

## **CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT**

Citizen involvement is essential in the governmental process to promote the general health and welfare of the total community. New approaches must be developed by local government to effectively involve citizens in the planning and decision-making process. Positive accomplishments can be achieved when citizens become involved in planning programs.

### **ISSUES**

1. Public awareness and understanding of land use proposals
2. Communication between the County and community groups, special interests, and individuals
3. Public availability of land use information
4. Mechanisms for public participation
5. Methods for decision makers to respond to citizen concerns and comments
6. The role of various public groups in the planning process

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

1. ORS 215 and 197 require the County to provide opportunities for citizen participation and to establish a citizens committee to assist the County in implementing and evaluating its citizen involvement program.
2. Clackamas County has an officially adopted Citizen Involvement Program, and that program is evaluated annually by the Committee for Citizen Involvement.
3. Continued public awareness of and citizen participation in the ongoing planning process is essential to responsible decisions which recognize public concerns and priorities.

## **GOALS**

- Promote public participation in formulation of the long-range goals, objectives, scope, and focus of the planning programs.
- Encourage broadly based public participation representing all concerned geographical areas and diverse interests.
- Provide an opportunity for every interested citizen to participate in the formative stages and throughout the planning process.
- Insure successful citizen participation through ongoing education in the planning process.
- Insure regular communication between citizens and County officials (governing body, Planning Commission, and Planning staff).
- Insure a continuing citizen participation effort in the planning process and periodic reevaluation.

## **POLICIES**

- 1.0 Require provisions for opportunities for citizen participation in preparing and revising local land use plans and ordinances. Insure opportunities for broad representations, not only of property owners and Countywide special interests, but also of those persons within the neighborhood or areas in question.
- 2.0 Maintain a Committee for Citizen Involvement with membership that includes representatives of Community Planning Organizations and a diversity of occupation, geographic representation, and gender.
- 3.0 Direct the Committee for Citizen Involvement to develop and implement an annual action plan for citizen involvement.
- 4.0 The County will forward to affected CPOs copies of notices it receives from Metropolitan Service District, Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission, and other neighboring jurisdictions on opportunities for citizen participation regarding proposed Urban Growth Boundary Amendments and/or annexations and other land use matters.
- 5.0 Encourage community planning organizations throughout the County and promote recognized community organizations where none exist through direct mail and media information, sponsorship of organizational meetings, and other appropriate means.
- 6.0 Seek citizens' input not only through recognized community organizations, but also through service organizations, interest groups, granges, and other ways.

- 7.0 Recognize community organizations which meet the following requirements:
- a. That one or more well-publicized general community meetings have been held for purposes of information, organization, adoption of bylaws, and election of officers.
  - b. That all community meetings shall be publicized in advance of the meeting date in accordance with existing state law, and participation shall be open to any property owner, resident, business owner, or representative of any nonprofit organization located within the community. Criteria regulating voting shall be included in the bylaws.
  - c. That the organization's structure is capable of providing necessary coordination and communication between its members and County departments, and elected and appointed officials.
  - d. That the boundaries of the community organization specifically define an area of mutual interests, appropriate geographic size and population for effective planning. These boundaries should take into account natural boundaries, commercial patterns, community organizations, and historic factors.
  - e. That community organization bylaws, assuring satisfactory fulfillment of the above minimum requirements, be recognized by official Board of County Commissioners' action and placed on file with the County.
- 8.0 Insure continued support of a recognized community group as long as the group fulfills its responsibilities, maintains the above policies, holds at least two well-publicized meetings per year, and furnishes copies of minutes of meetings to the County, together with an up-to-date list of officers.
- 9.0 Require the following functions and responsibilities of community organizations:
- a. Community organizations shall be advisory to the Board of County Commissioners, Planning Commission, and Planning Division on matters affecting their neighborhoods.
  - b. The organization may develop planning proposals with respect to land use, zoning, parks, water resources, open space and recreation, annexation, housing, community facilities, transportation and traffic, community services,

and other factors affecting the livability of their neighborhoods.

- c. Community organizations should review and advise the County on changes in the land use plan and zoning ordinance and may submit zoning recommendations to the County. Such recommendations shall be actively considered.
- d. Community organizations should develop and submit annual requests for services supportive of their functions for County approval and inclusion during the regular budget process.
- e. Community organizations may request funding of neighborhood projects for possible inclusion in the County budget and capital improvement program.
- f. Community organizations should continue the planning process by reevaluating the goals, objectives, and recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan or a Community Plan.

10.0 Assist community organizations by:

- a. Insuring that the level of funding and human resources allocated to the citizen involvement program is sufficient to make citizen involvement an integral part of the planning process.
- b. Providing a staff liaison for citizen participation.
- c. Providing designated representatives of recognized community organizations with copying services, postage, supplies, voter and property owner mailing lists, staff assistance, etc., to aid in the planning process.
- d. Notifying community organizations of proposed land use actions and legislative changes as required by ordinances.

11.0 Promote informed public participation in decisions through sponsoring or conducting education programs and providing publications and printed materials.

12.0 Insure availability of planning documents and reports, as appropriate, through County offices and public libraries.

13.0 Insure that the County responds to citizen recommendations through appropriate mechanisms and procedures.

14.0 Continue to implement the County's adopted Citizen Involvement Program.