

Implementing Inclusive Public Involvement Practices

A Case Study of Seattle, Washington



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Chapter 1: Introduction

It is widely accepted amongst literature that public participation conducted by municipal governments fails to reach beyond the 'usual suspects,' or those community members who most often have access to and participate in governance processes. This failure indicates a systemic problem in the way public participation is planned, implemented, managed, and viewed within local government. For example, legal requirements in land use or development code to provide notice and conduct hearings may limit the exchange of information, dialogue, and access to events for diverse community groups, and create frustration amongst the public toward the government. Local governments often use traditional public participation models like public hearings and citizen advisory boards, which limit the extent to which the public can participate in a decision. Too frequently groups with more institutionalized power have more weight in the public engagement process and influence in a decision. Furthermore, traditional approaches to public participation do not address barriers to participation by all members of the public. Sherry Arnstein (1969) explains that the issue of inclusion in public participation practices is important because what begins as consensus about conducting public participation can digress into racial, ethnic, ideological, and political opposition if participation is defined as the redistribution of power. Given these limitations to including all community members who have a stake in a decision, it is important to determine how to conduct more inclusive public participation on a citywide level.

Definition of Public Participation

Public participation is widely accepted amongst practitioners and scholars as an important part of local government decisions and governance. However, there is no single approach to or definition of public participation. It is important to clarify the definition of public participation because there are many terms used for similar concepts and there is dissent when defining the same term (Rowe and Frewer, 2005).

According to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), an association of public participation practitioners:

"Public participation means to involve those who are affected by a decision in the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision."

Definitions of public participation vary within the literature. Yang and Callahan (2007) use the term "citizen involvement efforts" to mean the efforts that governments take to include the public in administrative decisions. Public participation is also defined as the involvement of citizens in service delivery and management and decision making (Wang, 2008). For example, it could be citizens activities facilitated by institutions that develop policies (Rowe and Frewer, 2005). Public participation is encouraged as a mechanism to mitigate public cynicism towards government, build consensus amongst stakeholders in government, and improve decision making (Wang, 2008). Additionally,

public participation can be a method for “advancing fairness and justice” (Innes and Booher, 2004). In other words, it can be a means to empower citizens to navigate political processes, and confer capacity to them to act as leaders, direct decisions, or actively engage in decision making processes.

In this report, the term *public participation* will draw from Yang and Callahan's definition and refer to general efforts made by government officials to connect citizens to governance and government decision making processes. The term “citizen” is interpreted as any member of a city or community. While this research focuses on efforts made by the government to engage the public, it is important to note that public participation also encompasses involvement that is initiated by community members, community organizations, and the private and non-profit sectors

City of Seattle – A Case Study

This research is a single case study of City of Seattle's policies for inclusive public outreach and engagement. In 2005, Mayor Gregory Nickels established the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) to “end institutionalized racism in City government and promote multiculturalism and full participation by all residents” (IOPE, 2009). There are three goals of RSJI, which are (City of Seattle, Office of Civil Rights):

- Goal One: Racial Equity in City Operations
- Goal Two: Racial Equity in City Engagement and Services
- Goal Three: Racial Equity in Our Community

To fulfill the mission of the RSJI and address Goal Two, Nickels created Executive Order 05-08 on Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement (IOPE) in 2008. Executive Order 05-08 committed all departments in the City of Seattle to develop and implement “outreach and public engagement processes inclusive of people of diverse races, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations and socio-economic status” (IOPE, 2009). The Executive Order 05-08 acknowledges that immigrants, refugees, and people of color experience barriers to accessing City government and participation in public processes (IOPE, 2009). To address those barriers, Executive Order 05-08 recognizes diversity as a strength and opportunity and states that racial, cultural, and socioeconomic complexities must be accounted for to create healthy democracy (IOPE, 2009). The Inclusive Outreach and Public Outreach Guide is a tool for City staff to use to achieve RSJI and the Executive Order 05-08, recognizing that staff capacity to do culturally competent and inclusive work is essential for implementation. The three guiding principles in IOPE to which city staff must work are (IOPE, 2009):

1. *Enhance Relationships & Engagement*
2. *Enrich Knowledge Gathering*
3. *Embrace Organizational Change*

The goals of IOPE for public participation are to “empower communities to make decisions for themselves, release capacity and potential of communities, and change relationships between service providers and communities” (IOPE, 2009).

Amongst local governments, few plans exist that are intended to promote inclusive and culturally competent public participation. Therefore, a case study on Seattle's policies can provide valuable insight for other cities, practitioners, community members, and other stakeholders working to make public participation more equitable or inclusive.

The purpose of this research is to identify ways that local governments can achieve more inclusivity in their public participation and outreach, and determine the role of policies in goals for inclusivity. The central research question is: *how is the City of Seattle and its staff able to implement more inclusive public participation practices on a citywide level?* Specifically, this research assesses the implementation of RSJI Goal Two, the Executive Order 05-08, and the IOPE guide at the staff level. Given that the Executive Order 05-08 and tools like the IOPE Guide are under the umbrella of the RSJI, policy implementation will be evaluated within a broader context of the RSJI. There are other tools or guides available for staff to achieve RSJI, however this research specifically addresses implementation of the IOPE guide because it was developed for staff to develop inclusive public engagement plans.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Critique of Public Participation

Normative definitions of public participation that call for including all citizens affected by a decision are not always realized in practice. Yang and Callahan (2007) explain that while public involvement is widely acknowledged in professional and academic fields as part of the state and local decision making processes, it is infrequently conducted in an "authentic" form. According to Innes and Booher (2004), public participation in practice fails to achieve normative theory and practical goals. According to Innes and Booher (2004), legally required public participation methods such as the public hearing and review and comment procedures do not meet goals for public involvement. In fact, legally required public participation methods may be counterproductive to building trust, unwittingly creating anger amongst the public towards the agency, resulting in lawsuits, or blocking the implementation of a project (Innes and Booher, 2004). Within this context, public involvement as most commonly practiced by governments is widely critiqued.

According to Arnstein (1969), while the concept of public participation receives widespread support, there are marginalized communities that lack in representation and power to influence decisions. Arnstein explains that racism, paternalism, and the resistance to the redistribution of power create opposition to promote public participation for the "have-nots," or communities that are socio-politically marginalized. Arnstein offers a theoretical framework, 'the ladder of public participation,' to assess the extent to which citizens are empowered and included in decision making processes. At the lowest rung of the ladder is manipulation, when citizens are educated or cued of their beliefs to align with decision maker's perspectives. Manipulation is not considered to be a form of public participation. At the top rung of the ladder is total citizen control, where citizens have full charge in managerial and administrative

aspects of their community. Public participation mechanisms conducted at these lower levels of the ladder exclude citizens beyond the “usual suspects.”

