

PORTLAND ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Listen to All Portlanders: Engagement Recap

May 17, 2023

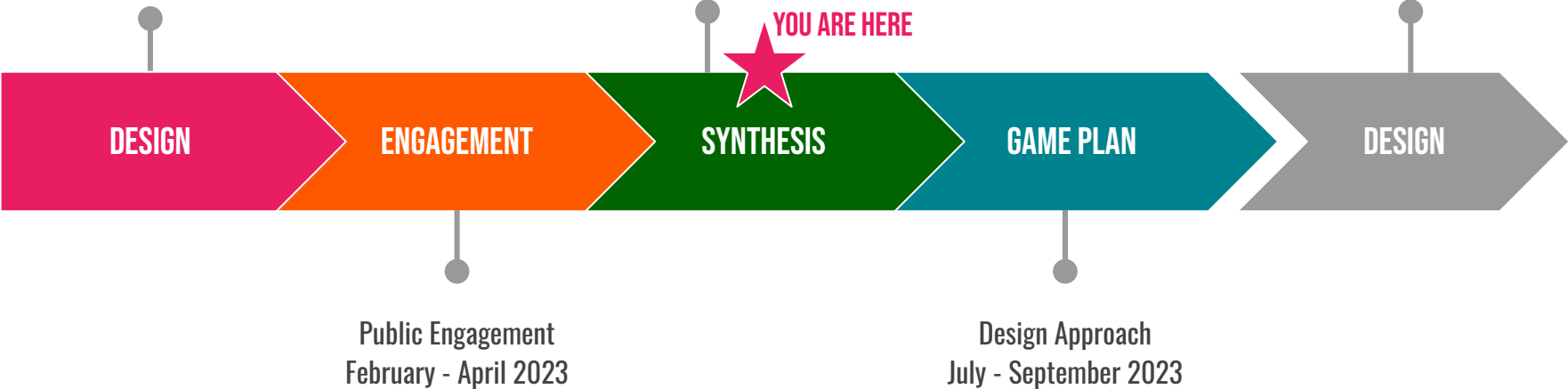
[PREGAME]

EXTERNAL LISTENING PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Design and Discovery
October 2022 - January 2023

External Listening - May 2023
All Listening Projects - June-July 2023

Design 2023-24
Enact 2024-25



ENGAGEMENT AT A GLANCE



LISTENING TO ALL PORTLANDERS: ENGAGEMENT RECAP

Pregame partnered with the Office of Community and Civic Life for the Portland Engagement Project, a multi-year effort to update the design of the City's engagement framework. We continued our work generating ideas from City Employees in 2022 by conducting citywide engagement in 2023.

- We generated over 100,000 impressions for the campaign, creating outreach materials, promoting citywide, reaching out to 85+ community partners, and leveraging City communications.
- We empowered Youth and community participation by creating a DIY facilitation kit that people could use to activate their own communities.
- We worked with translators and 311 to provide accessibility options, including translation of the survey into 12 additional languages.
- We worked with the leadership and communication teams of Civic Life to co-create and execute the project, adapting quickly to City needs and personnel changes.



PEP RALLY

I came into this thinking it was going to be a waste of time, but this has been a really great experience.

Listening Session Participant

Would love to see more of these open feedback mechanisms.

Survey Responder

Thank you - thrilled with the way the event turned out!

Community Group Chair

Thank you so much for reaching out. We feel like an untapped resource when it comes to civic engagement.

PTA Equity Group Parent



PEP Pop Up Event - Idea Collection Sheet

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Event Name	Location	Date	Facilitator(s)	Approx Attendance	# of People Engaged
Are you happy with options?					

GOALS + APPROACH

LISTENING TO ALL PORTLANDERS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Unifying

Our process conveys a spirit of “we’re all in this together” and reflects Civic Life’s core promise to Promote the Common Good.

Future-Ready

Our work is oriented toward the Portland of 2035 and beyond. Our output consistently reflects community needs and feedback.

