

## **EUGENE NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION POLICY with guidelines (*in italics*)**

The Citizens Involvement Committee (CIC) has recommended that guidelines be prepared for the City of Eugene's Neighborhood Organization Recognition Policy, Resolution No. 2554. Since this resolution was adopted in August, 1976, the meaning and intent of some of the provisions have been specifically interpreted or have developed certain meanings through practice. The marginal notes to the attached copy of the resolution explain the City's current thinking on the intent of these provisions and, in some instances, current implementation procedures.

Approved by Resolution No. 3746 of the Eugene City Council, on the 26th day of January, 1983.

Amended by Resolution No. 5140 of the Eugene City Council, on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2015.

### About the Guidelines

Guidelines to the NORP are in italics. They are a general guide of what is expected to be included in your neighborhood association charter. A model charter has been developed to assist groups in reviewing their charters to determine whether changes should be made to better reflect the intent of the policy. A copy of the model charter is in the *Neighborhood Handbook* at <http://www.eugene-or.gov/neighborhoods> or by request, 541-682-6243.

**EUGENE NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION POLICY with guidelines (*in italics*)**

RESOLUTION NO. 2554

AUGUST 1976

A RESOLUTION REPEALING THE NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION POLICY FOR CITIZEN PLANNING GROUPS ADOPTED AUGUST 28, 1973, AND ADOPTING A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD, ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION POLICY.

The Common Council of the City of Eugene finds that:

Public participation is the act of sharing in the formulation of policies and proposals which affect the lives of all citizens.

Local government has a responsibility for encouraging public participation in the planning process, both for the betterment of local decision-making and to satisfy requirements of state and federal planning programs.

Participation needs to go beyond just the simple role of commenting toward a process which involves the public in an active role.

The City of Eugene recognizes that public participation through neighborhood organizations can produce benefits for the general health, welfare, and pride of the total community.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EUGENE, a Municipal Corporation of the State of Oregon, as follows:

Section 1. The City of Eugene encourages the formation of neighborhood organizations and their involvement in the local government's decision-making processes.

Section 2. The City of Eugene adopts this Neighborhood Organization Recognition Policy in order to establish criteria for the recognition of neighborhood organizations and define the relationship between the city and recognized neighborhood organizations.

Section 3. The following sections one through five, which comprise this Neighborhood Organization Recognition Policy, are adopted as policy statements and are to be used to affirm and govern the relationship between the city and recognized neighborhoods as they participate in the decision-making processes of the city:

## **EUGENE NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION POLICY with guidelines (*in italics*)**

### **Section 1. Criteria for Recognition of Neighborhood Organizations.**

(a) At the time a neighborhood governing document is submitted to the City Council for recognition, evidence shall be submitted showing that the document was widely circulated within the neighborhood before adoption by the group.

(b) All meetings shall be well-publicized in advance

*See Article VIII, Section 3 of model charter concerning notification.*

(c) The neighborhood organization shall be open to the total area and diversity of interests present in the neighborhood. Participation shall be open to any property owner or tenant within the neighborhood. Criteria regulating voting shall be determined by each neighborhood group, shall not exclude residents, and shall be included in the governing document.

*This requires that participation be open to property owners or tenants (includes businesses) within the neighborhood, but the neighborhood groups may decide whether they wish to restrict voting to residents only.*

*The neighborhood groups may establish additional, reasonable voting criteria, such as requiring attendance at a minimum of one meeting within the year prior to being allowed to vote. Most groups do not restrict voting to residents. It is recommended that those groups restricting voting to the residents establish some mechanism to assure participation by non-resident property owners on issues that might concern them. This might be done by special notice of meetings when there is an agenda item of special interest; encouraging the business community to have representation at the general meetings; or holding a special meeting of business people to get input; and being sure the business community and non-residents have time at the meetings to speak.*

*See the model charter for some general guidelines.*

(d) The organization structure shall provide for necessary coordination among neighborhood residents and between the neighborhood and city departments and elected and appointed officials.

(e) The boundaries of the neighborhood shall specifically define an area of appropriate geographic size and population for effective planning and these boundaries shall take into account natural boundaries, commercial patterns, community organizations, and historical factors.