Wang (2008) offers a summary of Arnstein's framework, explaining that there are two levels of participation, pseudo or genuine. Pseudo participation is when participation methods are used to inform, placate, or manipulate the public and citizen opinions, whereas genuine participation occurs when citizens are included in government decision making and are the co-producers of goods, services, and governance (Wang, 2008).

Most cities in the United States use traditional public involvement techniques for planning and public administration: public hearings, community and neighborhood meetings, citizen advisory boards, internet, chamber of commerce meetings, and business community meetings (Wang and Van Wart, 2007). Traditional public participation processes often serve to reinforce a centralized decision making model. These common techniques have been widely critiqued in literature for reinforcing centralized decision-making processes, excluding certain population groups, and gathering public input that does not substantially influence decisions or policy development. Simrell King et. al (1998) argue that traditional public participation methods like the public hearing fail to facilitate “meaningful exchange” between citizens and decision makers. Citizen advisory boards, panels and surveys only include limited biased interests, and they do not allow for interaction between citizens and administrators (Simrell King et. al, 1998). Public hearings are often offered late in the process and represent another checkbox on the to-do list rather than a mechanism for communication (Simrell King et. al, 1998). Participation mechanisms can be used to reinforce systems of control and current institutional legitimacy (Anderson, 1998). Additionally, the powers of economies and institutionalized politics have more weight than the general public in planning decisions (Bedford et al. 2002). For example, in Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs) for federal and civilian agencies, only a select group of civilians receive one-way communication and the extent to which CABs influence decisions is small (Laurian, 2007). CABs receive information from federal agencies, however they are not effective in reflecting community input or in successfully sharing information with the public (Laurian, 2007).

If public participation practices fail to achieve normative theory and exclude certain population groups, it is time for local governments to evaluate new strategies. Innes and Booher (2004) describe ambivalence in the literature about the effectiveness of public involvement in planning; there is a range of perspectives in the literature, including arguments that the public does not have enough power in decisions, that practitioners use methods incorrectly, and that direct participation is no longer effective (Innes and Booher, 2004). Regardless of the range of arguments, theorists from a variety of fields mostly agree with the general concept that public participation practices are somewhat problematic, particularly with respect to inclusion. For example, Lukensmeyer and Boyd (2004) argue that the governance system is not structured to respond to citizen opinions and concerns in a meaningful way. Public officials have a high degree of power when determining who constitutes the public and tend to marginalize groups counter to the “general public” in participatory processes (Barnes et. al, 2003). Innes and Booher (2004) argue that legally required

public involvement mechanisms can be counterproductive and they call for a paradigm shift to respond to failure of participatory practices to achieve normative principles. The remainder of this section discusses different approaches for improving public participation practices and creating a more inclusive participatory system.

Approaches Towards Inclusivity

Some instrumental changes within government may be necessary to do more inclusive public involvement. Administrators need to be re-trained as participants in public participation processes rather than as experts, reframing their understanding of power structures (Simrell King et. al, 1998). Practitioners sometimes describe groups as “hard to reach,” but according to Alarcon de Morris and Leistner (2009), the struggle to reach certain groups may be a result of the staff’s lack of cultural competency to reach them. Therefore, training for administrators could teach intercultural competency skills. Other skills required for more collaborative public process includes conflict resolution, empathy, networking, trust building, empowerment, creativity, creating shared meaning, and understanding (McGuire, 2006). While McGuire (2006) argues that many of these skills may be inherent in the role of a public administrator, there still is room for training.

Staff characteristics may have a role in achieving normative public participation. Simrell King et. al (1998) argue that habits and practices must change to shift administrative structures or processes. Public trust may result when government administrators exhibit honesty, morality and integrity, and ethics and embed these characteristics in local governance through participation processes (Wang and Van Wart, 2007).

Similarly, it is important to consider the needs of the community and historical context of public involvement. Organizations that would like to increase avenues for public involvement should first consider factors like trust, civic capacities, time schedules, past working relationships, and participant’s interest in content of a project (White, 2000). White (2000) argues that increasing channels for participation can be problematic without tailoring processes to these kinds of factors.

Other approaches for engaging more diverse communities may be more sociopolitical in nature. Participatory practices create spaces in which participants engage in new ways and “readjust the boundaries between the state and its citizens” (Fischer, 2006). The re-negotiation or design of space that considers diverse cultures and complex socioeconomic situations is necessary to create more inclusive public participation. Fischer (2006) argues that the ability for diverse voices to have political power in places not previously available to them depends on the creation, opening, and negotiation of space through social understandings (Fisher, 2006). Meanings, identities, actors, institutions, and practices construct politics rather than the structures, practices, and methods of state institutions; politics are cultural and have the power to transform and subvert social relations (Fischer, 2006). Fisher (2006) advocates for cultural politics for involvement, meaning the creation of spaces for ongoing civic engagement and more responsive government instead of fleeting participatory methods such as voting. For marginalized groups, space in cultural politics represents a “site for radical possibilities”

and “a place for resistance” (Fischer, 2006). Social politics and cultural shifts play a key role in determining who participates and to what extent they have the power or capacity to influence a decision (Fischer, 2006). Space is a dialectical and political process because it is opened up and shaped by political understandings (Fischer, 2006). For deliberative empowerment to succeed it must have strong support, if not facilitation, from the top down; the result of citizens relying solely on endogenous efforts for civic engagement would be a strategic struggle and not citizen participation per se (Fischer, 2006). Furthermore, pedagogy is key for the development of discursive public spaces (Fischer, 2006). In the future, the creation of collaborative processes must continue to be a dialectical one involving the negotiation of political space and power redistribution. This negotiation of political space and power extends to specific deliberative activities as well as the general political arena. With regards to designing participation models, Fischer (2006) explains that a formal theory for designing participation models is not possible because structures themselves are social interpretations.

To create collaboration, public participation practices will need to move beyond dualist or pluralist governance frameworks. Governance goes beyond government, as power is distributed from civic leaders and through concentric networks (Innes and Booher, 2004). Fischer’s (2006) indicates that the renegotiation of space and power is necessary to allow citizens more influence in decision making processes. This suggests that a need for political restructuring within local government.

Additionally, infrastructure can create opportunities for the re-negotiation of space, social belonging, and political participation. For example, farmworkers in immigrant communities like Woodburn, Oregon, that have access to housing within a community have been able to more successfully access services, re-negotiate space, and create a sense of belonging (Nelson and Hiemstra, 2008).

Creating “safe” space for public involvement activity is important because it allows participants more opportunity to share their beliefs and opinions (Lukensmeyer and Boyd, 2004). Lukensmeyer and Boyd (2004) define “safe space” as one with spatial and non-spatial elements; for example, it should be in a “beloved public space in the community.” To create a safe space, facilitators should have racially diverse staff and volunteers, should offer support devices like listening devices for the hearing impaired, preserve anonymity, and train staff appropriately (Lukensmeyer and Boyd, 2004).

