



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD INVOLVEMENT

Amanda Fritz, Commissioner-in-Charge
Amalia Alarcón de Morris, Bureau Director
1221 SW 4th Avenue, Room 110
Portland, Oregon 97204

Enhancing the quality of Portland's Neighborhoods through community participation

REPORT TO COUNCIL

September 28, 2011

To: Commissioner Amanda Fritz

From: Amalia Alarcón de Morris, Director

Subject: Accept the Public Involvement Advisory Council Annual Progress Report

The City Council created the Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) in 2008 at the urging of both community members and City bureaus. City Council charged the PIAC with improving the quality and consistency of public involvement across City government and with creating Citywide guidelines for how City government engages with the public on the decisions that impact them. The PIAC continues to make progressive strides toward fulfilling this charge. This memo represents the PIAC's third annual report to City Council.

Local governments across the nation are experiencing increasing demands from community members that are insisting on a stronger partnership with government and involvement in the issues that affect their lives.¹ Many municipalities are actively searching for resources and best practices to help them successfully involve the community. The PIAC continues to be Portland's innovative solution for paving the way toward strengthening the public involvement partnership between community and government.

The PIAC is made up of 34 members who represent 15 City bureaus and 18 community organizations and together represent a wide range of Portland's diversity. Members work together to develop proposals for City Council's consideration and approval. The PIAC also works to support successful implementation of approved proposals.

Through the creation and implementation of systems designed to increase community impact on public decisions, the PIAC is creating effective guidelines and policy allowing Portland truly representative, responsive and accountable government.

In the past year, PIAC has consulted with numerous other cities interested in our unique approach, and PIAC members were invited to make a keynote presentation at a recent

¹ Leighninger, Matt, *The Next Form of Democracy: How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance...and Why Politics Will Never Be the Same*, Nashville: Vanderbilt, 2006.



Pacific Northwest dialogue and deliberation conference. PIAC also earned the 2010 Spirit of Portland Award for public involvement.

The PIAC itself has become known, among PIAC members and other community members and City staff, as a powerful example of how City advisory groups can be inclusive and effective. The PIAC provides a rewarding experience that keeps its members involved and productive.

PIAC Initiatives

PIAC members continue to affirm their mission to support bureaus' public involvement practices. The PIAC has employed a broad strategy to improve the quality and consistency of public involvement across City government. This includes the following areas, which are described in further depth below:

- City's Public Involvement Principles
- Public Involvement Questions for City Council Items
- Public Involvement Bureau Annual Assessment
- Best Practices Development
 - City Bureau Budget Process
 - Cross Cultural Public Involvement
 - Overall Public Involvement Best Practice Guides
- Accessible list of City's public involvement opportunities

City's Public Involvement Principles

In August 2010, City Council adopted new public involvement principles developed by the PIAC. The principles represent a road map to guide government officials and staff in establishing consistent, effective, and high-quality public involvement across Portland's City government. The principles are intended to set out what the public can expect from City government, while retaining flexibility in the way individual City bureaus carry out their work.

Each principle is accompanied by a set of indicators that allows City officials to identify what each principle looks like when it is being implemented as well as a set of outcomes which defines the benefits that will be seen once a principle is implemented.

These principles were developed through a comprehensive review of existing principles within the City, nationally and internationally. Draft principles were reviewed widely amongst City bureaus as well as community members.

The most thorough set of principles the City of Portland has adopted to date on public involvement, the principles include partnership, early involvement, building relationships and community capacity, inclusiveness and equity, good quality process design and implementation, transparency, and accountability. Mayor

Sam Adams commented that the principles would “allow for a higher quality and more consistent level of public outreach.”

Public Involvement Questions for City Council Items

In 2010, City Council directed PIAC to develop a set of questions to accompany all City Council resolutions, ordinances and reports. Over eight months, the PIAC worked closely with City Council offices and City bureaus to refine the new questions. In partnership with the Office of Management and Finance’s Financial Planning Division, the resulting Financial Impact and Public Involvement Statement became an official form for City Council items in July 2011.

The new questions provide City Council members with a synopsis of the public input that was considered in the development of the legislation. It also provides greater transparency in a consistent form regarding how the City conducts public involvement.

In order to support City bureaus in utilizing the new form, the PIAC developed a training curriculum and online guidance materials for City staff. Over 300 City staff have been trained by PIAC members on the new form. One staff person commented that “It seems a lot of work has been done to make implementation smooth and easy. Thank you!”

Commissioner Fish’s office, Bureau of Environmental Services and Portland Bureau of Transportation Bureau Directors commended the PIAC for involving them in a collaborative manner on an ongoing basis in this process.

PIAC members will be conducting a six-month review of the aggregated data submitted on the new forms and will be reporting results to City Council in 2012.

Public Involvement Bureau Annual Assessment

City Council also directed the PIAC to conduct an annual assessment of public involvement capacity and practices across City bureaus. PIAC members are finalizing a questionnaire for bureaus that will elicit information on public involvement staffing structure, policies, approaches, challenges and successes.

Gathering baseline information will allow PIAC to better support bureaus in areas of need as well as highlight bureaus that are conducting innovative practices. The results of the assessment will inform PIAC’s work plan in coming years.

The survey will be conducted during fall/winter 2011 and results will be reported to City Council in 2012.

Best Practices Development

The PIAC is also developing best practices and recommendations for various aspects of the City's public involvement processes and approaches. Current focus areas are described below.

