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Workforce Development Network
Project Contract

Planning Workshop  Fall 1997 - Winter 1998
Workforce Development Project
Final Contract

Planning Workshop Fall/Winter 1997-98

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12/09/97
Project Summary

This project will analyze the current workforce development programs and services provided by Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Community Development Corporations (CDCs), community colleges, and the Workforce Development Board (formerly TPIC) in Multnomah and Washington counties. Documentation of the gaps and/or redundancies in the provision of workforce development will be provided to the Workforce Development Network (WDN) based upon service provider interviews and research on national models in workforce development. This documentation will be provided in three forms: as a database; as a resource directory; and as an analysis of the gaps in the current system.

The project will analyze the connections between workforce development efforts and community development, economic development, social services, and infrastructure and demonstrate why those connections are vital to a healthy region. This analysis will go beyond the traditional workforce development focus which has been on job training and placement, to bring in issues relating to transportation, community-building, jobs-housing balance, and location of support services. The project serves two functions; first, to assist in the collaboration between local workforce development service providers based on the gap analysis and second, to demonstrate to planners and others working in related fields why workforce development should be incorporated into planning efforts.
Problem Definition

"Policies that are designed to help low-income individuals find better, more stable, higher-paying jobs are increasingly important in this time of economic and political change. Employment and income are at the root of many of the most pressing problems our communities face -- poverty, blighted housing, alienated youth, single-parent families, crime..." --Report of the Neighborhood Funders Group

What is workforce development?

Workforce development is the process of providing job training, retraining, job placement, or other work-related support services to individuals. In general, workforce development programs have been focused around youth, displaced workers, the unemployed, disadvantaged workers, and, to a lesser extent, those currently employed. In the past, most workforce development efforts have been offered though federal programs, community colleges, and social service agencies.

Why is workforce development important?

From a strictly economic perspective, workforce development is important to ensuring our nation's continued competitiveness in the global economy. The US. economy has undergone a series of structural changes over the past twenty-five years as it has shifted from a higher-wage manufacturing based economy to a lower-wage service based economy. Blue-collar jobs are declining and professional and technical jobs are on the rise. Yet these new jobs require post secondary education and more specialized training. A significant number of workers lack the skills necessary to transition into these new jobs.

These national changes have been reflected in the Oregon economy as well. During the 1980's we saw a decline and restructuring of our local economy away from industries based around natural resources to professional and technical industries. Today, Oregon is experiencing rapid employment growth at a rate of approximately 50,000 jobs a year. Most of this growth continues to be in the professional and technical industries or in the low-wage service sector. As Graph 1 indicates, analysts predict this change to continue into the next decade. However, it is not clear that our workforce is prepared to meet this increase in need. Closer to home, employers in Multnomah and Washington Counties are indicating it is hard to fill many of these positions -- especially those requiring some type of skilled labor. Others note that more basic issues such as a lack of math skills, transportation issues, and the perceived lack of ability or willingness to learn is making it difficult to find qualified candidates (Oregon Labor Trends, October 1997).

From a planner's perspective, a well-skilled workforce is essential because high unemployment puts a strain on city services and decreases a city's necessary tax base. Furthermore, it is also an important issue for planners because the unequal distribution of
Graph 1 - Oregon Employment by Major Occupational Group

- Prod., Const., Ops., Maint., Laborers
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing
- Service Occupations
- Clerical / Admin. Support
- Sales Related Occupations
- Professional & Technical
- Managers & Administrators

Source: Oregon Labor Trends, November 1997

Graph 2 - Unemployment Rates 1990

- United States
- Oregon
- Portland-Vancouver PMSA
- Portland
- N/NE Portland

Source: 1990 Census
unemployment translates into very real questions of equity for our citizens. While our region as a whole may be experiencing rapid job growth and low unemployment, many of our inner-city neighborhoods and rural communities continue to suffer from high rates of unemployment and underemployment. For example (refer to Graph 2), though the overall unemployment rate for Portland in 1990 was higher than that of the surrounding region (6.2% to 4.3% respectively), a significant portion of that burden was felt in the neighborhoods of North and Northeast Portland alone who had an overall unemployment rate of 9.2%.