Innes and Booher (2004) call for collaborative participation that addresses collective interests and facilitates multi-way interaction between stakeholders, explaining that collaborative processes can address the gaps between public involvement normative theory and practice. Innes and Booher (2004) explain that collaborative practices are achieved through “transformative dialogue,” where participants are equally empowered and informed, listen to others with respect, and where their perspectives are heard with respect. When these conditions are met, participants are changed through the process and are able to overcome problems together (Innes and Booher, 2004). Additionally, collaborative dialogue processes may foster learning, the building of new networks, institutional capacity, trust, and social capital (Innes and Booher,

2004). Finally, the hierarchies of power are ever more dispersed and to develop joint objectives, citizens must develop networks to take action (Innes and Booher, 2004).

Another approach is network structures, which can be used to reach out and build relationships with citizens through established organizations. Network structures are defined as a more permanent organization of public, non-profit, and private structures to solve problems on more “equal terms” (Mandell, 1999). Mandell (1999) evaluates network structures as an approach to build trust, synergy, social capital, empower communities to solve problems, and access community resources. They cannot be managed through traditional methods and are based on interpersonal relationships rather than formal contracts (Mandell, 1999). According to Mandell (1999), for network structures to operate successfully, there must be collaboration between government and other agencies, or embeddedness, government must facilitate participation at its own pace and from a bottom-up process, and encourage power as something to be unleashed from community members, not imparted upon them.

According to Lukensmeyer and Boyd (2004), partnerships developed with community organizations can be leveraged to recruit new members to participatory processes. Additionally, campaigns should go beyond “passive approaches” like posters and email invitations, and involve more personal and direct methods, like relying on community leaders to invite people in their network (Lukensmeyer and Boyd, 2004). When certain groups are not represented in a process, outreach workers can conduct one-on-one outreach in neighborhoods where media coverage is least present (Lukensmeyer and Boyd, 2004). Furthermore, the most successful public involvement efforts are those that involve sustained efforts with the community over time and that include community leaders throughout project processes from planning through implementation (Lukensmeyer and Boyd, 2004).

Finally, in developing more inclusive practices, it is important to look at the whole picture of who is involved in information development and which agents may have an indirect role in the process. Hanna (2000) explains that participation does not equate empowerment and may not influence a decision to a great extent. Additionally, participation is not always explicit. For example, NGOs may exert their influence via constituents (Hanna, 2000). Another channel of participation is the extent to which actors may contribute to information development; participation can lead to the development of new data and new interpretations (Hanna, 2000).

Chapter 3: Methods

An instrumental case study method was selected because it is appropriate for addressing a “how” question and it is exploratory in nature (Yin, 2002). Also, a case study is an opportunity to understand complex relationships or programs (Baxter and Jack, 2008). An instrumental case study approach is appropriate for this research because it looks at the external context and activities of the case study to answer a broader question and develop considerations for others who would benefit from them (Baxter and Jack, 2008). An instrumental approach can help to identify

recommendations or considerations for other cities that are trying to implement inclusive public involvement plans.

Procedures

Semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted from March to May 2013. A total of 12 City staff contacts were interviewed. Staff was sent an email invitation to participate in the study along with an Informed Consent document. Three interviews were conducted in person and nine were conducted over the phone. In compliance with IRB procedures and research protocol, the researcher confirmed that each participant received the Informed Consent document and verbally reviewed the key points (e.g. sensitive nature of research, confidentiality, and voluntary nature of participation).

Interviews were guided by a pre-determined list of questions, including the ones listed below. For a complete list of questions, see Appendix A.

- What type of public involvement work do you do in your current position?
- Are you familiar with the Executive Order 05-08? The IOPE guide? How do you use it in your public involvement work?
- Since the adoption of the Executive Order 05-08/IOPE guide, how has it changed the public involvement work that you do?
- What public involvement strategies have you or your department created to promote inclusivity?
- If you use the IOPE guide: How are you able to achieve the IOPE principles?
 - What support or mechanisms do you rely on to achieve the IOPE guide in your public involvement work?
 - What does the City do or offer to support you in achieving the IOPE principles?
- From your perspective, is the IOPE guide successful in creating more inclusive public involvement practices?
- How are you encouraged to use the IOPE guidebook?
- How do you perceive the community's view of the IOPE guidebook principles?

To clarify details about specific programs mentioned in interviews, City documents were reviewed.

Sample

Interview contacts were Seattle City staff that engages the public in government affairs as a part of their job duties. Interviews were conducted with staff from a variety of departments and projects because Executive Order 05-08 calls for each City department to implement inclusive public involvement principles.

Contacts were identified through a snowball method. The snowball method involves obtaining referrals from interview participants to other potential contacts that meet the criteria related to the research question (Lopes et. al, 1996). The technique relies on insider knowledge to identify contacts that would be willing to participate and that cannot be easily identified through other sources (Lopes et. al, 1996). This technique was necessary because Seattle's staff directory and many departmental websites do

not include job descriptions or titles.

Analysis

Analysis of interview notes was qualitative. Interview segments were coded by topic. While interview segments or topics were not quantified, consideration was given to the number of times a topic was mentioned or the degree of emphasis that a participant placed on a topic. Another factor given weight in the analysis of interviews was the role of a staff member and whether they have an instrumental part in drafting or implementing RSJI public engagement policies. Topics that were frequently addressed or stood out because of their comparative relevance to the research questions are addressed in the findings section of this report.

Chapter 4: Findings & Discussion

Findings are categorized and explored in 13 themes: Values – Race and Social Justice, IOPE and Other Tools, Trusted Advocacy & Leadership Programs, Networking & External Consultants, Internal Support, Soft Skills, Community Space, Translation Policy, Training, Funding, Enforcement, Pace of Change, and Community Perception. These themes represent key findings and were developed because they were frequently mentioned in interviews or specifically address a research question.

1. Vision – Race and Social Justice

As mentioned in Chapter One, the RSJI was released in 2005 and the Executive Order was released in 2008. RSJI is effectively the umbrella initiative that the Executive Order 05-08 helps to implement. The Executive Order 05-08 addresses RSJI because RSJI Goal Two is to achieve racial equity in public engagement and City services.

A couple staff expressed that there is confusion about the relationship between the Executive Order 05-08 and RSJI, whether RSJI oversees the Executive Order 05-08 or whether they are packaged together. However, staff members interviewed is aware of the RSJI. Staff members explained that each City staff member is held accountable for RSJI principles and they address required components in their work as applicable.

RSJI is implemented in departments and public participation practices through different ways. First, there is a RSJI Change Team within each department. RSJI Change Teams focus on institutional racism, inclusive public participation, and equity. The teams develop a charter, which can be modeled after a *RSJI Change Team Charter*. The *RSJI Change Team Charter* states:

“The Change Team supports the mission of the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) to end institutionalized racism in City government and promote multiculturalism and full participation by all residents. The Change Team works to implement the RSJI mission within (department name) by supporting development and implementation of the department’s annual RSJI Work Plan and promoting the development of an anti-racism culture in the department.”

