

Neighborhood Engagement Recommendations

Chapter 15-The Neighborhood Participation Program (NPP-Program)

EQUITY

New Orleans has an established culture of community engagement and leadership in decisions of its development and identity. The Neighborhood Engagement Office is a locus of the necessary exchange between community and public agencies, as well across communities. Through its devotion to neighborhood engagement and transparency, this office is one of our finest stewards of equity.

RESILIENCE

By fortifying our neighborhoods and practitioners with leadership in resilience thinking and practice, we can empower New Orleanians to manage complexity and make well-informed decisions. Through placing the science of environmental planning and development at the service on community, we achieve transparent, thoughtful, culturally-relevant engagement at the foundation of our resilience strategy.

1. New Recommendation:

To support a sustainable NPP-Program and support any deviation from the first draft offered, a newly added narrative inserted in the opening section of Chapter 15 detailing the Neighborhood Participation Plan (NPP-Plan) as one of the pillars of City's governance would set the foundation for public and civic engagement as the primary provision within the Neighborhood Participation Program.

This chapter will require a general rewrite to reflect the experiences of the NPP Program and NPP Plan. The Master Plan should contain a brief but comprehensive narrative that is broad in its application that will provide insight for public engagement policy for city governance. It should cover the NPP- Plan to do the following:

- Outline Effective Engagement Process
- Commit Diligent and Inclusive Community Outreach with Focused Public Engagement
- Demonstrate Transparency and Accountability in the Decision Making Process
- Identify the added value to outcomes due to Community Participation
- Identify deliberate deliverables due to the Systematic Process

2. Please note there should be a distinct notation between the NPP-Program and NPP-Plan as well as the work of Neighborhood Engagement Office throughout Chapter 15.

In 2011, the City of New Orleans envisioned a public engagement model that created the roadmap for public participation throughout city governance. The comprehensive neighborhood participation plan provided the framework and set the tone for both public administrators and community members to

work collaboratively to arrive at the best solutions on publicly funded projects while focusing on the City's pressing issues that affect everyone who lives in the city. The NPP-Plan encompasses practices and processes for exploring ways to create opportunities for dialogue, information sharing, partnership and interaction between city government and neighborhoods, residents, leaders and stakeholders.

The Neighborhood Participation Plan is the critical tool to improve public participation efforts within public decision-making processes. These efforts will ensure a collective wisdom of residents and public administrators to best serve the City of New Orleans.

I. GOAL 1.

(1A) Capacity Building and Training Opportunities should include specified city agencies whose mission is to inform, educate, link and orientate residents around city governance. (Neighborhood Engagement Office)

Description of Completed Action/Status of Ongoing Task: Neighborhood Engagement Office (NEO) has and continues to provide topic related overview on the City Planning Commission (CPC) Neighborhood Participation Plan (NPP) at various meetings, forums and workshops for community leaders and residents in Orleans Parish. Frequently and annually throughout the year neighborhood roundtables, citywide summits, Coffee On Your Corner community meetings, district-based leadership forums and Civic Leadership Academy classes are held for residents of New Orleans around city governance and civic engagement. CPC NPP process is thoroughly presented at those events for capacity building and maximum participation from citizens in CPC NPP processes. In addition, the NEO Office coordinates and supports additional capacity building initiatives with local non-profits organizations throughout the area, titled Neighborhood Capacity Building Initiative (NCBI) who also provides capacity building trainings and workshops for neighborhood associations and local community leaders. A NPP manual was created by NEO and issued on behalf of the City of New Orleans as the roadmap for public participation with City governmental agencies.

New recommended action(s):

Creation of Training Videos for NPP Process and additional on-line tools including a Land-Use Webpage.

II. GOAL 2.

(2A) Presently the MasterPlan has the provision to engage District-wide as part of the process on land-use decision; with no implementation of the District-wide Councils. Since no District-wide Councils were established during the time frame designated within the MasterPlan, and the NPP Plan has proven very effective in engaging the community in areas of policy, projects, and programs, the elimination of the District-wide Council as a written element of the Master Plan should be considered.

Description of Completed Action/Status of Ongoing Task: Neighborhood Engagement Office (NEO) has been instrumental in creating policy and a civic engagement model that ensured early notification and publicized community meetings. NEO also assisted in identifying a clear and defined system for obtaining public comment and conducting civic engagement within neighborhoods on proposed land use actions. NEO also provided the necessary guidance for criteria on community outreach and requirements for action-oriented responses, in addition to addressing community concerns on land use

actions during NPP process. NEO will and has worked alongside City Attorney and City Planning Commission on ordinance presentations to City Council. NEO has positioned itself to support civic engagement on land-use actions.