Inclusive

With cultural humility, we invite as many voices as possible and we rely on trusted methods that respect and reflect the substantive change and progress we are co-creating with our community.

Iterative

We are not starting from scratch; we are evolving to meet the needs of a changing City. We value work, discoveries, and relationships already established at the City and Bureau levels.

Transparent

We communicate our process and how to get involved. We proactively inform Portlanders in ways that are accessible by all.

ENGAGEMENT GOALS + RESULTS

Category	Goals	Results
Amplify the Often Unheard “Feet on the Street”	4+ location-based community outreach efforts and promo material distribution citywide	5 location-based community outreach efforts 10,000 postcards distributed citywide across 100+ locations
Youth Engagement + Empowerment	Create opportunity for youth to participate in facilitating feedback	Activated 8 youth ambassadors in partnership with Multnomah Youth Commission
Community Events	Join at least 4 community or city-sponsored events	12 community or city-sponsored events
Partner with Local Organizations	Partner with 12 local organizations, varying demographics	Partnered with local orgs for 4 Event Briefings + 2 Listening Sessions + 20 Survey Amplifiers
Neighborhood Associations	Invite every Neighborhood Association to participate in focus groups and/or via electronic survey	Invited all NAs via District Offices and Civic Life 4 District Office hosted Listening Sessions + Open Listening Sessions for each of 7 city areas
City-Adjacent Groups	Partner with 4+ local organizations, varying demographics	Partnered with 11 organizations
Online Survey	Distribute online survey link widely, goal 50,000+ impressions	Generated over 100,000 campaign impressions

ENGAGEMENT STATS

Category	Goals	Results
Campaign Impressions	50,000	100,737
Engagement Events	32	38
Survey Responses	-	258
People Heard	-	677
Ideas Generated	-	928
Postcards Distributed	-	15,000
Website Visits	-	2,200
Virtual Listening Session Registrations	-	346
DIY Listening Kit Downloads	-	8

DEFINING SUCCESS

Our intent for Portland Engagement Project Listening was for the process itself to be an authentic example of the Office of Community and Civic Life promise to “Promote the Common Good.”

Our Process is in Service to the People.

This includes our actions, methodologies, materials, and approach. We adapt the best practices of facilitation and change management scholars to optimize the information, timing, and people involved.

Our Relationships Strengthen.

We build trust and credibility with the people of Portland. The accountability structures we create and the process we design is based on bringing people along from making suggestions, to vetting suggestions, to prioritizing suggestions and generating a plan. We create a spirit of shared success with outside organizations, including community partners, nonprofit partners, and the media.

We Center Our Shared Future.

Our approach recognizes the challenges of today while focusing on what’s needed for the Portland of 2035 and beyond. Inclusion is imperative. We consider all experiences, views, abilities, and cultures, and then provide and program services accordingly.

Our Results Are Replicable.

Our end result is effective and can inspire other bureaus and cities to new structures for civic engagement. We can be a model for other organizations to serve their communities at a higher functioning, more effective level.

GETTING TO THE POINT

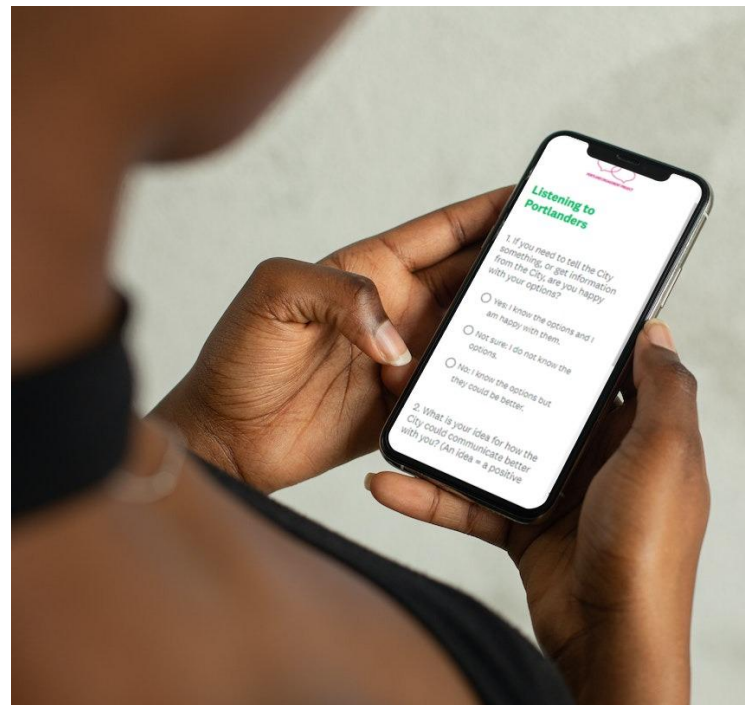
While some Portlanders are actively engaged with the City of Portland, many others have never been in contact. Our goal was to remove friction from engagement by making our questions, and opportunities to answer them, as simple as possible.