While the work of each RSJI Change Team varies slightly according to their department’s business needs, generally speaking, their role is to develop, coordinate, and monitor progress of annual RSJI departmental work plans. Change Team members are also charged with the task of mentoring new members, supporting their colleagues in their interest in RSJI change and planning, and attending certain staff meetings and caucuses (*RSJI Change Team Charter*, 2012). Furthermore, team members are responsible for obtaining a certain skill set to fulfill competencies identified by the city or complete trainings required for citywide staff.

According to the *RSJI Change Team Charter* template, all staff is responsible for understanding RSJI, institutional racism and its impacts, and current and historical causes of racism. In comparison, RSJI Change Team members must also understand the institutional change process necessary to achieve racial equity. RSJI work plans include equity goals for public engagement and outreach. The size and breadth of the RSJI Change Teams depend on the size of the department and its capacity needs to create a 'critical mass for influencing change' (RSJI Change Team Charter, 2012). Change Teams vary in size and frequency of meetings as well as support from department head and managers. A few staff interviewed participates in an RSJI change teams. For example, one staff member explained that the change team in which they participate meets every two months, reviews goals at the beginning of the year, and is responsible for looking at the recruitment and hiring process to ensure equity. Also, the team makes upper level management aware of issues and sub-committees within the change team focus on more specific issues related to equity. Similar to the role and function of the RSJI change teams, a Core Team works across all citywide issues related to RSJI rather than within a singular department.

Overall, the change teams create a level of awareness and knowledge amongst certain staff that may not exist without the RSJI change team structure. Second, those staff members support their department and colleagues in achieving and understanding RSJI principles, and partake in the development and implementation of racial equity principles pertaining to public engagement and outreach amongst other programming and policy areas.

RSJI work plan goals are coordinated with the use of other tools, such as the Racial Equity Toolkit that assesses impact/burdens of racial inequities in a community. The Racial Equity Tool Kit is a step-by-step guide for the analysis of racial equity and assessment of racial equity in a policy, initiative, program, or budget issue (City of Seattle). Additionally, the Racial Equity Toolkit includes a glossary of important terms in the document. Several staff explained that they have access to tools like the Racial Equity Toolkit and equity maps to help them achieve RSJI goals.

Another tool that is available for staff to implement RSJI is the inclusion sign-up sheet. Staff mentioned that there is a new inclusion sign-up sheet that is mandatory for public events. Community members in attendance sign-in and indicates race, ethnicity, primary language spoken at home, age, gender, zip code, and whether they own or rent their home. The purpose of this is to track participation, look for patterns and determine who is not at the "table," and determine course-corrective action(s) as appropriate.

The influence of RSJI in public involvement was evidenced in interviews with staff because several staff discussed topics like institutionalized racism, power, and intercultural competency. Staff spoke about having awareness of their own position of power and addressing that position by acting as a facilitator, building relationships in the community, and relying on trusted advocates (see Finding 3). Finally, this awareness of RSJI may be because all staff are required to take 'Race – the Power of the Illusion' training (further discussed in Finding 9). Furthermore, RSJI

has directly motivated the implementation of inclusive public participation approaches. A staff member explained that RSJI has been critical to creating space for emphasis and awareness of inclusive public participation.

The guidance that RSJI provides illustrates the importance of vision, or guiding values. Racial equity principles are embedded into public participation practice. In part, this is because staff is held accountable for meeting RSJI measures and attending RSJI trainings. It also goes further in that it creates awareness and 'space' for staff to do more inclusive public participation work. Thus, the vision for race and social justice helps to address what Arnstein (1969) explains that racism, paternalism, and the resistance of power serve as a barrier to participation for 'have-nots.' However, the central focus of the RSJI Initiative, as its address through Change Teams, goals, and trainings, is race. The re-negotiation of socio-political space recommended by Fisher (2006), as well as Arnstein's arguments, goes beyond race and calls for the redistribution of power. While staff interviews indicate some staff is knowledgeable of power dynamics and the IOPE includes a more comprehensive definition of inclusivity, the RSJI literature such as the change team charter and Initiative goals do not seem to go beyond 'race.' Furthermore, the trainings like 'Race – the Power of Illusion' addresses Simrell King et. al's (1998) argument for reframing an administrators' understanding of power structures.

2. IOPE & Other Tools

Each staff member was at least aware, if not very familiar, with the IOPE Guide. However, the majority of staff members do not use the IOPE guide on a regular basis. Several staff members expressed that while they see the value of the IOPE, their department addresses IOPE principles in existing procedures. Some departments have another tool that existed prior to the IOPE or that they feel adequately achieves the IOPE's principles. Seattle Public Utilities has been working to embed equity principles in all aspects of their work in some areas of the department even prior to the release of Executive Order 05-08. For example, they work to ensure that equity is embedded in their departmental policies, project design, and resources and support made available to staff. Other methods may address staff's need for implementation toolkits. For example, some staff explained that they have been trained in and/or use the Hans Bleiker method. One staff member finds that the Hans Bleiker method sufficiently aligns with the IOPE. Furthermore, one staff member recently tried to fill out the IOPE worksheet and concluded that it was more of a 'refresher' for them and that the IOPE better suits a department new to principles and design for inclusive public engagement. These findings suggest that the IOPE tool *by itself* may not play a prominent role in the implementation of inclusive public participation practices in comparison to approaches and tools developed by a department. Therefore, a single tool cannot be applied universally to all departments and organizational leadership and change should also be considered in shifting public participation work.

3. Trusted Advocacy & Leadership Programs

Several staff discussed the role of the trusted advocates and their wide use throughout the City. Specifically, the Department of Neighborhoods oversees the Public Outreach and Engagement Liaison program. According to the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' website, the program began in 2009 as the Planning/Public Outreach Liaison program for neighborhood planning processes. The program was successful in engaging thousands of community members and was expanded to serving all City departments under the title, Public Outreach and Engagement Liaison program (POELs). In their role, the POELs receive training on comprehensive and neighborhood planning efforts and then reach out to their communities. They are contracted and compensated for their work through an agreement managed by a fiscal agent and the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods).

The POELs are part of their community culture, fluent in their community's language, and are bi-lingual and bi-cultural (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods). The purpose of this program is to allow community members some "comfort and familiarity" as they navigate the City's processes (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods). POELs are responsible for providing quality translations and simultaneous interpretation, facilitating in a fair and equitable way in their native language, offering constituent support at community events, keeping accurate reports and records on participant input, assisting community workshops and events, and providing feedback and expertise on cultural concerns and barriers (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods). One staff explained that POELs go beyond language; for example, POELs connect to seniors, youth, and disabled persons. Additionally, POELs and other trusted advocates are able to share important information about their community with City staff that would not be otherwise represented on community profiles (also see 7 – Translation Policies).

