

CITY OF OREGON CITY

Chapter I: Introduction to Boards and Commissions

A. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Oregon City's system of boards and commissions provides a way for residents who have special experience or interests to participate in the City's decision-making process by advising the City Commission on numerous issues.

The governmental decision-making process has other citizen participation mechanisms, such as speaking at public hearings, speaking before the City Commission and its subcommittees, participating in neighborhood based organizations, petitioning and letter writing.

The City believes it is not only the right but also the duty of citizens to participate in planning for their future, and the City has a responsibility to provide commissioners with the tools to carry out their charge. That responsibility includes orientation sessions for commissioners, skills training and useful written procedures. This orientation manual attempts to fulfill the latter requirement.

The boards and commissions system provides the opportunity to interact creatively with people of all ages, interests and backgrounds. Democracy can be realized when citizens are able to come together across neighborhood and economic lines to assist in making the community decisions that will shape all of their lives. While commissioners are themselves appointed from within the community, it is important that they in turn ensure that a wide variety of viewpoints from the rest of the community are considered when boards make recommendations to the City Commission. Board members should treat these widely varying viewpoints of other members and the public with respect so that all citizens are encouraged to participate in government.

The City of Oregon City enjoys a wide variety of Commission-appointed citizen boards, commissions, and committees which advise the City Commission on numerous issues. As citizen participation has evolved into a vital and integral part of local government, the number of commissions has steadily grown.