

From GAY

Mt. Tabor Master Plan

Public Involvement Process Leading to Plan's Recommendations

- April '98 **Preliminary meeting** was held with representatives from Mt. Tabor, Center, Richmond, South Tabor, and Sunnyside Neighborhood Associations as well as Ginny Peckinpaugh from SE Uplift. Also attending were Nancy Norby from PUP (off-leash advocate group with active web site) and Dave Eshbaugh, Director of Audubon Society. Zari Santner, George Lozovoy, & Gay Greger attended for PP&R. The meeting was facilitated by Elaine Cogan of Cogan Owens Cogan. The purpose of the meeting was develop consensus on a public involvement process for the project, decide whether an appointed Advisory Committee was needed, and if so, what user groups and interests should be represented. Based on recommendations from this group, design of a survey and outreach for Advisory Committee membership began.
- May '98 As part of the outreach effort, **signs were posted** in Mt. Tabor Park, announcing the beginning of the planning process and inviting people participate. The signs generated several calls and some applications for the Advisory Committee.
- June '98 **Advisory Committee appointed.** Included are representatives from surrounding neighborhoods (Mt. Tabor, Center, Montavilla, Sunnyside, and Richmond), immediate park neighbors, Warner Pacific College, Western Baptist Seminary, Audubon Society, Tree & Environmental Advocates, Schools who use the park, Churches that use the park, seniors/disabled, bicyclists, walkers, area businesses, people with city-wide perspective, those familiar with issues related to concerts in the crater, dog owners (on-leash & off-leash advocates), event organizers, people who use tennis courts/basketball courts.
- Informal orientation/organizational meeting was held.
- July '98 **Initial postcard** mailing to all those on mailing list (user groups, neighborhoods, permit holders, and those asking to be kept informed) - announcing appointment of the Advisory Committee and inviting them to attend the upcoming Advisory Committee meeting.
- August '98 **Newsletter #1 with Survey Enclosed** is mailed to above-mentioned mailing list and to **3,500** residents in postal carrier routes surrounding Mt. Tabor Park. 350 surveys are returned and the information tabulated. The newsletter included dates, times and location for the Advisory Committee meetings as well as the first Public Meeting and encouraged people to participate in them all.

Among other questions, the survey asked about the off-leash area: how often people used it and whether they felt it was adequate and/or still appropriate for the

park. The survey included room for comments. Comments - including those related to the off-leash area - were categorized and reproduced for the committee's consideration.

October '98 **Postcard mailing to 3,500 residents** (same carrier routes as above) and those on the PP&R Mt. Tabor mailing lists. Postcard announced upcoming November 7th Public Meeting as well as December 5th Public Meeting and the meeting schedule for the Advisory Committee. It explained generally what project areas would be discussed but did not directly talk about off-leash. Note: At the suggestion of a concerned neighbor, this meeting notice was translated into Vietnamese and hand delivered to Vietnamese families living near the park. A translator attended the meeting but she was not called upon to do any translation - although some Asian families were in attendance.

Signs

- Signs advertising the meetings were posted throughout the park, including the off-leash area.
- A banner announcing the meeting was posted at SE Hawthorne & 65th where Hawthorne "runs into" the Western Baptist Seminary.

November '98 **Public Meeting #1** - Approximately 150 people attended the meeting. It was an Open House style meeting, and public comment was solicited at each project area station. As part of the programming station, alternative off-leash sites were presented. These generated the greatest volume of written comments. (see attached)

Reminder postcard was sent to the PP&R mailing list reminding people of the December 5th Public Meeting. The same banner was posted at SE Hawthorne & 65th.

December '98 **Public Meeting #2** - Approximately 100 people attended the meeting. It was an Open House style, with two presentations scheduled for those who preferred to get an overview from the consultants. Public comment regarding off-leash related to the committee's recommendation to close and restore the off-leash area.

March '99 *Public Meeting #3 - 60 people signed in, 22 comment cards received.*

April '99 *Newsletter - Final Plans*

October '99 *Newsletter - Construction*



Not modified since restructuring

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Public Involvement Procedure for Capital and Policy Development Projects and Planning Initiatives

Introduction

Portland's parks and recreational facilities are provided for the benefit and enjoyment of all citizens, so it is important for citizens to have a voice in how these resources are developed or improved for public use. The following procedure is intended to ensure that, whenever appropriate, a thoughtful public involvement plan is developed and integrated into each project's overall timeline and budget.