Several staff explained that they are aware POELs are available for contract, but that there are limitations that have prevented them from hiring POELs. POELs must be compensated and departments typically would need to set aside a portion of their budget to reimburse POELs. Hiring POELs is difficult when staff do not have a flexible budget or if their budget is limited. In addition, staff perceives the availability of POELs to be limited.

The POEL program is not the only trusted advocate models used in the City. The Fire Department also has a Community Fire Safety Advocate program in which community advocates give fire safety presentations in their respective language, e.g. English, Chinese, Cambodian, Lao, Vietnamese, Thai, Spanish, Oromo, Somali, Amharic and Tigrinya. The program was developed in response to a tragic fire in Seattle's East African community (Seattle Fire Department, 2013).

Finally, there is an emerging leadership program called People's Academy for Community Engagement (PACE). The program is focused on the development of new leaders. About 30 participants were involved in the first training and a few

PACE graduates receive leadership positions in their community, e.g. at community development organizations. Recruitment for the leadership program emphasizes diversity. While the PACE program is developing, it is another tool that enhances the connection between community members and their capacity to participate in civic activities and public participation conducted by the City.

The majority of staff interviewed manages one of these programs or uses them to conduct public participation work. Trusted advocate and leadership programs help City staff to network within the community and build methods of engagement that continue (vs. static methods like voting). Culturally competent or bi/tri-cultural liaisons engage community members and develop leadership skills themselves in the process. These programs are successful in achieving White's (2000) recommendation for understanding the historical context of a community because the liaisons are part of the community they serve. In addition, trusted advocates are a mechanism that can diffuse centralized power structures, and allow community leaders and advocates the role and capacity to engage or lead their community. Finally, these programs may help to build the trust and civic capacity recommended by White (2000), Wang and Van Wart (2007), and McGuire (2006).

4. Networking & External Consultants

Like trusted advocacy programs, many staff members use networking to build trust and relationships with communities. Relationship-building was mentioned frequently in interviews as a strategy for and outcome of public participation. One staff member explained that their position largely involves building relationships for education and outreach.

Staff members network in communities to build trust and reach diverse groups in the city. Staff uses the network structure model to connect with target outreach or engagement groups. A staff member explained that they use churches and community groups to network with community members. One program that relies on a network structure approach is the Environmental Justice Network in Action, operated by Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). The program is a partnership between community based organizations (CBO), non-profit and government agencies. It involves capacity building between partners, community assessment, and communication of environmental and/or environmental health concerns. Additionally, the program collaboratively trains community participants to conduct outreach through community events and presentations through a variety of communication approaches determined by the community (such as visual or hands-on activities), thus including the trusted advocate approach as well in some aspects of departmental outreach. Staff works to conduct outreach concerning SPU and other agency partners' services in a context and format relevant to the particular community. Furthermore, one staff member described that the focus of the program is developing reciprocal relationships and trust.

Also, staff uses community demographic profiles or tools that identify communities for which targeted engagement is mandated, and accordingly determine which

outreach liaisons would be appropriate. Outreach liaisons, non-profit groups, and community groups then connect community members to government events or processes or vice-versa. By networking and focusing on developing relationships, some staff develops sustained engagement with communities on a project basis or over time. For example, Department of Neighborhood's District Coordinators act as liaisons and attend neighborhood council meetings and rely on contacts in the community to engage certain population groups. Furthermore, staff express that networking has been instrumental in identifying community sub-groups and building trust and connections with communities.

With respect to the use of community organizations to engage the community, these findings confirm that staff uses Mandell's (1999) network structure model to build trust, synergy, social capital, empower communities to solve problems, and access community resources. The use of the network structure model as well as implementation of programs like PACE and the POEL mentioned above suggest that Seattle achieves Mandell's criteria for the success of network structures.

Like the trusted advocate programs, network structures are an approach for understanding the context of a community and creating more sustained engagement and trust. Furthermore, it is a method for reaching diverse groups throughout the city.

5. Internal Support

In addition to the trusted advocate programs described above, staff relies on contacts and collaboration amongst colleagues within the City. Several staff explained that they rely on the Department of Neighborhood (DON) staff as resource. DON staff explained that they assist with outreach efforts and are sometimes approached for community contact information. Also, several city staff explained that they are aware of the DON programs and resources offered (e.g. POELs) and rely on the District Coordinators to reach out to the community. District Coordinators are DON staff that serve as liaisons between the City and community and are stationed in each of the City's 13 districts, throughout the city (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods). The decentralized placement of the District Coordinators throughout Seattle ensures the accessibility of services and access to local government liaisons.

In addition to DON services, citywide departments occasionally host trainings and brown bag lunch sessions on inclusivity topics. Additionally, a couple staff referenced the importance of ad-hoc learning, reflecting that they often discuss and learn about lessons learned from their colleagues in casual conversations.

Finally, staff attribute some support for inclusive public involvement to come from leadership. Their supervisors or departmental directors prioritize embedding inclusivity in day-to-day and project work and support staff in the working towards such goals. Staff members explained that they work closely with leadership and

receive advice in developing their inclusive public participation plans and special programs.

6. Soft Skills

It is difficult to discuss inclusive public participation without addressing the necessary skill set required of a person conducting such work. Several staff discussed the importance of empathy, listening, advocacy, and relationship building skills. If a staff member has a technical background and limited communications or outreach skills, they can rely on soft skills like empathy and listening to understand a community member's perspective. It is important to have this special skills set to build trust in the community, understand the wider context of a community, go beyond consultation in public participation work, and engage all community groups. A local government and its staff should obtain cultural competency skills that Alarcon de Morris and Leistner (2009) explain are necessary for reaching the public beyond the 'usual suspects.' Thus, specialized training for city staff that is focused on cultural competency and communication skills is also an important approach to including the diverse public in governance.

7. Community Space

Several staff in different departments (e.g. Department of Planning and Development, Department of Neighborhoods, Fire Department, Seattle Department of Transportation, and Seattle Public Utilities) goes to community places to conduct public participation work. For example, one staff explained that they are currently working in a community with a population of Eastern Europeans and that they were able to engage the men of the community by going to local coffee shops at which they spend time socializing. Many staff spends time socializing with community members, listening to their perspectives, and acting as liaisons between the community and the City. This is reflective of Lukensmeyer and Boyd's (2004) concept of creating 'safe space,' in which staff are trained appropriately and events are held in beloved spaces within the community. Members of the community may feel more comfortable to share their beliefs and opinions in a space that is their own. This finding illustrates approaches that practitioners can use to engage diverse community groups: locating community members in places in that they congregate and conducting events in safe spaces. However, this finding does not conclude that *all* public participation efforts are conducted in community places and therefore, there may be an opportunity for the City of Seattle to expand this strategy.