In order to keep the listening process equitable and the data comparable, we asked Portlanders three consistent questions.

That's right: just three questions. In the spirit of listening, we opted for prioritizing conversation to balance out the data and surveying from other listening projects.

Our questions were designed to:

- Infer the meaning of engagement without saying “engagement”
- Be narrow enough to clarify the premise of the conversation, but broad enough to invite an array of responses
- Invite open-ended responses so people could share in their own style



KEEPING IT SIMPLE: THE 3 QUESTIONS

If you need to tell the City something or get information from the City, are you happy with your options?

What is your idea for how the City could communicate better with you?

How would you like to be involved with the City's decisions and direction?

A group of people's hands are clasped together in a circle, symbolizing teamwork and unity. The image is dimly lit, with the hands and text being the primary focus. The background shows the sleeves and parts of clothing of the individuals, including a striped shirt and a watch on one of the wrists.

LISTEN TO ALL PORTLANDERS

TEAM

PROJECT TEAM

Civic Life Leadership	Michael Montoya, Project Creator + Director TJ McHugh, Acting Director, Civic Life Gloria Harrison, Administrative Support
Civic Life Communications	Daniel McArdle-James, Strategic Communications Officer Perla Sitkov, Public Information Officer Shelby Williams, Communications Support
Pregame External Listening Partner	Ciara Pressler, Lead Consultant Marissa Cade, Design + Facilitation Lisa Niedermeyer, Data + Facilitation Rahsaan Cruz and Marlo Maroon, Project Management Community Engagement Facilitators
Other Listening Projects	Listening to Data - Neighborhood Profiles Team Listening to Community Experts - Oregon's Kitchen Table Citywide Equitable Engagement Practitioners Group

PREGAME FACILITATOR TEAM



Ciara



Lisa



Rahsaan



Marlo



Marissa



Jordan



Lizzie



Jonathan



Danya

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We knew that working with community leaders and organizations would connect us with established audiences and more trust.

We invited over 85 nonprofit and community partners to participate by hosting a Listening Session and/or sharing the survey with their audiences.

Group types helped us diversify our outreach, including organizations specializing in:

- Demographic focus: age, racial identity, place of origin, gender identity, orientation, geography
- District Offices and Neighborhood Associations
- Community and Civic Interest
- Business and Professional Organizations
- Housing and Low Income Service Orgs
- Students and Parents
- Nonprofits working with disadvantaged communities

Partner with PEP!

Are you a community leader, organizer, or passionate about helping people have their voice heard?
We'd love to partner with you!

Want to help us get the best feedback on our plans for the future? Come help us by participating in our listening session with PEP or becoming a Listening Session or sharing the survey with your audience.

Neighborhood Associations Community Organizations Public Events

Join the PEP Rally to Make Our City Better for All Portlanders!

Portland is made better and City government has to reflect the full spectrum of its people and their needs. It's crucial to partner with the Portland Engagement Project to help Portlanders voice their views to help our City that works for everyone.

