

Date: 12/06/2021

To: County Board of Commissioners

CC: Tanya Ange, County Administrator
Stephen Roberts, Land Use and Transportation Director

From: Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement

Re: Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) and Community Participation Organizations (CPO)
Revisioning Project

Overview

Washington County established the Committee for Community Involvement (CCI) and Community Participation Organizations (CPOs) with an expanded and formalized role in 1986. This was in response to Oregon Statewide Land Use Planning [Goal 1: Citizen Involvement](#). With the adoption of [Resolution and Order 86-58](#) that same year, the County began a contractual relationship with OSU Extension Service to administer the CPO program and manage CCI. In 2016, the coordination and support of this program came under the purview of the newly established Community Engagement program within the County's Administrative Office. More recently, this program has undergone another transition as Community Engagement became integrated into the newly formed Office of Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (OEICE).

CPO boundaries were also created in 1986 and although some modifications of the boundaries have been made over the years, much more has changed in the population, demography, and geography of Washington County since that time. Some CPO's boundaries are now entirely encompassed by cities which poses a challenge in terms of community clarification about jurisdictional service provision. The population count per CPO ranges greatly, as well, from nearly 1,500 (CPO 15 Fern Hill) to nearly 95,000 (CPO 6 Aloha). Furthermore, CPO boundaries do not align with Commissioner districts which can also be a source of confusion for community as they try to determine the appropriate place to direct their concerns about specific issues.

Currently thirteen CPOs are active in the County. This number is unchanged since the addition of CPO 12F in 2018. Although some CPO's have chosen to not meet during the pandemic due to concerns about internet reliability, virtual meetings, and competing priorities, they all remain active according to their specific leadership. While participation has waned slightly, staff are seeing close to pre-pandemic meeting participation numbers for those holding virtual meetings suggesting that a virtual option allows for more accessibility.

Over the last few years, and through various program changes, volunteer community members serving on the CCI and in CPO leadership have expressed a growing concern among about the state of the program. Staff and others frequently hear from CPO and CCI members about concerns that the program is no longer providing an adequate level of support to volunteers and that the program seems to be significantly diminished or failing in its mission and responsibilities identified in R&O 86-58.

Staff share some of the concerns regarding R&O 86-58 not meeting the current need and more specifically staff are concerned that the program is not currently aligned with the County’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion as identified in the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resolution](#) passed in early 2020. In early 2021, the OEICE conducted a demographic survey of CPO participants, the outcome of which was shared with the Board during an April 27, 2021 work session presentation of the first quarterly report from the OEICE. The findings show that the majority of respondents are in similar demographic categories (60 years or older, white identified, property owner, college graduate, median income of \$100k-150K – presentation excerpt attached) that do not reflect the diversity of Washington County. Given the homogeneity of respondents, it’s possible that the perspectives shared by current CPO participants may not fully reflect the perspectives or priorities of the entire community.

This memo will detail the OEICE’s current support to the CCI and CPO program and some ideas on how OEICE can begin to reshape and improve the CCI and CPO program for all involved, while also increasing community participation from people who have been historically excluded, as part of our commitments in the County’s February 2020 Equity Resolution.

OEICE Current Budget and Programmatic Support (FY 21-22)

OEICE allocates 350,000 dollars in lottery funds to the CPO program, this covers a variety of things specifically related to the CCI and CPO program, including:

- a portion of 6 FTE (listed below)
- funding for supplies and materials for meeting support and information sharing
- marketing (including the \$10,000 that has been mentioned in the past) and CPO special projects funds
- training opportunities related to EDI and meeting facilitation and consensus building
- support for the Civic Leaders training project

For both the CCI and CPO programs, the OEICE regularly provides general programmatic support from a Sr. Administrative Specialist, Program Specialist, and a Program Manager; and direct staff support from 3 Program Coordinators who are assigned to specific active CPOs and CCI.

Name	Classification	Support
Christina Barboza	Program Coordinator	Direct for 8, 10, 12C, 12F, 13, 15
Highland Edelman	Program Coordinator	Direct for 4B, 4K, 4M, 10
Marcus Ford	Program Coordinator	Direct for 1, 3, 6, 7, & CCI
Tricia Kennedy	Sr. Administrative Specialist	General for all CPOs & CCI
Carol Renaud	Program Specialist	General for all CPOs & CCI
Amanda Garcia-Snell	Program Manager	General for all CPOs & CCI

Support includes the following:

- Meeting Preparation
 - preparing agenda (most CPO leaders complete a fillable PDF and staff refine or offer extra support where needed)
 - meeting topic ideas
- Meeting support

- Technical assistance for Zoom meetings
 - Meeting start up
 - Speaker and presentation support
 - Zoom basic training
- Assist with identifying, contacting or connecting with presenters/speakers
- Meeting attendance
 - Coordinators attend when requested
 - pre-pandemic coordinators attended a minimum of 1 meeting each quarter for every CPO
 - May 2020-June 2021 coordinators attended every CPO meeting held
 - now coordinators are back to pre-pandemic attendance minimums
 - Coordinators may step in to facilitate if needed/respond to issues
- CPO/CCI Leadership development
 - Annual new leadership training (haven't had this since 2018. In 2019 CCI wanted to host it but changed their mind a month before it was scheduled to be held in the Fall, staff were planning to hold it for early 2020 but didn't because of the pandemic and additional program changes.)
 - provision of facilitation training (Technology of Participation) and EDI training (Race Forward) to support inclusivity was offered to all CPO leaders and CCI (none attended to staff knowledge)
- General program support
 - respond to email/phone requests for information on LUT or other County policies, projects, processes
 - communicate meetings (post on Nextdoor, the County webpage, send email to Constant Contact CPO and CCI member list and mail hard copy agendas to some mailing list members, per request)
 - misc. tasks such as finding previous Significant Natural Resources projects or information
 - collect and analyze demographic and meeting participation data to identify gaps in participation to identify strategies to increase diversity in recruitment.