(f) A neighborhood governing document which meets the listed requirements may be submitted to the City Council with a request for recognition of the neighborhood by official Council action.

(g) The neighborhood organization shall assume the responsibility of maintaining the requirements for recognition. Alleged violations shall be taken before the neighborhood organization at a publicized general meeting. Thereafter, unsettled disputes which concern adherence to provisions of this Policy may be taken to the City Council, which will take appropriate action, up to and including withdrawal of recognition.

*Members of neighborhood groups or residents of the area are generally responsible for being sure the group carries out its responsibilities as indicated in (g).*

(h) As long as the neighborhood remains organized and actively involved with current issues or in developing any part of a plan, it will continue to be recognized.

*With respect to (h), an administrative process for neighborhood groups to become inactive rather than have recognition*

*withdrawn, was approved by the City Council October 8, 1980, and is attached. The purpose of the process is to allow the group that has lost its leadership and participants time to reorganize, if there are others in the area that wish to do so. It also makes it easier for a group designated' as "inactive" to become active again without having to be formally recognized by the City Council. See attached "Administrative Guidelines for Initiating and Establishing Inactive Status for Neighborhood Organizations."*

## **Section 2. Function and Responsibilities of Neighborhood Organizations.**

(a) Neighborhood organizations will be advisory to the City Council, Planning Commission, and other city boards, commissions, and officials on matters affecting their neighborhoods. With the assistance of professional staff, subject to their availability, the neighborhood organization may develop neighborhood plans and proposals with respect to land use, zoning, parks, open space and recreation, annexation, housing, community facilities, transportation and traffic, public safety, sanitation, and other activities and public services which affect their neighborhoods.

*Each neighborhood group should establish a process for investigating and responding to information received from the City about proposed policies, projects, plans, etc. A planning committee, a special committee depending on the subject, executive board, or chairperson could review information and make recommendations subject to the general membership's approval, if time permits. Review "Neighborhood Systems for Responding to Referrals" in leader's notebook in Referral Section.*

*The reference to "neighborhood plans" applies only to those neighborhoods designated for refinement plans.*

(b) Neighborhood organizations, may address themselves to all matters which affect them and may establish relations, not in conflict with city-neighborhood relations set forth in this Policy, with any agency or jurisdiction with which they have mutual concerns. This Policy governs only the relationship between recognized neighborhood organizations and the city of Eugene.

(c) Neighborhood organizations shall inform themselves of neighborhood needs and desires and maintain communication with their neighborhoods on plans, proposals and activities affecting their areas.

*A system for finding out what the most directly affected neighbors think about city plans, proposals, and activities is an important part of any neighborhood organization process developed for advising the city. This could be done in various ways depending on the time available for response, e.g., going door-to-door talking to people about a proposal and finding out their concerns; notifying the neighborhood about meetings and proposals scheduled for discussion; having the neighborhood agree annually on goals, which would provide a general direction to the executive board for advising the City based on the goals (if there is a refinement plan for the area, this might be sufficient) or polling the neighborhood on issues.*

(d) Neighborhood organizations may submit to city departments and elected or appointed city bodies, requests or proposals for projects or activities needed in their neighborhood areas.

*Requests which affect the budget may also be made via the Neighborhood Liaison Office using the neighborhood need request report form (See information in Leaders Notebook, Neighborhood Information Section).*

(e) Neighborhood organizations shall continue the planning process by reevaluating the goals, objectives, and recommendations contained within the neighborhood plan

*This applies to just those neighborhoods that have refinement plans.*

## **Section 3. Functions and Responsibilities of the City**

(a) The city will provide recognized neighborhood organizations with funding and limited staff assistance to aid in their activities, subject to budgetary allocations.