Development of a public involvement plan is required for any planning initiative, capital project, or policy decisions that could, in the judgement of the Director, result in significant change in the use or appearance of Portland Parks & Recreation-owned grounds or facilities or have long-term implications for the provision of open space.

This is not a cookie cutter approach to public involvement. This procedure does not prescribe, for example, a specific set of activities for projects of like scale and complexity. Rather, it defines a process for collaborative development of the project's public involvement plan and describes key elements that plans must include.

Development of the Public Involvement Plan

At the time that a project is initiated, the Public Involvement Coordinator begins the research necessary to develop a draft public involvement plan (refer to the attached chart). Advice is sought from neighborhood associations and coalitions, friends groups, or key user groups about what will work best for the project and for the community and what other key stakeholders on the plan itself. This collaboration results in a draft plan that outlines the basic process, discusses public information and involvement strategies, suggests potential meeting dates, venues, etc. An initial list of stakeholders is also developed through these conversations. The draft plan is further refined with input from the PP&R staff and design consultants working on the project, as well as the Parks Board. It is then finalized in writing. The final working plan is shared with the community groups involved as well as to the internal Project Team.

It is important to note that that the public involvement process evolves throughout the life of a project. *The plan is intended as a guide, but is often modified along the way.* There may be need for additional meetings, for example, or a teacher interested in hands-on involvement for their students. Planning for the artwork could lead to a neighborhood tile-making day, or surveys could be distributed at a community fair that hadn't been anticipated. It is important that the plans are flexible enough to take advantage of opportunities.

Included in the following procedures are:

- Flow chart describing the process for plan development
- PP&R staff responsibilities for plan development and implementation (page 2)
- Key elements to be addressed in each plan (page 2 - 4)
- Documentation (page 5)
- Process for smaller improvement projects (page 5)
- Definitions: additional details about plan elements or specific strategies (page 6-7)

Responsibilities and Process

Parks & Recreation staff have a collective responsibility to ensure a successful public involvement process for each project. Specific responsibilities for development and implementation of project-specific public involvement plans are described below.

Division Manager. The manager of the division responsible for the project initiates the planning process by defining the project scope and assigning project management and public involvement staff. In most cases, the Planning and Development Division Manager will have this responsibility.

Public Involvement Coordinator. Working with the Project Manager, Project Team, and the community, the Public Involvement Coordinator is ultimately responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the public involvement plan.

Project Manager. For purposes of this policy, the term "Project Manager" refers to the person within Portland Parks & Recreation who has been assigned the lead responsibility for a planning initiative, policy development, or capital project. For planning projects, a Senior Planner will take the place of a Project Manager.

The Project Manager is responsible for scheduling the initial meeting with the Public Involvement Coordinator, for working collaboratively on all aspects of the public involvement plan's development and implementation, and for assuring that adequate resources and information are available for its accomplishment.

Project Team. The Project Team (see definitions, page 6-7) has responsibilities throughout the life of the project. The team is responsible for providing key information and input during development of the public involvement plan. Appropriate members of the Project Team (e.g., building directors, park district supervisors, and others who come in contact with the public as part of their jobs) assist the Project Manager and Public Involvement Coordinator in the implementation, ongoing refinement, and evaluation of the plan.

Required Elements for Public Involvement Plans

All plans will include a project description that defines the project purpose and scope, goals, products, project management contacts, and schedule. Beyond that, each public involvement plan is uniquely tailored to the project. The nature of the project and the anticipated level of public interest are primary considerations in determining the full scope of the plan. However, the following **key elements** should always be addressed.

I identify people who can identify stakeholders

I. Identification of Stakeholders. The initial plan lists people and organizations to contact in order to develop a list of stakeholders. This research is used to produce an initial stakeholder list that will be added to over the life of the project. (See definitions, page 6-7.)

II. Primary Public Forum. The primary forum for public dialogue about the project varies depending upon the nature and complexity of the project and potential impacts to the surrounding neighborhood. Generally, larger or more complex projects/issues combine public meetings with a citizens advisory committee or task force appointed by the Director or Commissioner in Charge. Other projects may use the Neighborhood Association, a Friends Group, or other community-based organization rather than appoint a separate special committee. In some cases, PP&R may elect to host general public meetings. Whatever forum is selected, the possible need for translation services for written or oral presentations

(including foreign languages and signed interpretation) should be taken into consideration. When the project involves an advisory committee, the plan includes a procedure for nominating and appointing committee members.