The Portland Engagement Project is winners, stakeholders, and reporters. Its community engagement effort will strengthen the vision approved City of Portland and build unity for a better Portland for all the people. Progress and innovation through listening. Its new strategies plan, not just reports, and I know they will do the

PDX 311

PDX 311 is a free service that improves access to local government by providing a single point of contact – in person, online or over the phone.

We worked with the 311 team so they were prepared to help all Portlanders participate in the campaign.

By utilizing an existing service that does not require someone have internet access to get assistance, we lowered the barriers to participating and broadened whose voice could be heard.

311 teams were available to answer Portlanders' questions about PEP, offer assistance with translation and digital survey completion, and help find upcoming events.

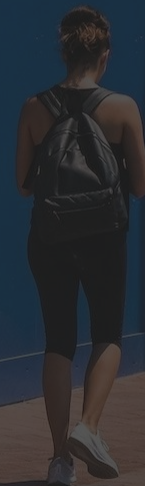




LISTENING TO ALL PORTLANDERS

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

PORTLAND ENGAGEMENT PROJECT



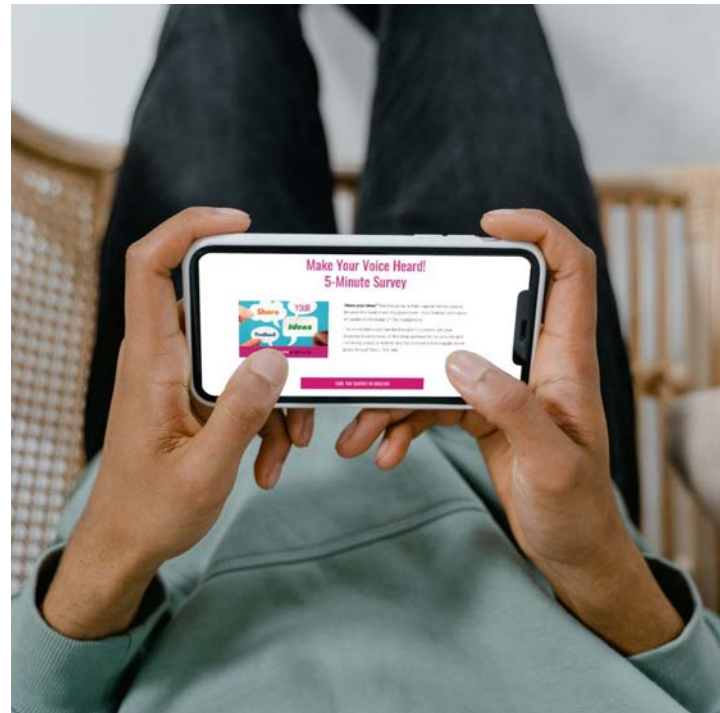
THE STRATEGY: MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE TO PARTICIPATE

The campaign faced two challenges: already-engaged Portlanders were eager to participate and wanted more information about the process, and the City's communication channels are not (ahem) known for being easy to navigate.

Our solution was to create [PDXengagementproject.org](https://pdxengagementproject.org) as a central, easy to use hub for all information related to the Listening to All Portlanders project. Its original function was to provide information on events, links to the survey, and transparency to our process, but it evolved to provide even more.

We added a [Partners](#) page to give anyone an opportunity to request a Listening Session.

We also had a turnkey [Promo](#) page where City and community partners could download and share graphics and text for newsletters and social media.

