



Short-term demonstration project concept outline:

SOCIAL PORTLAND: Community Gathering Center

Description: Emerging community-based organizations in Portland struggle to find locations and support to focus on their important work of community organizing and leadership development. The Community Gathering Center emerged from the visionPDX project clearly from both individuals and community based organizations. The Center could house a set of community organizations--several have already expressed interest including: the Latino Network, Oregon Action and Slavic Coalition. The Center could have the potential to house the Human Relations Commission, potential city bureaus, and potential satellite office space for service delivery organizations.

Basis in Vision:

One of the core values within the vision: **Inclusion and Diversity** states that: "we value fostering respect for and promoting interaction among all individuals in our community, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, belief system, political ideology, ability, socio-economic status, educational status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, place of origin, age and geography. By doing this, we will have richer relationships and make better decisions for our future." Likewise, within Social Portland there are several sentiments that address building capacity in the community. The Center may have the ability to house collaborative community problem solving discussions that can help government agencies and community organizations do their work better by involving the people who are affected - and who can help carry out - their programs.

How does it work?

Developing the plan for the Center will take place over the next six months. A series of discussions with interested community leaders will begin in the fall of 2007. PDC's technical resources to either find a current location that may be adapted or draft plans for building a new facility will be engaged early on as well as solicitations for assistance in the design community. The concept for the center is that it will provide space for community organizations to have offices, joint space for either organizing or specific organization meetings, open gathering space and potentially space for organizations not housed on site to have space for satellite service delivery. The Center will not be a city run building nor a bureau. The creation of the Center will be done in conjunction with community leaders.

Short-term demonstration project criteria:

Investment by City	Public/private partnership	Community involvement / impact
Initial resources will be city staff providing technical assistance to shape the center. Preliminary funds may be needed for a business plan or concept plan.	Community organizations will actively work with the private sector and community foundations to build support and funds for the center. The goal of the center is to leverage community involvement for the good of the city and to create a building that community organizations support and operate.	Community organizations will be intimately involved in the development of the center, not limited to the organizations mentioned above. The entire community will benefit from a center that provides open space for people from all backgrounds to gather. Following the preliminary recommendations from the Immigrant/Refugee Task Force, the Center could play a critical role helping newcomers to Portland and the US feel welcome.