For CCI, staff additionally provide:

- Logistics support
 - coordinate with CCI Chair for agenda; sign-in sheets; (for in-person - AV needs; bring hard copy agendas)
- Take meeting notes
- Harold Haynes Awards (logistics support for that event; nominations; prepare nomination packet; order award; BoC agenda item; event logistics)

OEICE Recommendations

The County's geography, demography and government organization has changed significantly since 1986 and the adoption of R&O 86-58. When established, the CCI and CPO program were mainly based around land use issues in the County. Over time, some volunteers have expressed interest in expanding their scope to include more "quality of life" topics. This has aligned nicely with the overall shift in County

priorities to steer the program more toward alignment with the County's current commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. The County's population has also grown significantly, and jurisdictional boundaries and commissioner districts have shifted over time as well. This has impacted specific CPOs differently and created a vast inequity and inequality in CPO boundary and population distribution.

Although Statewide Planning Goal 1 requires counties to have an officially recognized committee for citizen involvement to monitor and encourage public participation in planning, no requirement exists for Counties to have an independent CCI or CPO-type program. In Washington County, however, some CCI and CPO requirements are contained in adopted Land Use regulations such as the Comprehensive Framework Plan for the Urban Area and the [Community Development Code](#) (Sections 107-6 and 107-7). OEICE would continue to work closely with Land Use & Transportation department staff to ensure that any recommended programmatic changes would follow requirements of Goal 1 and that the implications for County regulations were understood, noted, and addressed in the recommendations.

The committee for citizen involvement may take a variety of forms in addition to its current volunteer-led form, it could also be configured as a sub-committee or an advisory committee to the Planning Commission, or a dual role with the Planning Commission where members also serve as the CCI, or it could be a Board appointed advisory council and still achieve compliance with Goal 1. Additionally, there is no specific Goal 1 requirement for a CPO program or an engagement program that is structured in the same way in which the CPO program currently operates. The following recommendations are based in OEICE's interest in revising the CPO program to align with County equity, diversity, and inclusion goals, center engagement on racial equity, and be responsive to the diverse perspectives throughout the entire County.

OEICE recognizes the many volunteer contributions the CCI and CPO participants have made over the last 45+ years and appreciates that those entities have served as a way for the department of Land Use & Transportation to send information out to the community and receive input. Specifically, CCI and CPOs have actively participated in the land use program by responding to development proposals, holding meetings to discuss proposals, and helping community members comment on the proposals. CCI provides annual recommendations for the Long Range Planning Work Program and Land Use & Transportation also refers to the CPOs and CCI as an integral part of their public engagement approach in [the Public Involvement Guidelines for Transportation Planning, Programs and Projects \(R&O 14-115\)](#) including looking to them as a resource for reviewing the engagement plans for some prior efforts like the Aloha-Reedville Plan.

As demonstrated by their relationship with Land Use & Transportation, CCI and CPOs have the potential for significant influence in land use planning decisions. This is one more reason why it is so important to ensure that the CCI and CPOs have every opportunity to include diverse perspectives that represent and reflect the County's entire population.

Recommendation 1: CPO Boundaries

OEICE recommends assessing CPO boundary population, demographics within boundaries, and overlay with Commissioner districts to determine if the CPO boundaries should be leveled, in regard to population, and the best way to make that change. OEICE would also recommend exploration of the potential for cross-jurisdictional collaboration to address the CPO needs of people living within city boundaries. Considering the County's current work in reapportionment, OEICE recommends aligning that work with the newly revised Commissioner district boundaries once those are adopted in early 2022.

Recommendation 2: Alignment with County Strategic Planning Process

To utilize best community engagement practices, OEICE recommends aligning the engagement portion of the CPO revisioning project with community engagement related to the County's strategic planning process. This would allow for robust and comprehensive engagement, centered on racial equity, that does not over burden community partners or community members. Conducting this work in accordance with the County Strategic Planning process would push this timeline to the Fall of 2022.

Recommendation 3: CPO Structure

Washington County's approach to community engagement in response to Goal 1 is unique. Most jurisdictions use a different structure. OEICE recommends an in-depth analysis of other jurisdiction's Goal 1 related community engagement structure including organization, budget, and process to better understand options for a successful program. Specifically, OEICE will work to identify equity centered options for how individual CPOs should be structured (leadership, bylaws etc.). Revisioning the CPO structure should also include more foundational and linguistic elements that encourage participation from diverse community members. These elements may include language access, plain language for technical topics, leadership training related to equity, diversity, and inclusion principles, meeting format, and provision of community supports like space for children to engage with each other at in-person meetings.

Recommendation 4: R&O 86-58

OEICE recommends updating the R&O 86-58 to modernize the language, nomenclature and overall align the responsibilities to reflect the County's current commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Looking to recently collected CCI and CPO member demographics, staff are aware that CCI and CPO participation does not reflect the demographics of the County. All aspects of R&O 86-58 should be assessed to determine the best approach to ensuring and maintaining a program that supports equity, diversity, and inclusion in community engagement. This should include an in-depth equity analysis of CCI including its specific organization, functionality, and designation as a volunteer lead committee in relation to an appointed committee.