Finally, from a more holistic perspective, workforce development is important because meaningful work provides dignity, self-worth, and personal fulfillment to individuals. It is through meaningful work that people are allowed to positively contribute to their communities. In sum, a well-prepared and active workforce promotes healthy communities.

What is the problem with workforce development?

The area of workforce development has been plagued by problems that stem from issues of fragmentation.

**Funding & Policy Fragmentation**

In the past, the federal government has taken the lead in responding to these issues by offering an array of employment and training programs. These initiatives have occurred through legislation such as the Job Training Partnership Act which allocated funds to the states for workforce development programs. Over the years, this funding and program stream has become increasingly complex. New programs have been added and additional regulations have been initiated to control how the moneys for workforce development could be used. The result has been the creation of a very complex, involved, and fragmented system.

More recently the trend has been towards government "devolution" whereby the federal government has been looking to get out of providing direct services. To do this, they have been asking state and local agencies to take the lead in workforce development implementation in exchange for receiving federal moneys. This change has served to "de-mystify" workforce by taking it out of the federal policy realm and into the hands of local community decision-makers.

As a result of these changes, workforce development in Oregon is now at a crossroads. In just this past year, the federal funding region (known as Region 2) that serves Multnomah and Washington Counties has undergone a drastic reorganization in order to streamline its operations and make it more effective in responding to the area's workforce needs. Such a major change in organization will help to decrease the fragmentation of the local system by placing both funding allocation and policy-making functions in the hands of a single policy board.
Fragmentation and Local Workforce Providers

While streamlining the funding and policy-making streams is an important first step to the process of repairing the local system, it alone is not enough to correct some of the fragmentation issues still found in workforce development.

At the local level there exists a good deal of fragmentation among workforce development service providers in Multnomah and Washington Counties. This is a result of the evolutionary nature of workforce development programs -- which has focused on addressing discreet issues and needs in lieu of a more comprehensive and systemic approach. Historically, communication and collaboration between the various workforce development agencies has been infrequent. The result is that today the current workforce development landscape in Multnomah and Washington Counties resembles that of a "patchwork quilt" -- a hodge-podge of efforts rather than a more strategic approach to the problem. Yet in order to promote more strategic thinking, collaboration among these service providers is essential.

Our work as workshop planning students is to examine this current landscape, identify what services are currently being provided and note what services are still missing. This information will be passed back to the service providers themselves so they can better understand what is available and begin the process of collaboration in order to best meet the needs of their clients.

Furthermore, this information also has implications for the newly formed policy board for it will provide a necessary understanding of what is currently out there in order to allow for more strategic and systemic future planning of workforce development needs.
The Client

The Workforce Development Network (WDN), was established this past year. WDN is a forum that, for the first time, brings together community-based organizations and community development corporations in Multnomah and Washington counties that are involved with and interested in workforce development. WDN’s goals are to increase awareness of issues and policies, identify needs and resources, and to share models and best practices. Recent changes in the system signal real opportunities to improve the efficiency of the overall system in Washington and Multnomah counties. In order to do so, however, these organizations need a map of current services and an analysis its gaps and strengths. Our work as Planning Workshop students is to provide our client with this information and analysis.

Project Overview

Our goal in the Planning Workshop is to provide a map and database of current workforce development services and programs and an analysis of the assets and gaps in services including recommendations for action and further study. Through a series of interviews with organizations engaged in workforce development issues, including CBOs/CDCs, the community college, Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) direct services providers and Portland Development Commission (PDC) programs, we will provide a picture of the types of efforts that are underway in Multnomah and Washington counties to address joblessness. We will provide this information in both a database and directory format. In addition, we will provide an analysis of the current system, identifying what services are being provided and where the gaps are. We will pay particular attention to the links that exist or could exist between workforce initiatives and economic development, community development, social services, industry, and infrastructure planning.
Planning Intentions

Connecting people to meaningful work is one of our responsibilities as planners. The AICP Code of Ethics directs planner to continuously pursue and faithfully serve the public interest. We feel that the planning process must pay particular attention to the long-range consequences of present actions. Joblessness does not serve the public interest because it can carry dire consequences for a community's long-term economic and social health. As planners, we must strive to expand choice and opportunity for all individuals—in particular individuals whose circumstances leave them at a disadvantage.