(2D) Platforms have been established for public feedback and input.

Description of Completed Action/Status of Ongoing Task: NEO in tandem with CPC has and will continually convene and facilitate meetings and forums to collect and disseminate information. NEO has created the platforms for reporting changes, identifying new opportunities and addressing impacts as it affects the communities on the land-use decision through the NPP for CPC as well as other city agencies. NEO promotes and sets the stage for public participation as they schedule forums and meetings such as Coffee on Your Corner- bimonthly, Roundtables -quarterly and Neighborhood Summits and district-based Budgeting For Outcome Community Sessions- Annually.

(2E) NEO has defined a notification process that initiates notification to key stakeholders (neighborhood and community leaders) with sensitivity to time schedules and calls for action. NEO has and currently serves a resource for individuals/entities/organization seeking guidance on many city processes in addition to the NPP for land based actions. NEO will continually endeavor to work jointly with the CPC on community concerns and problematic challenges around the NPP process to predetermine measures necessary for transparency and equity within the process.

New recommended action(s):

1. NEO sustains the capacity to facilitate stakeholders' meeting.
2. Illustrative map added to One Stop App Web page for a more prominent designation of neighborhood boundaries.

(2F) Presently the MasterPlan has the provision to engage District-wide as part of the process on land-use decision; with no implementation of the District-wide Councils, NEO has been responsible during summits, district based leadership forums and roundtables to engage community and initiate dialogue, discussions and review of neighborhood district plans and its alignment with the community's vision.

New recommended action(s):

Since no District-wide Councils were established during the time frame designated within the Master Plan, and the NPP Plan has still proven effective in engaging the community in areas of policy, projects, and programs , the elimination of the District-wide Council as a written element of the Master Plan should be considered.

(2I) The previous strategy identified in original draft on this goal was to transition NPP system to the Neighborhood Engagement Office or the Mayor's Office of Public Advocacy. Since the Mayor's Office of Public Advocacy no longer exists and based on the Neighborhood Engagement Office scope of work, formalized programs on civic engagement, numerous successes in public participation and contributions added to the city's governance system of processes for departmental public engagement, it would be very beneficial for community to have NEO manage and maintain the temperament of NPP-Program.

New recommended action(s):

Neighborhood Participation Program should be inclusive of all City agencies. Outlines, narratives and/or references for the NPP process as it relates to other City agencies should be added and segmented into the **Community Participation Program Chapter 15** to solidify the universal application adopted by City of New Orleans as the platform for civic engagement for city agencies specified (ie...CPA, NOPD, NORDC, etc..) and identified within the City of New Orleans Neighborhood Participation Plan Policy.

III. GOAL 3.

(3A) Administrative and Logistical support has been provided by liaisons in NEO for public funded projects. NEO role should increase as a referral source in the NPP-Program process or proposed land base actions

New recommended action(s):

NEO increases its responsibility in the NPP-Program

(3B) Mayor’s Office of Communication in tandem with NEO provides info via online notices, email blasts, press releases. Information is shared at city sponsored forums, meetings and posted online on website.

Stat meetings are held monthly and posted online. Customer service stat, Blight stat, and online state is accessible to all and public participation and attendance is encouraged at meetings. Public notice of meetings is promoted through the calendar provided at NOLA.gov website that allows notification to be uploaded into personal calendars.

IV. GOAL 4.

(4B) NEO has and will continually coordinate and facilitate public meetings that adhered to the NPP process for city agencies on pre-design, final design and pre-construction meetings for City agencies on land use actions. NPP process has been created and implemented by NEO for CPA, NOPD, NORDC, ITI, DPW, OCD for land use and other programming actions.

V. GOAL 5.

(5C) NEO methodology for community engagement can be also applied for Capital Improvement Program. NEO can serve as the technical advisors to ensure the information shared between the two parties is relevant and meaningful to the decision making process.

(5D) Several models of a Neighborhood Improvement Fund have been established and executed for community generated projects. Several programs have been managed through and by NEO; Beautification Grant- (Love Your Block), NCBI collaborative grants, NEO mini-grants have been a few of the many opportunities presented to communities at large. Also another grant to mention, offered to neighborhoods, includes the NOLA for Life Mentoring Grant sponsored by the Mayor’s Innovation Team.

Please Note – No comment was provided for the following topics:

(2B), (2D), (2G) - Not Applicable for Assessment by NEO

(4A) – Not Applicable for Assessment by NEO

(5A), (5B) - Not Applicable for Assessment by NEO