8. Translation Policy

In early 2007, Mayor Greg Nickels released an Executive Order that required citywide departments to adopt the Translation and Interpretation Policy. Executive Order 01-07 was created because of the recognition that Seattle has over 100,000 foreign-born individuals from diverse countries of origin, that many residents speak

English as a second language and experience barriers in accessing government services and participating in government, and the City of Seattle wanted to make government services and resources more comprehensible for all community residents (Office of the Mayor, Gregory Nickels). The order directed City departments to translate government documents including consent forms, complaint forms, notice of rights, and explanation of department services, and to translate and distribute relevant documents for major projects when over five percent of the local population consists of a specific language group (City of Seattle, Mayor Gregory Nickels, 2007). A staff member explained that the use of the term “relevant documents” in Executive Order 07-01 is intended to give departments flexibility to determine what that means to them. Also, the term is not further defined because policy makers recognized no single staff or department fully understand all aspects of each City department’s specialized work. The Order also directed departments to translate and distribute information about any services they provide. Additionally, the Executive Order called for City Departments to use cultural competent and sensitive staff and professional interpreters and translators, and to provide interpreters for community meetings and neighborhood specific events (City of Seattle, Mayor Gregory Nickels, 2007). According to staff, language groups are defined using the latest census data and are made available on community profiles.

Several staff discussed the limitations of translation services and a few mentioned the translation and interpretation policy. Generally, departments have successfully implemented the translation policy and some staff worked to offer such services before 2005. Staff explained that translation services are only a start to reaching out to diverse community groups. While translation can serve as a supplement to public involvement work, it does not itself engender inclusive practice. For example, while materials may be translated, community members to whom the materials are directed may not be literate in their first language. Additionally, translation is not necessarily equated with cultural competency, relationship and trust building, empowerment, or two-way communication. Furthermore, one staff member explained that relying on community profiles based on U.S. Census data to determine outreach groups could be problematic because the make up of a community is continually changing and the profiles only identify racial and ethnic groups defined by the U.S. Census. Instead, the staff member relies on networking with community contacts to understand community context and identify sub-community groups. Finally, translation services like the POEL program require budgeted funds, which may not be available for smaller projects. Therefore, translation and interpretation is only one piece of implementing more inclusive public participation.

9. Training

Interview participants explained that citywide staff is required to complete two RSJI trainings. The first required training is an ‘Introduction to the Race and Social Justice Initiative.’ The second of those trainings is the ‘Race – the Power of Illusion,’ a three-

part documentary series aired on PBS about race and racism. The training includes the following components:

- “Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race”
- “Genetics, human variation, evolution, scientific classification and more”
- “Slavery, the origins of race, ancient views of difference, 19th century race science, and more”
- “Law, immigration, housing, the wealth gap, census, racial classification and more” (City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative)

The ‘Race – the Power of Illusion’ training as conducted by the City of Seattle consists of facilitated discussion about the documentary. According to the *Race the Power of an Illusion/ 8 Hour Training – GRE Facilitators Outline*, learning goals of the training are:

- “Examine our beliefs about race, advantage & justice, and how these issues impact organizations/institutions”
- “Increase awareness of the City’s Race and Social Justice (RSJ) Initiative”
- “Promote an understanding of the term “institutional racism” and how it differs from individual racism”
- “Gain awareness of historical cases of institutional racism”
- “Begin recognizing examples of institutional racism within the City of Seattle policies, practices & procedures, and begin brainstorming solutions” (Larrainzar, Seattle Office of Civil Rights)

The training begins with ground rules, context of the RSJI and training, and the introductory RSJI video. Staff may write notes about their reactions and reflections as the training proceeds and during allocated times. After each video segment airs, staff have conversations with the group, in pairs, and in small groups. The group training ends with an evaluation of the program and a 30-second closing statement from each participant about what they learned or appreciated from the day.

Over 8,000 city employees have participated in the RSJI trainings including inclusive public engagement and outreach and most departments have participated in training their employees (City of Seattle RSJI). The required RSJI training like the ‘Race – the Power of Illusion’ play an important role in supporting staff in doing more inclusive public participation because it offers education and reflection on race, racism, and justice. Staff mentioned that part of RSJI progress has been the completion of this training in many departments.

Several staff from a few different departments has access to trainings beyond what is required by RSJI. For the most part, additional opportunities relate to intercultural competency and outreach trainings, workshops, and brown bag sessions. The District Coordinators within the Department of Neighborhoods receive additional training on special topics, such as white privilege.

While trainings on racial equity, culturally sensitive outreach, and cultural competency are available, a couple staff explained that staff needs to be aware

about such opportunities in order to participate. A couple staff members interviewed have not participated in these additional trainings, which may suggest a lack of awareness of available trainings. Additionally, staff members need time in their schedule in which they can participate in the trainings, while achieving their job duties. RSJI trainings are often offered during the lunch hour in downtown Seattle, and it is difficult for staff stationed in other parts of the city to travel to and from downtown within the lunch hour. Finally, staff explained that they have received no formal training on the IOPE guide.

As mentioned in Finding 6, Alarcon de Morris and Leistner (2009) argue that intercultural competency skills are critical for reaching beyond the usual suspects, i.e. engaging community members traditionally marginalized in governance processes. Therefore, trainings like those described in this section could help other cities and practitioners to reach diverse community groups.

10. Funding

Budget models for public participation vary by department. A few staff explained their budget is project-based, while others explained that their budget is held out for them and is flexible or that there is a budget for communications work within their department. Staff that has more control over their budget can build public participation into the project and their decision to do so is usually respected. For example, if translation is required for services and a staff member makes a decision to translate materials, staff with more control over their budget is trusted to do so. A flexible budget or budgeting process is important for insuring the availability of funds for public participation. However, a couple staff explained that prioritization of and planning for public participation is equally important as having an adequate budget because budgeting involves some subjective decisions.

One staff member explained that no new funds have been issued to achieve Executive Order 05-08. Some funds are provided to the RSJI change teams, but it is unclear whether that is new money or whether it is related to the Executive Order 05-08.

Furthermore, one staff member emphasized that while it is important to applaud the release of the Executive Order 05-08, it is equally important to ensure the availability of resources and capacity. While some limitations may exist to budget flexibility or availability, a few staff explained that it is equally important to embed equity into all stages of a project, from planning to implementation, and to make inclusivity a priority.

11. Enforcement

Several staff explained that the Executive Order 05-08 is encouraged rather than enforced. There is a sense that the City "may check up on departments at some time." It is not implemented in a top-down fashion from leadership to staff and the RSJI team often does not research compliance with equity principles unless a

complaint is received from the public. However, a few staff explained that there is a general awareness that generates implementation, similar to the shared expectation that one should use recycled paper in the printer to save trees. There are a few exceptions. As of May 2013, there is a new Executive Order directed to departmental leadership that requires submission of a list of major project or programs that will require IOPE in 2013 to the Mayor's Office. Second, one staff member explained that inclusivity is part of employee evaluation in their department (SDOT) and that they may earn extra days off (merit days) if they can demonstrate their implementation of inclusive or equity goals. Also, as explained in *Finding 1*, there is also a required Inclusion Sign-In Sheet overseen by the Office of Civil Rights. Finally, a couple staff explained that questions about the IOPE or cultural competency are included in job interviews. Therefore, RSJI and Executive Order 05-08 require the implementation of certain measures, but other change can be attributed to institutional culture or awareness.