For this project, we define planners as those in the private, public, and non-profit sectors who strive to create better communities. A community's economic health and general prosperity is inextricably tied to a productive and engaged workforce. This workshop project will demonstrate to planners that workforce development is a key component of community development at both the micro and macro levels. By demystifying workforce development and identifying it as a fundamental component of a community's growth and planning process, this project will investigate the link between an engaged workforce and community prosperity.

At the basic level, workforce development is a process where employment training and placement organizations and employers communicate with each other to provide a forum for job placement to occur. At the most sophisticated level, workforce development promotes healthy communities. Workforce development is a process that can facilitate a trained and engaged workforce that participates in the creation of a productive and innovative community.

As planners, we have both an implicit and explicit obligation to advance the prosperity of our communities. It is our obligation to ensure that economic and social prosperity reward everyone within our communities, and that no groups of individuals are left out. Unfortunately, the segments of the population most likely to be involved in workforce development activities have been left behind as our region's prosperity has grown. To the extent that these segments of the population are able and willing to be engaged in the region's economy, planners have the responsibility as well as the capacity to promote a mechanism to include these individuals in the growth of the community. Doing so is the most fundamental and perhaps the most meaningful action a planner can take to ensure the growth and prosperity of a community.
Regional Significance

Multnomah and Washington counties are the labor market that comprise Region 2 in the state of Oregon by which federal and state workforce development funds are disbursed. Multnomah and Washington counties are a region defined by the Oregon Economic Development Department. As the Portland metropolitan region continues to grow, regional planning becomes indispensable for coordinating local plans and eliminating redundant services. At present, the regional demarcation for workforce development funding does not coincide with actual regional economic boundaries, which comprise the six counties of the Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). These include Clark County in Washington State as well as Yamhill, Columbia, and Clackamas Counties in Oregon in addition to Region 2. Metro defines an economic region as a “Region of interdependent economic and labor activity which may transcend jurisdictional boundaries”. This situation is cause for further investigation into how to coordinate workforce development regions that reflect the scope of regional economic planning in accordance with an economic reality rather than by political boundaries.

In order for workforce development to be effective, it must be coordinated with regional planning efforts to ensure that those who are entering the workforce have adequate housing near employment opportunities, reliable transportation to jobs, and convenient access to necessary services. If any of these components is absent from the picture, the unemployed and underemployed citizens of the region will continue to bear a disproportionate burden in their search for employment.
Scope of Work

The project consists of three products:
1) a computer database;
2) a resource directory;
3) a gap analysis with themes, system linkages, and recommendations for action and further study.

The first phase, Project Definition, will begin with the drafting of the contract between the Workforce Development Network and the project team. Other tasks to be completed during this phase include researching current issues in workforce development. A review of literature will help identify issues that others have found of importance. Identification of organizations involved in workforce development will be completed. Weekly project team meetings will be scheduled as well as a minimum of twice monthly client meetings.

Phase two, Interviews, deals with specifying the actual methodology to be used in the project. The results of the literature review and meetings with the client will allow for the construction of a standard interview format to ensure consistency. Organizations identified in phase one will be contacted and interviews will be scheduled. The computer database to hold the results of the surveys will be designed during this phase. Finally, an editorial board paneled by members of the WDN will be formed to review all products. All data provided by individual organizations and agencies will be reviewed and approved before release.

NOTE: The scope of work will focus on services for the adult workforce. Although services provided for youth are critical and of vital significance to the region, inclusion of these services and programs is beyond the scope of this project.