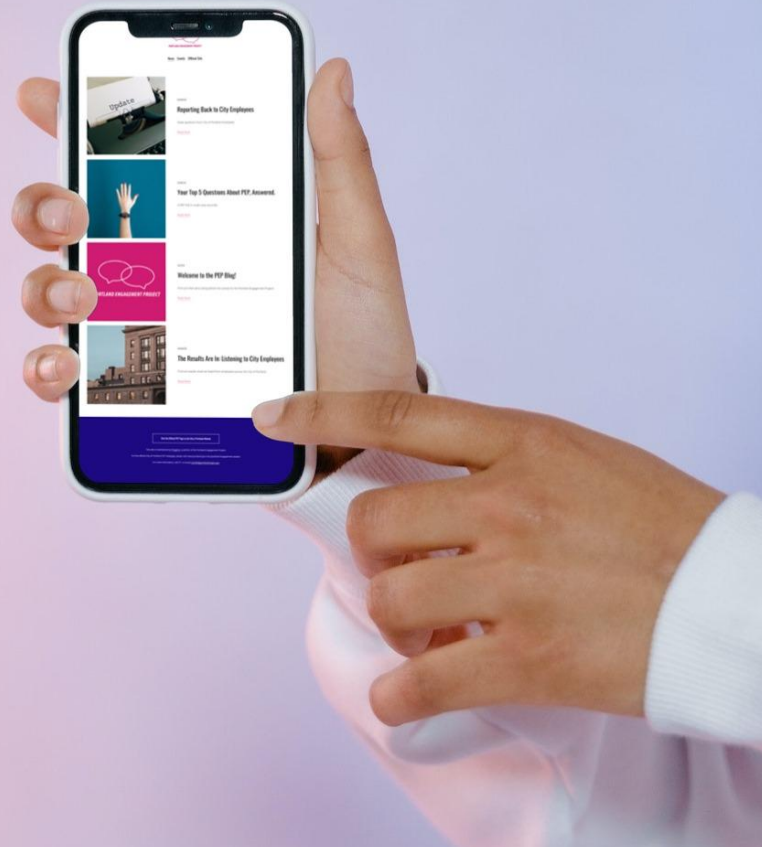


INVITING THE PUBLIC TO OUR PROCESS

We wanted to proactively dispel the fear that the Listening Projects were performative and the City was just making decisions behind the scenes without seriously weighing public opinion.

We decided to be as transparent as possible by sharing our process through frequent communications and a DIY Listening Facilitation Kit.

We published a weekly blog post on [PDXengagementproject.org](https://pdxengagementproject.org) to share news, updates, and relevant stories throughout our process.



DIY LISTENING SESSIONS

We opted for ultra-transparency by sharing our facilitation process and materials with the public.

Our goal was to give anyone the opportunity to lead a Listening Session, making it more likely that we could hear from communities that we might not otherwise reach.

The DIY option also gave the 94 Neighborhood Associations another way to participate, in addition to the many District- and Pregame-hosted events.

The screenshot shows a website page for the Portland Engagement Project. At the top, there is a logo consisting of two overlapping circles and the text 'PORTLAND ENGAGEMENT PROJECT'. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for 'Events', 'Survey', 'News', 'Partners', 'DIY', and 'About'. The main heading is 'Lead Your Own Listening Session!' in large white text on a dark blue background. Below the heading is a sub-heading: 'Collect ideas from within your own community to include more voices in the future of engagement for Portland.' A red button with white text says 'CLICK HERE TO GET YOUR FREE DIY FACILITATOR GUIDE'. Below this is a section titled '1: INVITE PEOPLE' with a list of bullet points: 'It starts with people: who will you refer to your session? Ideas include neighbors, school clubs, faith community, book club, professional group, and beyond.' 'We recommend a group of around 10 people for a 1-hour listening session.' 'Determine if you want to gather people in person or by video conference.' 'Decide on a date, time, and place for your event.' 'Invite people! (Our previous guides and text in the facilitator guide to make it really easy)'. To the right of the text is an image of hands holding speech bubbles that say 'Share YOUR Ideas' and 'Portland'. Below the image is the URL 'PDEngagementproject.org'. The next section is '2: COLLECT IDEAS' with a paragraph: 'As a facilitator, you have an important role. You're part, where part of the reason. Keep people's voices on record and keep the conversation moving, making sure everyone gets a chance to contribute. Just answer the 5 questions.' Below the paragraph is a list of three numbered questions: '1. If you need to talk the day something, or get information, from the city, are you ready with your session?' '2. What is your idea for how the day could communicate better with you?' '3. How would you like to be involved with the city's decisions and direction?'. Below the list is a paragraph: 'The listening session presentation deck will take you, step by step and how it's able to write participants responses on in real time so all can see they are being heard, and clarify as needed.' At the bottom of the page is a red button with white text that says 'Preview Presentation Deck'.