12. Pace of Change

Several staff explained changes that have resulted from City mandates. They expressed that portions of the City have become more responsive to participation by community members and more departments have adopted inclusive practices. For one example, the Seattle Police Department recently took the 'Race – the Power of Illusion' training, formed ethnic advisory boards, and have been making a greater effort to involve the community.

A couple staff explained that their department or colleagues were already working to conduct inclusive public participation. For them, the release of the RSJI and then the Executive Order 05-08 was more of an affirmation of work being done than a milestone. One staff member expressed that there has been a shift in public administration in cities towards valuing inclusivity in the last 12 to 13 years. One department was working to embed equity principles in all aspects of their service delivery to and engagement with the public prior to 2005, and they felt that RSJI affirmed the legitimacy of their work and allowed space for them to continue.

In contrast, several staff explained that the City still has a long way to go. One staff person explained that inclusive public participation for capital projects is often not conducted unless required by the State Environmental Policy Act. Most staff members expressed that while the Executive Order 05-08 has supported some changes, change is a gradual process and it is not necessarily a direct result of any mandate. They expressed that change is slow and that it could be implemented more quickly. Accordingly, it is too soon to tell whether the mandate has been successful. A few staff described the Executive Order as a 'change initiative.' It is about generating cultural change, which requires awareness amongst staff of the initiative's purpose. Staff members described the inclusivity work that Seattle is working towards as the City's 'conscience' for inclusivity and that the work that they do happens more at 'gut level.' Another staff member echoed this perspective, explaining that they feel the City has always valued inclusive public participation during their tenure. In other words, inclusive public participation goes beyond the

mandate and requires a shift in awareness, understanding, and values. Overall, involvement has become more intentional over the last few years, but full implementation of the Executive Order 05-08 remains to be seen.

According to one staff, the new Executive Order released in 2013 (see Finding 11) essentially states, 'staff really needs to implement inclusive public participation work plans.'

13. Community Perception

The majority of staff expressed that when they receive community feedback, the community is generally appreciative of the efforts made to include the public. For example, the Environmental Justice Network in Action program has received feedback from community organizations with whom they have partnered indicate they appreciate experiential, partnership (or network structure), and trusted advocate approaches through collaborative processes. The organizations have commented to program staff, 'you are a team that works with us completely different than other parts of the City.' While the general public is not aware of the specific mandates that encourage inclusive public participation, they understand the City's work on a project basis. Community contacts and non-profit organizations have more understanding of the specific policies. Generally, both the public and non-profit organizations appreciate having more access to the government. While feedback is mostly positive, there are a couple exceptions. A couple staff explained that the complaints they receive often come from community members who have historically been 'at the table.' Second, a couple staff mentioned that some departments still have a negative reputation. For example, Seattle Public Utilities has developed a better reputation in recent years staff still receive complaints about Seattle Department of Transportation, and sometimes, City Light. While staff sometimes make feedback cards available or have informal check-ins with the public, rarely do they address the public participation process itself. Additionally, staff gave little mention to the existence of formal evaluation processes.

Finally, one staff member explained that each community will soon be able to track RSJI work plans and outcomes via the RSJI section on the Office of Civil Rights webpage. In the meantime, departments are still choosing which priorities among community-identified RSJI "Opportunity Areas" for racial equity they would like to focus on each year.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

This case study evaluates ways in which local governments could create institutional change or modify their public participation practices to include marginalized members of a community through policy initiatives. The purpose of this research was to understand the implementation of Seattle's policies for inclusive public participation, the Executive Order 05-08 under the umbrella of RSJI Goal Two. Understanding the ways that staff implements these policies addresses two questions. First, can policies create the change needed to shift away from traditionally less inclusive public participation practices? Second, what implications does Seattle's implementation of inclusive public participation policies have for other cities or agents who would like to do more inclusive public participation?

More experienced staff or departments have created their own strategies, guidebooks, or work plans for inclusivity, or adopted the IOPE guide to fit their business needs. Staff expressed that the IOPE and other tools are helpful for beginners. Therefore, a guidebook for inclusive public involvement may be a helpful resource tool to aid staff in achieving mandates for inclusive public participation. Furthermore, tools like the IOPE may be helpful for some staff members but cannot be universally applied throughout the city. Third, a tool like the IOPE should be flexible and adaptable to specific departments, while maintaining consistency. One way this could be achieved is by including principles, theory, and ideas for implementation and suggestions for how specific departments could adapt the tool for their operations.

The use of a guide like the IOPE is limited by the extent to which it is encouraged or enforced by leadership and mandates. As it is currently used, the IOPE is just one of many tools available to staff and it simply being available does not guarantee that staff will implement the step-by-step guide and principles of the IOPE. This means that the IOPE is not a catalyst for change by itself. Thus, the role of a guidebook is similar to trainings or document resources; a guidebook can be a 'refresher' or teaching tool on the approaches, skills, and principles of inclusive public participation. Broader measures, such as policy creation and implementation, citywide trainings, and staff collaboration and strong leadership, are necessary for change to occur.

The implementation of the Executive Order 05-08 goes beyond strategies and skills. Staff explained that implementing inclusive public participation happens at the 'gut level,' and requires soft skills such as empathy and the guidance of overarching values like those promoted by the RSJI. Various trainings on the RSJI and cultural competency are offered, if not required, for staff. Staff uses non-institutional engagement methods like network structures, relationship building, or trusted advocacy models to engage with the community on a more continual basis (versus static). They go to community places and engage with community members to understand context, build trust, and learn about community sub-groups that may not be mentioned on community profiles based on U.S. Census data. Furthermore, staff uses creative methods to improve the accessibility of their engagement process, such as illustrations and interactive activities. They go beyond simple translation or interpretation services and use their cultural competency skills to engage with diverse community groups. Therefore, an

understanding of racial equity, cultural competency, relationship building, and soft skills should be incorporated into the development of inclusive public participation strategies. Interviews did not determine the specifics of the cultural competency training and no literature was identified on trainings. Future research on the need for specific skills and training necessary for more inclusive public participation would be instrumental in developing policies like Seattle's Executive Order 05-08.

