



*The Mayor's Open Government Task Force*

**REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL**

December 2, 2014

# TASK FORCE WORKING STRUCTURE

- ❑ Early discussions and work plan
- ❑ Why were subcommittees formed?
- ❑ What were the objectives of the subcommittees?
- ❑ How was the process implemented?

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Rabbi George Gittleman, Dee Dee Bridges, Karen Weeks, Peter Stanley

## ❑ Subcommittee objectives

- Understand the underlying issues related to current relationship between the community and its government

## ❑ Stakeholder feedback

- Listen to the community and all interested stakeholders

## ❑ Subcommittee education

- Learn from City staff and other communities and organizations about what does and doesn't work
- Investigate and analyze successful and relevant engagement models already in place here

# SUBCOMMITTEE KEY FINDINGS

## ❑ **Feedback from community and open forums**

- Two-way communication is critical to overcoming perceptions that government doesn't listen
- Access to decision makers needs to be enhanced
- A change is needed in the culture of the organization
- Community knowledge and wisdom must be honored
- Who do you talk to in the City if you have a problem; need a single-point of contact
- Website needs to be a tool for the community not the organization

## ❑ **Portland Participation Principles**

- Community engagement structure that encourages residents and businesses to involve themselves early in the outreach process
- Educational “academy” that not only teaches the community about interaction with government but also teaches government about the communities expectations of them.

# SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

## ❑ **Council Goal Setting**

- Set community engagement as a Council Goal
- Create a City Mission Statement that establishes community engagement and transparency as an organization imperative

## ❑ **Establish a Community Engagement Director**

- Must have executive staff level authority and support
- Direct access to the City Manager
- Two-way communication and dialogue with the community
- Direct access point and accountable to the community

## ❑ **Cultural Change in Public Outreach and Engagement**

- Community public/private partnerships that encourage dialogue
- Reevaluate the structure and responsibility of the CAB
- Systemic approach to helping residents/businesses solve problems
- Adopt and implement the recommendations detailed in this report
- Establish an ongoing reviewing body that will regularly analyze and provide implementation strategies for the OGTF recommendations

## POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

Tony Alvernaz, Ashle Crocker, Shirleen DeRezendes-Claiche, Bruce Kyse,

- ❑ Formed to determine what, if any, policy changes could increase transparency, communication and community engagement.
- ❑ Looked at cities and counties that went beyond the minimum requirements set by the Brown Act and California Public Records Act.
- ❑ Analyzed Sunshine Ordinances from San Francisco, Alameda, Oakland and Contra Costa County.
- ❑ Side-by-side comparison to Santa Rosa, highlighting one or two significant additions each jurisdiction included in their ordinances.

# POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE KEY FINDINGS

- ❑ **Santa Rosa exceeded Brown Act in a few areas, including:**
  - Notices and agendas – specifically in addressing regular meetings and agenda exceptions
  
- ❑ **Other cities/counties exceeded Brown Act and PRA in several areas, including:**
  - Closed Session agenda and reporting on pending or settled litigation
  - Public rights and agendas specifically addressing public comment
  - Advanced notification of public hearings and release of staff reports
  - Timely accessibility to public records

# POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create and adopt a Sunshine Ordinance
- Meeting notices – Codify existing “practices,” expand advance posting of agenda to 12 days, expand agenda summaries, post final agenda 5 days before meeting
- Public Education – Provide written guidelines for public comment, access to records, access to city departments
- Public Comment – Establish time-certain periods for public comment
- Closed Meetings – Expand requirements for closed-meeting agendas and disclosure of settled litigation
- Public Records – Acknowledge requests in 1 day, provide formal appeal process
- Website – Redesign site to provide better access to city information