TURNKEY PROMOTION

To make it easier for City and Community Partners to promote PEP Listening Sessions and the survey, we created a central Promo page where anyone could download text and graphics to share with their audience anywhere, including newsletters and social media.

Portland Engagement Project

News Partners Survey About Contact

Spread the Word!

Use the tools below to invite your neighbors and network to be part of the Portland Engagement Project

PEP Promo Graphics

Click to enlarge, right-click to download

Five Tools, PEP Graphic, PEP at Workflows, Social Listening Session, On Top Session, PEP Survey, QR Code, PEP Flyer, PEP Logo, PEP Logo, PEP Logo

Pep Promo Text

Social Media

How do you want to influence the City of Portland? Tell them your ideas - now through April 30! www.portlandengagementproject.org/survey

Portland is gathering YOUR ideas for how you want to influence the City's policies and direction. Join a listening session or take the online survey to share your ideas today at www.portlandengagementproject.org. Listening sessions are available now through the end of April.

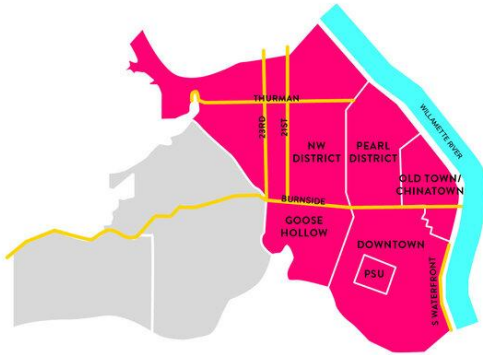
PRINT + IN PERSON

Our research and conversations with experienced City engagement practitioners always emphasized the best practice of “going to the people,” rather than waiting for them to come to us.

To promote city-wide equity, we scheduled Pop Ups in different areas, briefed audiences at Partner events, and distributed 15,000+ postcards throughout Portland



POSTCARD DISTRIBUTION



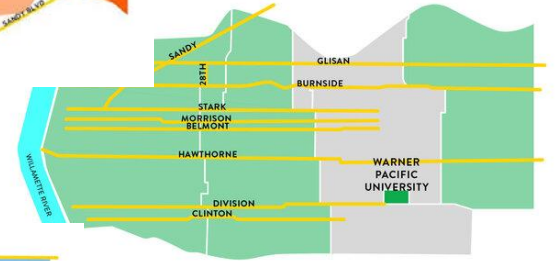
Northwest

North



Northeast

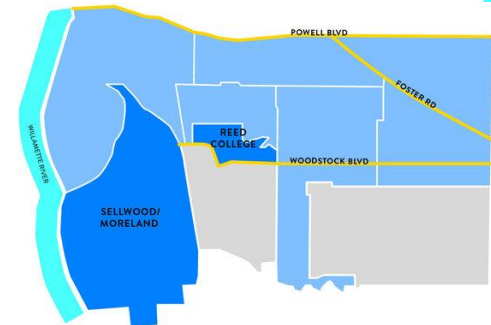
East



Southeast



Southwest





PORTLAND ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Listening to All Portlanders

Portland

Comparte

TU

punto de vista

Como Podemos Forjar Juntos El Futuro De Portland?

Portland está reuniendo SUS ideas sobre cómo desea influir en las decisiones y la dirección de la ciudad. Responda la encuesta rápida para compartir sus ideas hoy!

PDXengagementproject.org

Portland Engagement Project

Share

YOUR Ideas

Portland

How do YOU want to influence the City of Portland?

We're gathering YOUR ideas for improving the relationship between Portlanders and City government.

Make sure YOUR voice is heard, now through April 30!

