

**City of Portland, Oregon**  
**Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC)**  
**Charter and Protocols**  
*Approved on February 2, 2010, Amended on July 6, 2010*

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## **Background**

The City of Portland's Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) was established on February 27, 2008, by the Portland City Council in response to recommendations made by numerous previous efforts, including Community Connect (2008), Bureau Innovation Project #9 (2007), the Public Involvement Task Force (2004), and the Administrative Services Review (2000). These efforts all recommended that a standing body be created to support and improve consistency and accountability in public involvement processes across all City of Portland bureaus.

## **Mission**

The goal of the Public Involvement Advisory Council is to strengthen and institutionalize the City of Portland's commitment to public involvement by adopting principles, policies, and guidelines that assist City bureaus in creating consistent expectations and processes for public involvement activities.

The PIAC is composed of Community members and City staff working collaboratively to develop and advocate for policy and best practices related to improving public involvement across all City bureaus.

## **Official to Whom this Advisory Council Reports**

The Public Involvement Advisory Council is a standing advisory council accountable to the Portland City Council. City Council appoints all PIAC members, and thus, PIAC members are considered "public officials" and will present their recommendations to City Council for formal approval and adoption. The PIAC will provide a formal report to City Council on current projects on an annual basis.

## **Scope of Advisory Council**

- Review and refine past recommendations regarding citywide public involvement.
- Develop guidelines and policy recommendations for citywide public involvement, to be presented to City Council for approval.
- Provide support and advice to City Council and City bureaus with implementation of shared public involvement guidelines and best practices.
- Encourage ongoing collaboration between the community, City bureaus and City Council in the development of shared public involvement guidelines.

## Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were developed by the PIAC and demonstrate PIAC's shared organizational values. These principles will serve as a basis for PIAC's decision making, implementation processes, organizational culture, and meeting design. We seek to ensure that our work supports:

- **Partnership:** A model of partnership between community and government.
- **Consistency:** The creation of shared guidelines and expectations for City bureaus to adapt and employ in their public involvement processes. While a uniform model will not serve the unique needs of bureaus, a basic level of consistency will increase the public's ability to understand and get involved in City processes. It also provides bureaus with resources and guidance in public involvement.
- **Representation:** Reducing barriers to involvement in order to be inclusive and representative of the whole community, and working to include those that have been historically excluded.
- **Effectiveness:** Ensuring that our work leads to tangible, measurable outcomes that increase the quality of public involvement and sustainability of high quality processes.
- **Implementation:** Incorporating action steps, monitoring, and evaluation into all PIAC recommendations. Providing ongoing guidance and support for bureaus' implementation of recommendations.

## Ground Rules for PIAC Meetings

Listen carefully and speak honestly.  
Respect the views of others.  
Keep an open perspective.  
Critique issues, not people or organizations.  
Allow everyone to speak without dominating the conversation; share the air.  
Take responsibility for the success of the meeting.  
Listen and consider both community and citywide concerns.  
Start and end meetings on time.  
Seek to provide solutions for issues or concerns that are raised.

## Duration and Number/Frequency of Meetings

The PIAC meets once a month on the first Tuesday of every month from 5:30 to 8:00 PM, unless otherwise notified. Any changes will be posted online at: [www.portlandonline.com/oni/piac](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/piac) PIAC meetings are open to the public and will provide a set amount of time during each meeting for public comment when necessary.

## Rules and Responsibility of All PIAC Members

- 1) **Attendance:** Members are required to attend all monthly meetings. PIAC members are allowed to miss up to three meetings per year. If a member cannot attend a meeting, they are required to inform the PIAC staff coordinator before the meeting, to be excused. After missing a meeting, a PIAC member should contact the PIAC staff coordinator and their

working group “lead” to receive updates and send in contributions/responses to work done during the missed meeting. The Mayor may choose to revoke PIAC membership, at the recommendation of PIAC, and by confirmation of City Council.

- 2) **Time Commitment:** Members are expected to commit four to six hours per month to PIAC related meetings and activities. This commitment of time includes reading email correspondence, reviewing meeting notes and handouts, and attending additional meetings as needed.
- 3) PIAC members are expected to serve on at least one working group.
- 4) PIAC members will present at City Council meetings and participate in briefings with the Mayor, City Commissioners, Bureau directors, and with community stakeholders, to discuss PIAC initiatives, as needed.
- 5) Members are expected to serve their full appointed two or three year term. If a member must resign due to unforeseen circumstances, resignation must be provided in writing to the PIAC staff coordinator.

## **Organization and Facilitation**

### **Leadership & Facilitation**

The PIAC will maintain a Coordinating Committee (CC) to develop the meeting agendas and overall process for PIAC. CC meetings will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month, 4:00 to 5:30 PM, unless otherwise notified. The CC is open to all interested PIAC members. CC members will rotate facilitation of PIAC meetings. PIAC staff coordinator will facilitate meetings as needed.

