

Section 1

Citizen Involvement

I know no greater depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves. And if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their indiscretion through education. That is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power.

— Thomas Jefferson

This section is intended to show compliance with Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) Statewide Planning Goal 1, Citizen Involvement, which requires local governments “to develop a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process.” The Citizen Participation Goal in the 1976 *Land-Use Policies for Oregon City* is to “provide an active and systematic process for citizen and public agency involvement in the land use decision-making for Oregon City.” The goal is based on the philosophy that a neighborhood program would provide the best means for citizens to become involved in the planning process.

Recognizing the importance of providing citizens with opportunities to be informed about, and involved in, the planning process, Oregon City established a Citizen Involvement Program in the 1980s. The program has two major components: neighborhood associations and a Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC). The CIC is the officially recognized citizen advisory committee to meet LCDC Statewide Planning Goal 1, and as required by Goal 1, is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating the Citizen Involvement Program. The CIC coordinates and communicates various aspects of citizen participation in the community and advises the City Commission, the Planning Commission and other planning and advisory bodies. The City Manager provides a City Liaison, and the Public Affairs Manager provides staff assistance. The overall goal of the CIC is to help improve the quality of life in Oregon City.

Prior to beginning the Comprehensive Plan update in the spring of 2002, the CIC revised the citizen involvement procedures for Oregon City. The CIC developed a five-year strategic plan (*Citizen Involvement Program Five-Year Strategic Plan*, 2002), which includes a mission statement, vision, values, roles and

responsibilities; wrote bylaws, approved by the membership on January 11, 2000; and wrote a Citizen Involvement Handbook. The documents were developed over three years by the entire CIC, which consisted of the elected leadership of the City-recognized neighborhood associations in Oregon City.

The five-year strategic plan and bylaws were written to comply with the intent of LCDC Statewide Planning Goal 1, which requires citizens to be involved in all aspects of land-use planning and other livability issues.

The CIC serves the area within the current legal city limits and all areas of impact within the current Urban Growth Boundary such as county islands within the neighborhood association boundaries; areas of the county adjacent to recognized neighborhood associations; and areas of the county not adjacent to a recognized neighborhood association but within the Urban Growth

Boundary and not represented by a county-recognized neighborhood association (called Community Planning Organizations or CPOs).

In February 1999, the City sponsored a meeting to evaluate a proposal for a “visioning process” and how the city might benefit from the undertaking. At the meeting, it was concluded that the process could work if properly structured with realistic “visions” that could be accomplished by volunteers working with the community; government, medical community, educational leaders, and business organizations. From that meeting, the

First City’s Future Initiating Task Force was created.¹ The task force then developed a strategy to create a vision for Oregon City.

In November 2000, the task force held its first community-wide open house, which was attended by 125 community members and City staff. From that meeting, a vision statement emerged that brought forward shared common goals for the future of Oregon City (*First City’s Future, Visioning Project, Phase 1 Report*, 2001). The visioning process is an ongoing project and needs to be updated periodically. A successful visioning process is a constant, dynamic process that must be initiated and maintained by the community. The First City’s Future Initiating Task Force visioning effort represented a major citizen participation project.



Goal 1.1 Citizen Involvement Program

Implement a Citizen Involvement Program that will provide an active and systematic process for citizen participation in all phases of the land-use decision-making process to enable citizens to consider and act upon a broad range of

¹ “First City” is a reference to the fact that Oregon City was the first incorporated town west of the Rockies and the seat of the first provisional government of the Oregon Territory.

issues affecting the livability, community sustainability, and quality of neighborhoods and the community as a whole.

Policy 1.1.1

Utilize neighborhood associations as the vehicle for neighborhood-based input to meet the requirements of the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) Statewide Planning Goal 1, Citizen Involvement. The Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC) shall serve as the officially recognized citizen committee needed to meet LCDC Statewide Planning Goal 1.

Goal 1.2 Community and Comprehensive Planning

Ensure that citizens, neighborhood groups, and affected property owners are involved in all phases of the comprehensive planning program.

Policy 1.2.1

Encourage citizens to participate in appropriate government functions and land-use planning.

Policy 1.2.1

Encourage development and refinement of CIC and neighborhood association bylaws that will govern the groups' formation and operations.

Goal 1.3 Community Education

Provide education for individuals, groups, and communities to ensure effective participation in decision-making processes that affect the livability of neighborhoods.

Policy 1.3.1

Encourage training of volunteers involved with the CIC and neighborhood associations.

Goal 1.4 Community Involvement

Provide complete information for individuals, groups, and communities to participate in public policy planning and implementation of policies.

Policy 1.4.1

Notify citizens about community involvement opportunities when they occur.

Goal 1.5 Government/Community Relations

Provide a framework for facilitating open, two-way communication between City representatives and individuals, groups, and communities.

Policy 1.5.1

Support the CIC in initiating and planning events in cooperation with the City on issues of mutual interest. Topics may include such things as working with local schools regarding citizen involvement and stakeholders involved with Comprehensive Plan development and Urban Growth Boundary expansion.

Goal 1.6 CIC Continuous Development

Support the CIC's team spirit and dedication to community involvement to ensure continuous improvement.

Policy 1.6.1

Assist the CIC in finding funding for the Community Involvement Program's current and future development.

Policy 1.6.2

Support an Annual Leadership Development Conference for CIC members, to include updating the CIC strategic plan, if funding is available.

Goal 1.7 Neighborhood Plans

Adopt neighborhood plans that encompass a broad range of concerns for each neighborhood over a five- to ten-year period as refinements of the Oregon City Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 1.7.1

Ensure that neighborhood plans are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 1.7.2

Provide opportunities for property owners, residents, and businesses within the neighborhood to be involved in all phases of the preparation of a neighborhood plan.

Policy 1.7.3

Use the neighborhood plans to make recommendations to city boards, commissions, and agencies regarding public improvements and land-use decisions.

Goal 1.8 Advisory Committees

Establish and support citizen advisory committees and commissions.

Policy 1.8.1

Identify the areas of City government in which the counsel of a formal citizen advisory committee or commission is warranted if funding is available to provide appropriate staff support.

Policy 1.8.2

Solicit and support citizen participation on citizen advisory committees and commissions. Identify desirable expertise from the Portland metro area as needed to best serve the interests of Oregon City.