Tasks in phase three, Database Development, are centered on designing and entering information gathered during the interviews. The data will be gathered, entered into a database, and checked for accuracy. Concurrent with phase three will be phase four, Resource Directory. This phase will involve formatting and structuring the index of the directory.

During phase five, Gap Analysis, the project team will prepare internal memos based on interview results, concerning patterns and themes in services provided. During this phase the group will be responsible for leading a session of the workshop class. It is anticipated that this will involve bringing to the forefront the issues that service providers in workforce development have to address each day. This will underscore the need for a holistic approach toward planning. These internal memos will lead up to the final gap analysis and recommendations.

Phase six, Final Report, brings to a close the final project, with presentations given, both verbal and written, regarding the findings of the study.
**Phase 1: Project Definition**

**Task 1.1: Background Information**

**Discussion:** This task is meant to educate the project members on the background issues to be addressed by the project and the history of the WDN. This will involve a review of the relevant literature and discussions with members of the WDN. Also to be discussed at these meetings is the identification of other players.

**Products:**
1. Bibliography of literature related to workforce development.
2. Issues raised.

**Schedule:** The briefings will occur on November 13 and 14, 1997. The literature review will be complete by January 1, 1997.

**Task Leader:** Ray Jackson

**Task 1.2: Revise and Finalize Contract**

**Discussion:** This task will involve finalizing the language of the contract to the satisfaction of the client, the project team, and the class professors. The final contract will be presented to the client and the workshop class December 1 or 3, 1997.

**Products:**
1. Final contract of the project agreement between the client and the project team.
2. Presentation of the contract to the client and workshop class.

**Schedule:** The final contract will be presented to the client and the workshop class December 1, 1997. Changes based on presentation will be completed by December 10, 1997.

**Task Leader:** Ray Jackson

**Phase 2: Interviews**

**Task 2.1: Identify Organizations**

**Discussion:** This task will identify organizations that either participate in the WDN or perform workforce development. These organizations will be identified by WDN and represent the private, public, and non-profit sectors.

**Products:** List of organizations, addresses and contact person to be the subject of the interview, Task 2.5.

**Schedule:** Draft list will be completed by December 3, 1997. It is anticipated that the identification of organizations is likely to be a dynamic task.

**Task Leader:** Claire Smith
Task 2.2: Interview Format and Strategy

Discussion: This project is structured around interviewing workforce development service providers. This task will involve meetings with the client (WDN) to determine precisely their needs and the suitability of the interview format. The project team will work with WDN to identify an interview format that will provide uniform information and a concise assessment of current workforce development services. An assessment of the interview format will be made after a first round of interviews.

Products:
1. An interview instrument that meets the criteria of the client and is easy to administer.
2. Strategy for interviewing organizations identified in Task 2.1 and the division of interviews among team members.
3. Identification of organizations to test and refine the interview format.

Schedule: The strategy and identification of organizations will be completed by December 1, 1997. The initial interview format will be complete by December 10, 1997.

Task Leader: Britt Parrott and Kim Burnett

Task 2.3: Contact Organizations

Discussion: This task will involve an initial mailing and follow up phone call to organizations identified in Task 2.1. The nature of this contact will be to inform the organization of the project, its goals and methods, and to solicit their cooperation in gathering the necessary data. The primary goal of this task is to schedule a date in January to conduct an interview with each of the organizations.

Products:
1. Letters and/or calling script to use in soliciting the cooperation of identified organizations in conducting the interviews.
2. Calendar of interviews with the organizations.
3. Presentation of project to the December 12, 1997, WDN meeting.

Schedule: The initial mailings will be completed by December 19, 1997. Subsequent telephone confirmation calls will be complete by December 31, 1997.

Task Leader: Matt Ransom

Task 2.4: Finalize Interview Format

Discussion: As discussed in Task 2.2, the interview format is important for the efficient gathering of the necessary information from the identified organizations. The initial version of the interview format will be tested on a limited number of cooperative organizations and based on these tests, the format will be finalized.

Products:
1. Trial interview and analysis of results.
2. Finalized interview format.
**Schedule:** The trial interview will be completed by December 19, 1997. The final interview format will be completed by January 1, 1998.