### **Working Groups**

As of March 2009, the PIAC has organized into three working groups. These working groups were created based on an assessment of the major themes that emerged from past public involvement recommendations. Working groups will report back to the larger PIAC at each monthly meeting and request feedback from other members. Any recommendations created in working groups will need to be adopted by the larger PIAC. The name and goal of each working group is:

- **Community Empowerment:** Support and increase the City’s skill and ability to engage the community in a community empowerment model.
- **Policy:** Develop citywide policies that advance quality public involvement.
- **Process:** Design internal City guidelines that guide and support bureaus in implementing quality public involvement processes.

The PIAC will work in these groups until it decides to discontinue or change this structure. PIAC working groups will generally meet during the second half of the PIAC monthly meeting time, unless decided otherwise. Working group members can decide whether they need to hold additional meetings outside of the monthly meeting time. Working groups are asked to:

- 1) Choose a “lead” member to facilitate working group meetings and provide coordination in between meetings. This role will be rotated amongst working group members.

- 2) Notify the PIAC staff coordinator of the scheduling of any additional working group meetings, with at least one week's notice, so that sufficient public notice can be given.
- 3) Ensure that meeting notes are recorded for all working group meetings, including a list of members present, and a summary of discussion and any decisions made.
- 4) Include the PIAC staff coordinator on any working group email exchanges, so that a public record is maintained.
- 5) Maintain a work plan that expresses the current goal and action steps being taken by the working group.

**Staffing:** The Office of Neighborhood Involvement provides a PIAC staff coordinator at the rate of .5FTE to manage coordination and facilitation activities for the PIAC. The PIAC staff coordinator will post past meeting notes online and send email reminders to PIAC members.

## **Decision Making Process**

The PIAC represents a diversity of expertise, skill sets and viewpoints. As such PIAC members are expected to listen, analyze, and consider both community and citywide goals and needs for the project. PIAC recommendations should represent a broad base of the collective wisdom about what will best serve the City of Portland.

**Consensus:** In developing recommendations to be forwarded to City Council, the PIAC will work by consensus; a method of making decisions through which a group strives to reach substantial, though not necessarily unanimous, agreement on matters of overall direction and policy which can be supported by all.

**2/3 Majority Vote:** If consensus is deemed not possible by the group, the PIAC will allow for a two-thirds majority vote by verbal assent to provide the basis for a decision. In the case of a majority vote, the PIAC will provide the opportunity for minority reports to be submitted and included in meeting notes. The PIAC will strive to ensure that there is a balanced representation of Community members and City staff perspectives when voting and consensus processes are conducted. All PIAC members appointed by City Council will serve as voting members.

**Quorum:** A quorum is defined as 50% of appointed membership, plus one (e.g., if there are 34 appointed members, the quorum would be 18). A quorum is required to conduct business and make official decisions.

## **Membership**

PIAC will have a minimum of 24 and a maximum of 34 members, representing both community and government viewpoints, as well as specific skills and expertise that relate to public involvement. City staff members are chosen for their perspective and ability to inform and initiate public involvement policy discussions within their bureaus and on a citywide level. City staff members are chosen to bring a bureau perspective to PIAC discussions and to be able to take back and share PIAC developments within their bureaus, getting feedback when needed. Community members are chosen for their experience and ability to draw upon the feedback/experiences of a larger community/constituency regarding perspectives on public involvement, and for their ability to collect feedback from that community/constituency when needed.

There are two and three year terms available to ensure that PIAC membership is staggered. Approximately half of all City staff positions are either two or three-year terms, and approximately half of Community Member positions are two-year and the other half are three-year terms.

Members are allowed to serve for a total of two terms. Members seeking reappointment will submit a reappointment form expressing their interest in serving for another term. Bureau representatives are asked to re-confirm ongoing support for serving on the PIAC, from their bureau leadership. In the case of no other suitable bureau representative, bureau members may ask for an exemption to serve more than two terms. Selection Committee will consider reappointment requests along with any new member applications

### **Selection Process**

PIAC CC and staff coordinator will work to ensure that membership is composed of approximately half community members and half city staff members. PIAC CC and staff coordinator will work to maintain a diversity of members, including but not limited to, youth, elders, persons with disabilities, communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities, neighborhood groups, and business associations.

Interim vacancies will be announced in January and a member will be recruited to fill the balance of the unexpired term. Upcoming vacancies will be announced each July, with terms beginning in September. A selection committee consisting of both community members and city staff will review applications and forward recommendations to the Mayor and City Council. The Mayor will make final selections and appointments will be confirmed by a vote of City Council.