- ✓ Sign up for a listening session
- ✓ Submit your ideas via online survey
- ✓ See full event schedule + news

Scan the QR code to go to PDXengagementproject.org

[PREGAME] Office of Community & Civic Life

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PEP

ON THE SCENE





LISTEN TO ALL PORTLANDERS

ENGAGEMENT DETAILS



PORTLAND ENGAGEMENT PROJECT



LIVE EVENTS + LISTENING SESSIONS

- 38 events across Portland, virtually, and hybrid
- 26 Listening Sessions
- 419 total participants
- Dedicated session for each of 7 city areas
- Dedicated sessions hosted by 4 District Offices
- Complemented by PEP Pop Ups and Briefings
 - Pop Ups at public spaces to increase access
 - Briefing at partner events to drive awareness and participation



ONLINE SURVEY

- 258 respondents
- Available in 13 languages
- Exact same questions as Listening Sessions
- Survey assistance available via 311
- Shared across Civic Life and other City bureau newsletters and social media
- Shared by 17+ community organizations
- Accessible via QR code on print materials



ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

1: Go To the People	There are incredible public and community events already happening around the City, so we showed up to existing events and prioritized listening. We also met people on their turf by scheduling Pop Ups during busy hours at Community Centers.
2: Youth Empowerment	Today's youth are our future leaders, so we created opportunities for youth to amplify their voices and help others use theirs.
3: Partner With Local Organizations	We joined existing neighborhood associations, City-adjacent groups, coalitions, and community groups for their regular meetings, shared the electronic survey option, and informed them about the DIY kit.
4: Fill In the Gaps	We heard from a diversity of voices by hosting focus groups or other engagement methods for affinity populations in partnership with existing organizations and groups.
5: Scale with Tech	We maximized reach through the virtual survey that increased flexibility and accessibility.

AMPLIFY THE UNHEARD

Following the best practice to “go to the people,” showing up where the often-unheard already gather in person, Community Centers were our strategic location-based hubs to engage with large numbers of Portlanders of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

We also offered DIY Listening Session Kits on the website so that any Portlander could engage their community based on their own availability and their own style of engaging.

Budgeting for bilingual facilitators and translators ensured we were ready to engage with non-English speakers who may not have a voice in the current engagement structure.

- Training for DIY Listening Session Facilitators
- Multnomah Youth Commission Listening Session
- Lideres Verdes Bilingual Spanish Listening Session
- Wells Equity Group Listening Session
- East Portland Community Center Pop Up
- Matt Dishman Community Center Pop Up
- Charles Jordan Community Center Pop Up

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

We worked with the Multnomah County Youth Commission to engage young Portlanders during both the Project Design and Listening phases.

30 youth leaders participated in our Listening Session, and eight of them volunteered to be PEP Ambassadors. They distributed PEP postcards, shared on social media, and encouraged their communities to participate.

The Multnomah Youth Commission is the official youth policy body for both Multnomah County and the City of Portland.



CITY-SPONSORED EVENTS

- Fix-It Fair PEP Pop Up at Parkrose High School
- Parks Career Fair PEP Pop Up at SW Community Center
- Summer Career Fair PEP Pop Up at East Portland Community Center
- PEP Talk at June Key Delta Community Center
- PEP Talk at PSU Native American Student and Community Center
- PEP Talk at Zenger Farm



LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Partners who hosted Listening Sessions, PEP Pop-Ups, Briefings, social media posts, and newsletter links included:

- Business for a Better Portland
- Business Resource Network
- Chinese Museum / Asian Art Network
- El Remate Oregon
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Mercatus
- LGBTQ Portland
- Oregon Entrepreneurs Network
- PDX Women in Tech
- Portland Community College
- Portland Oregon, en Español
- Portland Rotary Club
- Puertorriqueños Boricuas en Portland
- Say Hey / Partners in Diversity
- The Street Trust
- Verde

DISTRICTS + NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

We invited each District Office to participate during our design phase, and again during the engagement phase to host a Listening Session and share the survey with the Neighborhood Associations under their umbrellas.

