NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING OFFICE

Phase II Guidelines for Validation

December 1996

Purpose

The purpose of validation is to make sure that those affected by neighborhood plan recommendations are aware of the proposals and that they have an opportunity to contribute. An effective and well-documented validation process for a neighborhood plan will make it possible for NPO, other City agencies and ultimately the City Council to endorse and eventually implement the neighborhood plan.

Minimum Standards

On-going, iterative process: The records of the planning committee should demonstrate that continuing efforts were made to inform and involve members of the community in the investigation of problems and development of solutions. Development of a Phase II outreach strategy and its incorporation into the Phase II work plan is essential. Outreach efforts should ensure that parties not at the table are identified and that special attention is paid to bringing them into the process. Groups are encouraged to be creative in their outreach and to remain open to new participation at every stage of the process.

Closure activity(ies): Once a draft Approval and Adoption Package is prepared (see Guidelines) the following will be required as minimum validation steps before the Approval and Adoption Package is submitted to City Council.

1. A notification mailing to all stakeholders within the planning focus area, including a mechanism for returning comments and asking questions about the recommendations. NPO will fund this mailing to addresses within the planning focus area and to non-resident property owners. Generally, this mailing will be no longer than one 8-1/2 by 14-inch or 11 by 17-inch sheet (approximate cost per item is $.35 which includes bulk rate postage).

2. At least two public forums at which the recommendations are presented and public feedback is encouraged and audio taped. At least one of these sessions should be scheduled at a time which is not an evening or weekend. Use of a "third party" facilitator, not associated with the planning committee, is one of several ways to ensure objectivity. *(Efforts will be made to work with Channel 28 to videotape and air forums).*

Appropriate Approaches to Validation

The information to be provided and the nature of comment opportunities to be offered depend upon the significance and impact of the plan recommendation.

"Intensive" validation required:
Any recommendation which would change the Comprehensive Plan or other City ordinances such as the Land Use Code requires intensive validation. Public forums on the subject and the stakeholder mailing will be expected to provide a detailed explanation (with appropriate maps or graphics and budget information) of the recommended change, why it is being proposed and to invite comment. Examples of plan recommendations requiring intensive validation are urban village designations, growth targets or street classifications; Land Use Code changes (affecting uses or development standards); legislative rezones of property (e.g., to take advantage of RSL zoning); neighborhood-specific design guidelines or proposed changes to City Council-adopted policies. *When plan recommendations require intensive notification for validation, NPO and the planning committee may negotiate additional funding for an appropriately detailed stakeholder mailing.*

"Broadcast" validation required:
Summary information on recommendations will be required for those which entail changes in City or other public programs in a specific area (such as bus route alterations or changed community center or library hours), for those which propose changes to City facilities or suggest buying, selling, leasing or changing the use of facilities, and for those which involve improvements or changes to City rights-of-way. Broadcast notification should also solicit comment, but the level of detail of the discussion in the stakeholder mailing need not be as extensive as that above. For both intensive and broadcast level notification, the stakeholder mailing should include information about where (at the local library, neighborhood service center or other accessible location) more complete records on the planning process may be reviewed.

"Invitation" validation required:
Volunteer-led community activities recommended by the planning process should be publicized to stakeholders. Validation occurs when community members participate and do the work. Examples of such activities which may be recommended in a neighborhood plan include tree planting projects, arts installations or festivals, graffiti clean-up, formation of public safety organizations or fundraising projects. The validation mailer needs at least to mention these activities and provide information about how to get involved.

Documentation

Public response elicited through *any* validation opportunity should be included in the information submitted to City Council with the Approval and Adoption Package. A *summary* of comments received during the *closure* activities should be prepared and submitted by the planning committee along with its final Approval and Adoption Package. Groups must also complete the Public Involvement Checklist. Copies of *all* written comments received during the closure activity(ies) and audio tapes of public forums should be kept on file, and if requested by the City Council, should be included in the final recommendation package.