**Task Leader:** Project Team and WDN

**Task 2.5: Conduct Interviews**

**Discussion:** This task defines the data gathering of the project. It will entail conducting in person interviews with the contact person of the organizations identified in Task 2.3. Telephone interviews and written interviews will be conducted on a case by case basis due to scheduling conflicts or similar time constraints. The resulting data will be processed in Task 3.2.

**Products:**
1. Interview results.
2. Thank you letters to interviewees.

**Schedule:** This task will be completed by February 13, 1998.

**Task Leader:** Ray Jackson

**Task 2.6: Form Editorial Board**

**Discussion:** To ensure that the data gathered by the interviews satisfies the needs of the client, an editorial board will be convened by WDN to periodically review the database. The timeline and the role and responsibility of the Editorial Board will be determined by the project team and WDN.

**Products:** A list of member names and Editorial Board responsibilities.

**Schedule:** This board will meet during the course of Phase III. This task will be completed by January 1, 1998.

**Task Leader:** Claire Smith and WDN

**Task 2.7: Drafts of Interviews for Editing**

**Discussion:** To be specified by the client and the editorial board, either partial or complete records of the interviews will be made available to the editorial board identified in Task 2.6 for review and comment. These records will be used to maintain the quality of the interviews and to reconfirm the relevancy of the information gathered.

**Products:** Unspecified number of drafts of interview results, pre and post processing.

**Schedule:** The final drafts will be submitted to the editorial board by February 16, 1998. Comments and revisions will be accepted from the board, with the task to be completed by February 25, 1998.

**Task Leader:** Project Team and Editorial Board
Workforce Development Contract

**Phase 3: Database Development**

**Task 3.1: Structure Database**

**Discussion:** The database is to be repository of the information gathered from the interviews. The database will be constructed in Microsoft Access and will be structured to allow for the widest number of output formats. By necessity, this task will be conducted in parallel with Task 2.4 to ensure that the data generated by the interview format can be easily maintained and updated.

**Products:** Database structure.

**Schedule:** This task will be completed by January 1, 1998.

**Task Leader:** Claire Smith

**Task 3.2: Database Entry**

**Discussion:** Concurrent with Task 2.5 is the entry of the results from the interviews into the database specified in Task 3.1. The result will be a complete record of the information gathered from the interviews in Microsoft Access format.

**Products:** Database of interview information.

**Schedule:** This task will be completed by February 25, 1998.

**Task Leader:** Claire Smith

**Phase 4: Resource Directory**

**Task 4.1: Define Resource Directory Format and Structure**

**Discussion:** Details of interviews will be presented in an indexed directory the organization of which will be determined concurrent with Task 2.4. The primary focus of the Resource Directory is to maximize the accessibility by and usefulness of the document with an emphasis on a functional index.

**Products:** Outline of Resource Directory.

**Schedule:** The task will be completed January 16, 1998.

**Task Leader:** Britt Parrott

**Task 4.2: Produce Draft Resource Directory**

**Discussion:** Formalize layout of Resource Directory and index.

**Products:** Draft Resource Directory.
Schedule: This task will be completed February 20, 1998.

Task Leader: Britt Parrott

Task 4.3: Produce Final Resource Directory
Discussion: Incorporate changes from draft copy and compiled final edit of Resource Directory.


Schedule: This task will be completed March 18, 1998.
Task Leader: Britt Parrott

Phase 5: Gap Analysis

Task 5.1: Interim Analysis
Discussion: Concurrent with tasks 2.5 and 2.7 and informed by the literature review in Task 1.1, the project team will prepare internal memos concerning patterns and themes loosely organized around the themes of economic development, community development, social services, industry and infrastructure planning.

Products:
1. Internal working memos.
2. Database status reports.

Schedule: This task will be completed by February 25, 1998.
Task Leader: Memos - Kim Burnett, Database Status Reports - Matt Ransom

Task 5.2: Database Results and Draft Analysis
Discussion: Compilation and review of interview results and preparation of draft findings leading to a gap analysis.

