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability shall appoint members of the Community Involvement Committee. Appointment to the Community Involvement Committee shall be for a three-year term, renewable for a second term. If a position is vacated during a term, the Commissioner-in-Charge of the Bureau shall appoint a member to serve for the unexpired term. Members appointed to the Community Involvement Committee serve at the pleasure of the Commissioner-in-Charge of the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Members of the Committee may be dismissed at the discretion of the Commissioner-in-Charge.
- B. Meetings, Officers, and Subcommittees.
 - 1. The Community Involvement Committee shall meet at least five times yearly and as otherwise necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with bylaws adopted by the Director of the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.
 - 2. The Community Involvement Committee may divide its members into subcommittees which are authorized to act on behalf of the committee for an assigned purpose, such as gathering information.
- C. Attendance. Members of the Community Involvement Committee are expected to attend each meeting of the committee. The Commissioner-in-Charge may replace any member who accrues unexcused absences from two or more consecutive meetings or more than 50 percent of the meetings in any year.
- D. Compensation. Community Involvement Committee members shall serve without compensation.

City Support Team

BPS will provide a support team to the CIC. The support team, which includes a CIC coordinator, a facilitator, and administrative support, will assist with technical support, substantive expertise, logistical assistance, administrative assistance, and advice to the CIC. The CIC coordinator will supply informational resources, engaging activities and popular education techniques that create a low barrier to participation and allow all members to fully discuss meeting topics. Additionally, the coordinator will foster shared learning by BPS staff and members and facilitate discussions that lead to meaningful input for Bureau decisions.

BPS also will provide public notice of all meetings, post materials to a webpage, supply refreshments and prepare meeting summaries that outline the issues discussed, the areas in which there is agreement, and any remaining issues on which agreement was not reached. The support team also will assist the CIC with drafting recommendations or memorandums that describe the range of CIC perspectives and considerations.

General Operating Procedures

Meetings

Meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of the month during 8 months of the year at a time and place convenient to the members and the community and outside of winter and summer break periods. Meetings will be open to the public and will be accessible to all. Needed accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or Civil Rights Title VI will be provided when requested.

Group Conduct:

In our re-chartering, we, CIC members, and City staff agreed to hold ourselves accountable to the BPS shared ground rules:

- **Listen to understand, not to respond.** Listen for learning opportunities. Do not prepare a response; just listen.
- **W.A.I.T:** Use self-awareness by asking yourself “Why Am I Talking?” Remember everyone has the right to share their ideas, but not everyone always has the opportunity.
- **Assume good intentions but attend to impact.** We are all good people looking to collaborate for better outcomes. Not all good intentions lead to good outcomes; If someone is hurt, focus on listening and understanding the impact, not on the intent.
- **Be willing to make mistakes and be forgiving of those who do.** Forgiveness fosters safety so we can all take risks. We make mistakes, even with good intentions. By making mistakes, we ultimately learn how to do things better.
- **Allow for, and appreciate, disagreement of opinions, ideas, methods – respectfully.** Don’t interrupt someone just because you disagree with them. Listen to understand; you may find you have something in common. Critique ideas, not people.
- **Personal stories stay, lessons can be shared.** After the meeting, comments, ideas and thoughts will be attributed to any individual – this is a group learning process. If you share a personal story, let people know if or how your story can be shared.
- **Speak clearly and concisely and use audio amplification to ensure all can hear.**

Communications

Members agree that transparency is essential to all deliberations. Members are requested to copy the City staff liaison on all communications from/to interest groups commenting on the CIC's deliberations. These communications will be included in the public record as detailed below and copied to the full CIC as appropriate.

Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Our membership is diverse and involved in the city and the community in many ways. We may find ourselves discussing topics where our personal interests may cause us to have a conflict with public interests. We will use the following process to ensure potential conflicts are openly stated and recorded as we do our work.

- A public official is required to make an announcement of the nature of a conflict of interest each time the issue giving rise to the conflict of interest is discussed or acted upon.
- The announcement needs to be made on each Occasion when the public official is met with the conflict of interest. Each time a public official is met with a conflict of interest the nature must be disclosed.

- Staff are obligated to keep a record of all conflicts of interest that are announced during each meeting.
- If it is found that a member did not disclose a conflict of interest, staff must alert the Bureau Director of the instance.
- Any potential or actual conflict of interest noted by staff will be included in the recommendation report provided to city council or other final decision-making body.

Public Meetings and Records

Meetings of the full body and subcommittee meetings are open to the public and will be conducted under the provisions of Oregon Public Meetings Law (ORS 192.610-690). The CIC coordinator will provide notice to the public regarding the dates, times and locations of all meetings.

All records of the CIC, including formal documents, discussion drafts, meeting summaries and exhibits, are public records. Communications among members related to the subject matter of the CIC should not be treated as confidential and may be subject to public records requests. "Communications" refers to all statements and statements made during meetings memoranda, work projects, records, documents or materials developed to fulfill the charge, including electronic mail correspondence by and among the members. The personal private notes of individual members taken at public meetings might be considered to be public to the extent they "relate to the conduct of the public's business" (ORS 192.410(4)).

Amendment of Bylaws

The CIC may recommend to the Bureau Director amendment or repeal of these Bylaws. The Bureau Director must sign off original bylaws and any amendments to the bylaws. Members have no authority to amend bylaws without approval.

We, CIC members, and BPS staff will be working closely together to ensure our work is meaningful, useful and reflects our community's values to the fullest extent. This charter, as our guidance document, may need to be adjusted as our work matures. We commit to revisit the charter as needed to ensure it is still guiding us to support and reflect our community's needs and interests, be transparent about our work and our outcomes, and provide BPS decision-makers with advice that fully reflects our community.