*The main allocation of funds for neighborhood outreach printing, mailing, and supplies for organizations has included printed and electronic publications, and event support. Human Right and Neighborhood Involvement staff provide assistance to neighborhoods regarding outreach, developing organizational capacity, funding and other assistance as available. Various department also provide limited services to groups upon request: e.g., special maps, publications, planning information, and presentations of information at neighborhood meetings.*

*There is a Neighborhood Liaison position in the City Manager's Office to assist in the implementation of the Neighborhood Recognition Policy. A Newsletter Coordinator provides technical assistance to neighborhoods in producing the newsletters. Various departments also provide limited services to groups upon requests: e.g., special maps, publications, planning information from the computer, presentations of information at neighborhood meetings.*

(b) The city shall provide an orientation session once yearly to acquaint neighborhood leaders with city functions and programs, and city-neighborhood relationships and responsibilities.

*Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement staff are responsible for providing or arranging for these orientation sessions.*

(c) Neighborhood organizations shall be notified of land use and development applications within the neighborhood and annexations contiguous to the neighborhood within five days after the receipt of such applications. Neighborhood organizations will also be notified of public hearings affecting disposition of these applications.

*City proposals, land use applications, and all matters which may affect neighborhoods are referred by departments via the Neighborhood Liaison Office to the appropriate neighborhood. The liaison also alerts neighborhoods to relevant legislation and policies being considered by the City Council or other boards and commissions.*

(d) Neighborhood organizations shall be notified of all proposed changes in city policies, projects, services, and activities having a significant effect on their neighborhoods (e.g., land use, transportation and traffic, parks and recreation, housing, and public services), in ample time to allow participation in the decision-making process. Specific site locations for land acquisition need not be identified by the city.

*In respect to notification "in ample time," there is not always time for neighborhood groups to take proposed changes in policies, projects, services, and activities to the general membership, because some groups do not meet every month, or the information might miss the group's meeting time. However, the goal is to provide sufficient time to the executive committee to meet to consider an issue.*

(d) All neighborhood plans shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission at a public hearing open to the Eugene community before a recommendation is forwarded to the City Council.

(e) Upon adoption by the City Council, the neighborhood plan shall be considered a general plan refinement by the city and its various departments.

*Section 3(e) and (f) apply only to neighborhood groups that have been working on refinement plans.*

#### **Section 4. Neighborhood Newsletters.**

(a) The city will provide funds to assist with the printing and mailing of neighborhood newsletters and communications, subject to budgetary allowances set by the city. Neighborhood organizations may raise funds to finance their own publications.

*Newsletter Guidelines explaining this section were prepared in the fall of 1976 in consultation and with final agreement from the neighborhood leaders, the City Manager and City Attorney.*

(b) Newsletters financed by the city shall be governed by these guidelines:

(1) The main purposes of the neighborhood newsletters are to distribute

information to neighborhood members on matters affecting their areas and to provide a forum for the free expression of the opinions of neighborhood members on issues of interest to the neighborhood.

(2) Advocacy positions may be included in the newsletters in an editorial format. Newsletters shall clearly indicate editorial material and guarantee space for timely printing of differing viewpoints.

(3) Commercial advertising is permitted in newsletters in accordance with the Guidelines for Use of Public Information Funds.

(4) The city shall have access to neighborhood newsletters for city information.

**Section 5. Recommended Procedure for Establishment of City-Recognized Neighborhood Organizations.**

(a) When sufficient interest has been expressed by a substantial number of persons interested in the neighborhood, a request should be made to the city manager for staff assistance.

(b) After informal meetings between city staff and interested persons, a neighborhood-wide meeting or meetings shall be held for the purpose of information, organization, adoption of neighborhood governing document and election of officers.

*A model charter, approved by the City Council on January 26, 1983 is available and should be a guide in writing the governing document.*

(c) After a neighborhood governing document has been adopted by the neighborhood organization, it may be submitted to the City Manager for consideration by the City Council.

(d) The City Council, upon approval of the governing document of the neighborhood organization, shall accept the document and any modification thereto, by resolution. The neighborhood organization is then recognized as the official voice of that neighborhood area under the provisions of this Policy.

**Section 6.** The Neighborhood Organization Policy for Citizen Planning Groups adopted by the Common Council of the City of Eugene on August 28, 1973, is repealed and superseded by the Neighborhood Organization Recognition Policy contained herein.

The foregoing Resolution adopted on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2015.