Four districts hosted events, and Civic Life invited all Neighborhood Association members to participate in one of the seven City area themed Listening Sessions hosted by Pregame. Many Neighborhood Association members attended Pregame's Listening Sessions open to all Portlanders.

Civic Life also encouraged Neighborhood Associations to take advantage of the DIY Listening Session option.

- Wilkes Community Group Listening Session
- University Park Neighborhood Association DIY Listening Session
- South Tabor Neighborhood Listening Session
- Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods Listening Session
- North Portland Neighborhood Services Listening Session
- Forest Park Neighborhood Association DIY Listening Session
- Neighbors West-Northwest Listening Session
- SE Uplift Listening Session

CITY-ADJACENT GROUPS

- **BPS Community Involvement Committee - Listening Session**
- **Office of Human and Equity Rights - Promotion**
- **Citywide Equitable Engagement Professionals - Briefing**
- **Diverse and Empowered Employees of Portland - Promotion**
- **Community and Neighborhood Involvement Center - Briefing**
- **Multnomah Youth Commission - Listening Session + Promotion**

A dimly lit meeting room with people seated around a table and a presenter at the front. The scene is dark, with the primary light source being the text overlay. In the background, a man in a suit stands at the front of the room, addressing a group of people seated around a large table. The room has large windows on the left and a clock on the wall. The overall atmosphere is professional and focused.

LISTEN TO ALL PORTLANDERS

ENGAGEMENT PRO TIPS

PRO TIPS: WHAT WORKED



Continuing our practice of sharing wins with City and other community engagement practitioners, here's what we recommend incorporating or repurposing for your own projects:

- **Keep it simple.** This is the theme of everything that worked from limiting our outreach to three questions to clean graphic design.
- **Keep conversation constructive.** We coached attendees on creating ideas versus registering complaints.
- **Design for regular people, not fellow professionals.** Too often, external communication is jargony and hard to process at the speed of society today. We use an “explain it like I’m 5” guideline in most of our communications. It’s not an insult to intelligence; it’s respecting people’s limited time and attention.
- **Make it as easy as possible for people to share.** Even our turnkey Promo webpage was less utilized than simply linking our existing Instagram posts and asking partners to share it. Simplify, then simplify more.
- **Be clear about the scope.** When participants sought to share about topics that were unrelated to engagement, we proactively brought it back to the topic at hand. While the “Portland nice” approach of nodding and smiling may seem polite, what’s really kind is to engage people as valuable equals, helping to get their voices heard.

PRO TIPS: WHAT TO IMPROVE



There are always things we could have done better in retrospect. Be sure to factor in these learnings for future engagement initiatives:

- **Equitable engagement is more than translation.** Only 10 people accessed our translated survey, signaling that more or different outreach was needed to engage with non-English speakers. ESL participants also needed more time to tell their stories than some events allowed.
- **Prioritize leveraging existing relationships.** With some community partners, we were introducing ourselves for the first time. We would have benefited from more City support with warm intros or employee-led encouragement to participate.
- **Consider the competition.** We did not foresee competing with many other engagement efforts, as the City values public engagement but does not thoroughly coordinate across bureaus and with other government agencies. Also, some organizations and individuals now expect compensation for participating in surveys and focus groups.
- **City-led marketing matters.** Too late into the project to adapt, a public opinion expert recommended that the City should have led awareness for public participation as it was the entity benefiting from the campaign. The public perceives the City as one unit, so engagement should be amplified accordingly (more on this in our final Design recommendations).
- **Big projects need a consistent manager.** PEP has many moving parts, and would benefit from a consistent central manager to make sure the symphony is playing in harmony.

NEXT STEPS

Pregame is creating three additional reports:

1. **Listening to All Portlanders: The Results - June**
2. **All Listening Projects: Synthesis - July/August**
3. **Game Plan + Recommendations for Design - September**

In September, Pregame will put everything together to identify the priorities and potential process for next [fiscal] year's Design update.

CHEERS!

Ciara Pressler, Lead Consultant
Rahsaan Cruz, Project Manager
Lisa Niedermeyer, Data + Tracking

[PREGAME]