City Bureau Budget Process - Best Practices

The PIAC has conducted an in-depth evaluation and review of City bureaus' budget advisory committee (BAC) process. Each year, bureaus are required to involve an advisory committee in the development of their budget. However, no guidelines or best practices for involving the public have been provided to bureaus. PIAC members have been working to develop a set of recommendations for this purpose.

The PIAC observed the past years bureau budget processes closely, conducted interviews with staff and community members and evaluated budget materials in order to create recommendations that would improve future processes.

The PIAC will be developing a BAC best practices "how-to" manual that will contain several best practices and recommendations that bureaus can adopt. Recommendations have been developed regarding community outreach, including the community at meetings, creating accessible handouts and presentation materials, guidance for bureau budget websites, guidance for compliance with ADA and Limited English Proficiency regulations, and a proposed Citywide program to raise community capacity to engage in the budget process.

The PIAC is in the process of setting up meetings with City Council offices and City bureaus to obtain input on the developed recommendations. Final recommendations are expected to be implemented in fall 2012.

Cross Cultural Public Involvement - Best Practices

A planned, forthcoming tool called *Equipedia*, is meant to serve as an online, interactive guide for City staff seeking support with engaging underrepresented communities. This guide will detail best practices on engaging the diverse communities of Portland. One of the PIAC's key principles is to work to reduce barriers to the City's public involvement in order to be inclusive and representative of the whole community. This will be accomplished by actively working to include those that have been historically excluded as well as building the City's capacity to respond to Portland's shifting demographics. PIAC members have developed a draft version which is currently being refined.

Overall Public Involvement Best Practices Guides

The PIAC has recently decided to begin focusing on developing short public best practice guides on various public involvement topics. These guides will serve as a “hands on” and accessible way for City staff to employ innovative public involvement techniques. Work on these guides will begin in fall 2011.

Accessible list of City’s public involvement opportunities

The PIAC has developed a proposal for a central location for City public involvement opportunities to be posted online so that any community member can easily access the various ways they can be involved with the City. This proposed site, named *PDX Civic Connect*, has been developed in partnership with the Bureau of Technology Services. This proposed tool seeks to provide a central repository for all City bureaus to recruit community members who seek to be involved. The PIAC is currently working to identify opportunities for how this tool can be incorporated with the City’s new website.

Conclusion

As local governments across the nation institute public involvement best practices, they are finding that effective public involvement is essential to achieve and sustain this partnership and the civic health of the City. PIAC seeks to serve the City of Portland through the development and implementation of various best practices and tools. What has been most unique is the PIAC’s model of a community-government partnership which they employ throughout their process.

Three years into our process, the PIAC continues to have a popular response from community members: recent openings on the PIAC produced more than twice the number of highly qualified applicants as there were vacancies available. The PIAC actively works to maintain an inclusive and diverse group that includes perspectives from neighborhood organizations, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, ethnic minorities, elders, youth, public involvement consultants, and other perspectives. This broad cross-section of the community helps ensure that the recommendations the PIAC gives to City Council are strengthened by the many perspectives that helped develop them.

The PIAC actively works toward their end goal in mind: that as a result of PIAC’s work, the community will experience greater satisfaction with public participation processes in the City and City public involvement staff will feel more supported in their work with best practices, resources, and guidance. Ultimately, the PIAC works so that better decisions will be made for all of Portland based on improved public involvement processes.

We recommend that City Council accept the report.


Amalia Alarcón de Morris, Bureau Director

TO THE COUNCIL

As Commissioner-in-Charge of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, I concur with the information in this report and

RECOMMENDS:

That the Council accept the report.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Fritz
Commissioner In Charge of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement

Agenda No.
REPORT NO.

Title

Accept Public Involvement Advisory Council Annual Progress Report (Report)

SEP 28 2011

<p>INTRODUCED BY Commissioner/Auditor: Amanda Fritz</p>	<p>CLERK USE: DATE FILED _____</p>
<p>COMMISSIONER APPROVAL</p> <p>Mayor—Finance and Administration - Adams</p> <p>Position 1/Utilities - Fritz <i>Amanda Fritz</i></p> <p>Position 2/Works - Fish</p> <p>Position 3/Affairs - Saltzman</p> <p>Position 4/Safety - Leonard</p>	<p>LaVonne Griffin-Valade Auditor of the City of Portland</p> <p>By: <i>Susan Parsons</i> Deputy</p> <p>ACTION TAKEN:</p> <p>SEP 28 2011 ACCEPTED</p>
<p>BUREAU APPROVAL</p> <p>Bureau: Office of Neighborhood Involvement Bureau Head: Amalia Alarcón de Morris <i>Amalia</i></p>	
<p>Prepared by: Afifa Ahmed-Shafi Date Prepared: September 20, 2011</p>	
<p>Financial Impact & Public Involvement Statement Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amends Budget <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Council Meeting Date September 28, 2011</p>	
<p>City Attorney Approval: required for contract, code, easement, franchise, charter, Comp Plan</p>	

AGENDA
<p>TIME CERTAIN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Start time: 9:30 am, Item 1 of 2</p> <p>Total amount of time needed: 30 min total for both items (for presentation, testimony and discussion)</p>
<p>CONSENT <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>REGULAR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Total amount of time needed: _____ (for presentation, testimony and discussion)</p>

FOUR-FIFTHS AGENDA	COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:	
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz	1. Fritz <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. Fish	2. Fish <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. Saltzman	3. Saltzman <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. Leonard	4. Leonard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Adams	Adams <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	