

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT 2012 FACT SHEET

In the early '90s, Seattle community members worked together to develop plans for their neighborhoods. Today these plans are being updated to reflect the changing needs and priorities of each neighborhood.

In partnership with the Department of Planning and Development, the Neighborhood Planning Outreach and Engagement Program works with selected neighborhoods each year to engage community members in updating their neighborhood plans.

Neighborhood Plan Update Program Overview

The Neighborhood Plan Update (NPU) process is presently occurring in Rainier Beach and the combined neighborhoods of Broadview, Bitter Lake, and Haller Lake. For each plan update, the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON) staff established a Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) consisting of 12-15 members representing a broad range of community members, including socio-economically diverse residents, local business groups, and neighborhood organizations. The NAC advises the city on key elements of the plan update, assists with outreach, and helps to review recommendations to ensure all community interests are reflected. The plan updates will be completed in 2012.

Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement

As part of the outreach and engagement process, DON staff strives to include the diverse array of stakeholders that make up each community, including historically underrepresented populations. The Planning Outreach Liaison (POL) program was established to address the desire for meaningful inclusion of historically-underrepresented communities in neighborhood planning. This successful outreach model has led to thousands of engaged Seattle stakeholders and residents.

In 2012, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' Neighborhood District Coordinators are piloting several projects utilizing the POLs to assist other city departments in their outreach and engagement needs. This will ensure that the city receives rich and diverse civic participation.



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Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

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POL Program Overview

Planning Outreach Liaisons (POLs) serve as expert “bridge builders” who are a part of their respective community’s cultures, fluent in their languages (if applicable), and bi-cultural and bi-lingual so as to communicate with mainstream communities. As contractors, POLs partner with the city in forging connections and fostering relationships with disenfranchised or “outside” groups by building and maintaining trust and transparency. By conducting equitable outreach and engagement in a culturally-specific manner, POLs provide participants some comfort and familiarity with the democratic process. They also create a high level of trust and neutrality while facilitating communication between the participants and the city.

POLs are also charged with providing:

- Quality translations
- Fair and equitable facilitation (in native language)
- Simultaneous interpretation
- Constituent support at city-hosted events
- Feedback and expertise on cultural concerns and barriers
- Accurate records and reports of participant feedback and concerns



2011 POL Key Activities

- 2010-2011 Neighborhood Plan Updates (Round 2): POLs engaged over 1000 underrepresented community members at POL-hosted workshops and city-hosted events.
- 2011 Transform Seattle: Many Voices. One Future Campaign (Climate Action Plan, Transit Master Plan and Seattle Comprehensive Plan) event: POLs engaged over 150 participants from historically under-represented groups.



- From 2009-2011, languages and historically-underrepresented groups served by POLs:
 - Afaan Oromo-speaking Ethiopians
 - African Americans
 - American Indians and Alaska Natives
 - Amharic-speaking Ethiopians
 - Cambodian (Khmer speakers)
 - Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese speakers)
 - Hispanic and Latino Communities
 - Hmong community
 - Laos Community
 - Mien community
 - People Living with Disabilities
 - Renters
 - Seniors
 - Somalis
 - Tagalog and English-speaking Filipino community
 - Tigrinya-speaking Eritreans and Ethiopians
 - Vietnamese community
 - Youth

Contact Information

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