



East Portland Action Plan

February 16, 2016

Re: ONI advocacy for establishment of a citywide overhead fund for interpretation, translation, and childcare for public meetings

Dear Director Amalia Alarcón de Morris, Policy Advisory Clare Adamsick, and Commissioner Amanda Fritz:

As the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) is having a series of conversations about an equitable budget, we, the Civic Engagement Subcommittee of the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP), would like to urge ONI to advocate for overhead funding for interpretation, translation and child care funding for all public meetings. To ensure all Portlanders have a chance to participate in civic engagement process, we ask ONI to advocate with the City of Portland to establish a percentage from each bureau's budget for a citywide interpretation, translation and childcare fund.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act entitles access for people with limited English proficiency and the City of Portland adopted East Portland Action Plan identifies ONI as the lead to accomplish:

Community Building 1.2: Engage ethnic Communities in neighborhood activities; provide translation/language services to remove barriers and improve messaging and invitations.

ONI and EPAP alike, work to foster a culture of civic engagement. EPAP and our partners have found that it is critical to provide materials in other languages and interpretation for the community members with the limited English proficiency.

EPAP set a Strategic Priority to advocate for funding to provide interpretation, translation and childcare to make the involvement equitable for the underrepresented community members of the City of Portland: immigrants, refugees with limited English proficiency, and low-income working families. EPAP meetings have been successfully engaging diverse opinions and perspectives in great part due to providing interpretation and translated materials. With proper childcare, mothers have been able to develop their leadership skills such as testifying to City, Metro, State elected officials and facilitating meetings in different languages.

Lastly, we would like to highlight mother and daughter EPAP members, Adriana Govea and Emily Larraga. Adriana joined the EPAP Education Subcommittee in 2014 and Emily joined the general EPAP meeting in 2015. Adriana came to EPAP from Padres Unidos and has been empowering other parents at Earl Boyles Elementary School, developing leadership skills, and supporting others to take shared responsibilities to improve the school. Adriana speaks English, but having materials in Spanish and interpretation available made her feel the EPAP meetings are welcoming and inviting for her and everyone, including people with the limited English proficiency.

Emily started attending the EPAP general meetings with her mother, Adriana, once they had established that Emily's younger brother was safe with the EPAP childcare providers. Emily, a student at David Douglas High School, like her mother, is now an EPAP leader.

EPAP and the City of Portland have benefited enormously from the perspective and valuable input that Emily and Adriana provide.

EPAP will continue to advocate for more funding for interpretation, translation, and childcare; we ask ONI's leadership to provide support so that more underrepresented community members can be brought into the decision-making process and as neighbors can work together.

Please contact ????? for questions and further discussion needed to move this initiative forward.

Sincerely,

On Behalf of the East Portland Action Plan Civic Engagement Subcommittee:

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EAST PORTLAND ACTION PLAN

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