III. Meetings and Other Person-to-Person Opportunities for Input.

General Public Meetings. The meeting purpose and anticipated level of public interest are factors to consider when determining the most suitable design for each meeting. Depending on the specific situation, a wide range of meeting types may be utilized, including simple presentations to neighborhood associations, informal on-site gatherings, formal multi-media presentations, facilitated large or small group discussions, design charrettes, or open houses.

The purpose, date, time, location, and forum for general public meetings, as well as the number of meetings to be held, are described in the public involvement plan. Every effort will be made to assure that the meeting site is ADA accessible. If requested at least 48 hours in advance, sign language interpretation will be made available. At the meeting(s), project information is available for review and the project manager or meeting facilitator conducts the meeting in a manner that encourages meaningful participation. Concerns are acknowledged and recorded and questions answered in a straightforward and non-judgmental way.

Meeting results/summaries are prepared following every public meeting. Summaries are included in newsletters or prepared separately and posted on the Portland Parks & Recreation website.

Citizen Advisory Committee Meetings. When the public involvement process includes an appointed advisory committee, meeting dates and times are publicized and anyone with an interest in the project is encouraged to attend. Time is always provided on the agenda for public comment. Every effort will be made to assure that the meeting site is ADA accessible. If requested at least 48 hours in advance, sign language interpretation will be made available. Citizen Advisory Committee meetings are held in addition to, not in place of, general public meetings.

Other Person-to-Person Opportunities. Plans may also include other opportunities for sharing information during the planning phase, as well as during construction or project implementation. These opportunities vary depending on the nature and complexity of the project and are refined as the project develops, but may include community presentations, site walk-throughs, hard-hat sneak previews, "open trailers," or acquisition site visits. (See definitions, page 6-7.)

IV. Publications. Publications are a primary tool for sharing information about a project and inviting participation. A variety of them will be produced and distributed throughout the life of each project. The anticipated types of publications and production timelines are included in the public involvement plan. Generally, these publications fall into four categories: newsletters/fact sheets, meeting notices or flyers, press releases, and surveys. (See definitions, page 6-7.)

Publication Distribution. In general, publications are distributed through the mail, the Internet, and various community locations. The distribution plan should include all stakeholders and community gathering places where the information could be shared or posted (e.g., libraries, police stations and community policing offices, community centers, schools, grocery stores, and senior centers). It should also include citywide print and electronic media including City Search and PP&R event calendars. All publications are posted on the PP&R web site.

As a rule, project publications are always sent to City Commissioners and other city departments as appropriate, Portland Parks & Recreation Expanded Management Team, Public Information staff, and to each department for posting.

Initial newsletters are distributed to all households living near the site and/or all program participants involved at the recreation facility, as well as to all other identified stakeholders. (See definitions, page 6-7.) The magnitude of the project and anticipated level of public interest determine the boundaries for this mailing. As a general practice, the target audience is made up of residents and businesses within a 3-5 block radius of the park site. Mailing to all postal customers within specified carrier routes assures the most complete coverage of a target area. For projects involving a recreation facility, current program participants (within the last year) are included in the distribution, as well.

Groups or individuals that respond to surveys, ask to be placed on the mailing list, or attend meetings will also be added to the stakeholder mailing list for the project.

V. Signage/Displays. Whenever possible, on-site signs announcing the planning process, inviting participation, and explaining the park improvements are posted. In addition, opportunities to display project-related information on-site or elsewhere in the community should be considered - particularly when a mechanism for citizen response could be included.

VI. Evaluation. Each public involvement plan includes an evaluation of the effectiveness of the public involvement process from both external and internal points of view. Evaluation tools vary depending on the nature of the project. Regardless of the tools used, however, the final evaluation always includes observations and recommendations from both public participants and the Project Team. The recommendations are incorporated into future public involvement strategies.

Possible evaluation tools include:

- Questions included as part of public meeting surveys or comment cards that ask for feedback about the public involvement process and how it might be improved;
- Small group critiques of the public involvement process conducted with community groups, neighborhood coalition, or similar organizations;
- Internal critiques by Project Team members;
- Written evaluations by Citizens Advisory Committee members (if appropriate); and
- Feedback/comments from the PP&R website.