Products: Draft findings.

Schedule: This task will be completed by March 1, 1998.
Task Leader: Draft Analysis - Kim Burnett, Database Results - Matt Ransom

Task 5.3: Report Preparation
Discussion: Concurrent with the previous two tasks, the preparation of the final report will take place. This report will focus on the gap analysis that is derived from the interviews, literature review and internal memos.

Products:
1. Drafts of the final report(s) to be distributed to the client, project team and class professors for review and comment.
2. Incorporation of the revisions into a final report.
Schedule: This task will be completed by March 1, 1998. Final revisions due to client and professorial review and comment will be completed by March 21, 1998.

Task Leader: Matt Ransom and Ray Jackson

Phase 6: Final Report

Task 6.1: Presentation of Final Report

Discussion: This task represents the completion of the project. The presentation will be to both the client and to the workshop class. This will summarize the major findings of the project and the methodology used.

Products:
1. Presentation to the client at location, dates and time to be determined.
2. Presentation to the workshop class in Shattuck Hall, room 301, at a time and date to be determined.

Schedule: This task will be completed by March 21, 1998.
APPENDIX

Budget

WDN will provide financial support for the development and final production of the Resource Directory and Program Analysis. Further financial assistance in terms of providing office/meeting space for the project team, as well as reimbursement for travel and mileage expenses will be provided by WDN.
Team Strategy

As planning students we are both collectively and individually engaged in contributing to the revitalization and sustained health of our communities. Collectively, we believe that growth within a community is not determined by a single source, rather it is based upon a set of interrelated factors involving people, the economy, and the built environment. Each of these factors serves as the general foundation upon which a community of opportunity and prosperity is built. Through an analysis of workforce development in Multnomah and Washington counties, we will attempt to illustrate to policy makers and planners alike that engaging the unemployed or under-employed residents in meaningful career development training is a key component in every community's planning and visioning process.

As individual group members, each of us brings a different set of experiences and viewpoints to the workforce development issue. The wide array of individual team member strengths will result in a thorough review of workforce development and an analysis with a fresh and innovative perspective.

Kim Burnett's particular interest in this project is based upon her belief that an essential element to creating a healthy community comes from providing meaningful work to its members. Kim brings to the team professional experience in economic and community development. In addition, she provides the group a theoretical and public policy perspective to their work. Her focus will be to look at the potential linkages between workforce development and other arenas.

Ray Jackson's interest in this project relates to community development and its relationship to individual mobility. Ray's recent professional experience relates to surveying and examining residents' residential location and travel choices in terms of their opportunities for mobility.

Claire Smith brings to the team ability to be creative and flexible, to use critical thinking in problem analysis, and to value teamwork. In this project, Claire would like to investigate the apparent disconnect between job training and successful job placement.

Matt Ransom's recent professional experience involved managing multi-component planning projects which have comprised independent research and economic analysis components. Matt's particular interest in this project is to study how workforce development, land development, and transportation infrastructure impact job retention.

Britt Parrott's interest in this project stems from his personal frustration of turning down jobs due to his lack of automobile ownership. Based on his previous experience as the managing editor of a skateboarding magazine, he plans to help produce a quality document that meets the deadline.
Relationship to Colleagues

It is this project team's intent to illustrate to planners that they have a vested interest in the development of their community's workforce. As planners in training, we have the opportunity to demonstrate to other class participants the dynamic relationship between a developing workforce and its relationship to long-term economic vitality and community growth. This project team intends to involve the class members through a combination of first person experience as well as in-class discussion. These experiences will be developed with the intention of instilling a basic understanding among class participants that:

1) Community growth is based upon the skills, adaptability, and the ability of its workforce to continually learn.

2) Coordination of planning services can aid a community in providing a strong economy and a solid employment base.

3) Workforce development is an immediate planning concern.

In doing so, each class member should leave the workshop program with the knowledge that workforce development is a fundamental component of community development and the land use planning process.