Optional/additional validation actions

Groups may wish to conduct validation activities in addition to the minimums listed above. Examples include publication of recommendations in local newspapers or an extended mailing to include all parties in the outreach area. The required stakeholder mailing will be conducted at NPO expense; additional notification costs should be in the neighborhood planning group's Phase II budget. In areas where familiarity with English is an issue, opportunities for learning about the proposals and commenting in other languages should be part of the validation process.

When there is no community newspaper or other appropriate outreach avenue or there is a particular need associated with one or several stakeholder group(s), funding for costs associated with translation services or other outreach costs (such as a mailing to the outreach area beyond the focus area) may be negotiated with NPO as part of the Phase II contract.

Note on Validation: Neighborhood planning validation does not supersede, and can be greatly assisted by, independent notice requirements associated with City actions or programs. For example, a neighborhood planning recommendation regarding establishment of a L.I.D. (Local Improvement District) will trigger the petition process always associated with such an initiative. Published notice about the environmental review process, decisions and appeal opportunities will take place for each plan in conjunction with but independently of the validation process.

Phase II Guidelines for Public Involvement Checklist

December 1996

(Phase II Outreach Evaluation for Council Approval and Adoption Package)

Introduction

As part of your adoption and approval process, NPO will help you create a public involvement checklist that will reflect all the outreach work you have done. Following the NPO guidelines and completing performance reports as you go should assure that there will be minimal work needed to complete the checklist.

Objectives

- Assure an open and accessible planning process.
- Assure that the Planning Committee included members drawn from a range of interests, ages and backgrounds.
- Assure that the vision, goals and issues selected for planning were shared with and validated by members of the community (residents, business and property owners in the planning area).
- Assure that your draft neighborhood plan and recommendations have been appropriately validated by the community.

Criteria

Evidence that,

- Your organizing committee created and implemented an initial outreach plan.
- Planning Committee membership reflects a stakeholder analyses and was selected through a process that was open and accessible to people who live, work, own property or do business in the planning area.
- The Planning Committee created and implemented a continuing outreach plan.

- The scope-of-work for planning was developed through a clear and accessible process as issues were selected, relationships among issues were determined and priorities developed. Agreement on priorities, and planning recommendations was achieved with broad public participation by residents, business and property owners, and other stakeholders in the planning area. (Phase I validation.)
- Consultants were selected by a clearly articulated process established by the Planning Committee (or Organizing Committee).
- Opportunities for participation in gathering and analyzing information and creating options during the planning process were accessible and inclusive.
- Validation processes (including, but not limited to, a stakeholder mailing and two public forums) were used to notify and gather comments from all stakeholders on recommendations to City Council to implement your neighborhood plan.

Checklist

NPO will use to evaluate:

Phase I

NPO will review documentation already gathered of:

- outreach plan completion
- selection of Planning Committee
- participation in creating scope-of-work
- validation of Planning Committee and scope-of-work.

(See Planning Committee Guidelines and Phase II Scope of Work Guidelines)

Phase II

NPO will need to evaluate documentation of Phase II:

- Consultant selection process was clearly managed by the Planning Committee to reflect community planning priorities.
- Phase II continuing outreach plan was developed and implemented. New participants were included in the planning process; especially those "stakeholders" not previously participating.
- The Planning Committee remained diverse throughout Phase II and selection of new members was conducted through an open and accessible process.

- The community members (residents, business and property owners and other stakeholders in the planning area) were periodically given updates of the progress of the planning effort.
- The planning process provided opportunities for review and comment as the plan and recommendations were being developed by stakeholders who had not been regularly participating and this "input" was respected and considered in the plan and recommendation development.
- The draft plan and recommendations were "validated." Notice with sufficient detail was mailed to all stakeholders and there were opportunities to comment at two public forums and by other means. Comments or responses are included in the approval and adoption package submitted to City Council.

peb\ph2val.doc