Given that this research sought to explore ways in which public participation could become more inclusive and the role of policy implementation, it is appropriate to assess whether policies are an appropriate approach to generate change. In other words, should cities create policies or take other measures to make their public participation practices more inclusive of marginalized communities? On one hand, policy measures like the RSJI and Executive Order 05-08 can create more awareness and encourage more intentional action. In particular, steps towards more inclusive public participation are made by departments that may have not have taken such action in the absence of mandates. In the case of Seattle, mandates have resulted in some specific changes, such as staff participation in RSJI change teams and trainings and the implementation of required accountability measures. However, several innovative approaches and programs for inclusive public participation were not a direct result of the RSJI, Executive Order 05-08, or IOPE. The Community Fire Safety Advocate program was a result of a tragic incident and leadership support (though it may have also been influenced by other factors) and the Environmental Justice Network in Action program resulted from staff knowledge and efforts that took place prior to 2005. This suggests that mandates do have a role in creating more inclusive public involvement, which is creating more action and consistency throughout a city and encouraging staff or departments that would not otherwise implement the policy to take action. Furthermore, citywide mandates can prevent siloed approaches to public participation conducted by individual departments.

While policies have been successful in creating some changes, as staff explained, change is a gradual process and there is still a need for further implementation of inclusive and equitable public engagement principles. The release of the second executive order urging staff to implement Executive Order 05-08 is an indication that implementation is not complete. Given that Executive Order 05-08 is encouraged and not mandated, the slow pace of change suggests program monitoring and evaluation could be helpful for ensuring policy implementation. Additionally, there is a need to understand the role of carrots and sticks enforcement for program implementation. Third, further research could explore the role of the community in policy implementation: their knowledge of public engagement policies, in developing public participation strategies, and in encouraging the city to take action.

Staff indicated that RSJI and the Executive Order 05-08 is really a 'change initiative.' Institutional change involves variables beyond the policies and support mechanisms explored in this research, such as behavior, norms, shared understanding, and organizational leadership. Future research could evaluate the role of enforcement and institutional change and accountability in ensuring citywide efforts to do more inclusive public participation.

This research also considered the need to redistribute power to allow members of the public to participate in city governance in meaningful and empowered ways. Fischer's (2006) argued for the re-negotiation of political space, for endogenous and empowered action with some exogenous support, and for more continual modes of engagement instead of static ones (e.g. voting). While some efforts like the People's Academy for Civic Engagement, other advocate programs, and the placement of District Coordinators suggest that Seattle is taking steps towards empowering community members, the public participation methods are more often centralized and exogenous. For example, public participation is conducted in many departments by city staff. Additionally, the advocates are re-implemented and conduct engagement efforts on behalf of the city, but are not officially city staff. To achieve more empowered levels of public participation, cities should further re-shape political boundaries between government and community members.

This research did not include interviews with community members regarding their satisfaction with Seattle's public participation efforts. Second, one of the limitations of this project is that interviews did not specifically inquire about the challenges staff experience. In addition to limitations mentioned above, research should further explore challenges involved with implementing the RSJI and the Executive Order 05-08. Third, future research should evaluate the community's perceptions of the city's public engagement efforts.

One of the goals of this research was to identify recommendations for other cities or staff working to improve the inclusivity of their public participation practices using policies. Findings suggest the need for broad and interactive approaches to create institutional change. Below is a list of considerations for practitioners.

Considerations:

- **CREATE A SIMILAR POLICY.** As explained above, the RSJI and Executive Order 05-08 have increased action for inclusive public involvement, especially in departments that would not take such action in the absence of a mandate. Therefore, cities that would like to conduct more inclusive public participation could create a mandate for inclusive public participation. The policy should have a broad definition of inclusivity, including issues of race and social equity and civil rights.
- **RE-SHAPE POLITICAL BOUNDARIES.** Conducting inclusive public participation is intangibly connected to the re-distribution of power. For the public to become more engaged, community members have political capacity, empowerment, and access. Some ideas that cities could employ to re-negotiate political relationships with the public include:
 - Located staff in de-centralized locations
 - Offer leadership capacity, participation, or mentorship programs for community members, particularly marginalized community members
 - Make public participation efforts continual
 - Strengthen relationships between staff and the community

- Create physical spaces for community member leadership, participation, and administrative work
 - Conduct collaborative communication work and make decisions collaboratively with the public
 - Develop mechanisms for accepting public input, concerns, and participation and responding in meaningful ways
- **VALUES.** Embed values the agency would like to promote through the implementation of municipal policies. For example, consider social justice and racial equity principles that help to direct and guide public participation plans towards inclusivity. Additionally, strive to create a culture of awareness and prioritization of inclusive public participation. Options to embed agency values like social justice and racial equity in public participation techniques include:
 - Mandate specific implementation measures
 - Create committees or groups in each department responsible for implementing those measures and educating their colleagues
 - Conduct staff outreach about the existence of agency mission, principles, and policies
 - Offer trainings related to agency values, e.g. intercultural competency and 'Race – the Power of Illusion'
 - Include questions about agency principles in performance evaluations and job interviews
- **STAFF COMPETENCY.** In trainings and guidebooks, focus on intercultural competency, racial and social equity, and soft skills. Additionally, train staff on the use of network structures, building trust and relationships, and trusted advocate programs i.e. leadership programs for community members. Teach creative approaches like interactive activities and illustrations for children, and trusted advocacy models that utilize community members in participation mechanisms.
- **DIFFUSE CENTRALIZED POWER.** To promote accessibility to government services and local governance, as well as public participation, work to empower community members and diffuse the centralized governance model. This could be achieved through the following options:
 - Station some staff members responsible for public participation or engagement throughout the city
 - Create leadership capacity and/or trusted advocate programs to empower community members
- **MOVING IMPLEMENTATION FORWARD.** Making public participation more inclusive requires staff and resource capacity and long-term commitment to change. Mandates help to ensure that certain measures are achieved. Another way to push implementation forward is to create a follow-up executive order/policy to further stress the importance of implementation. However, the most important approach may be to create the space for

cultural change. An agency should promote leadership and shared understanding of change initiatives. To implement change, an agency can consider the following steps:

- Host brown bag lunches or encourage staff to host them, as a way to discuss lessons learned or listen to presentations on topics related to policy measures.
- Create committees like the change teams to plan for their department and report progress to a central agency, e.g. Mayor's Office or director
- Offer annual updates i.e. citywide progress reports
- Offer trainings on the use of tools like the IOPE
- Ensure staff and fiscal capacity is available for implementation
- Advertise all relevant policies to encourage awareness
- Create follow-up policies as necessary
- Determine and create appropriate incentives and enforcement measures

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APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

Main Questions

1. What type of public involvement / citizen engagement work do you do in your current position?
2. Are you familiar with Executive Order 05-08? The IOPE guide? How do you use the IOPE Guide in your public involvement work?
3. Since the adoption of the Executive Order 05-08/IOPE guide, how has it changed the public involvement work that you do?
4. What public involvement strategies have you or your department created to promote inclusivity?
5. If you use the IOPE guide: How are you able to achieve the principles in the IOPE guide? Executive Order 05-08?
 - o What support OR mechanisms do you rely on to achieve the Executive Order 05-08/IOPE guide in your public involvement work? These could be from
 - o What does the City do or offer to support you in achieving the IOPE principles?
6. From your perspective, is the Executive Order 05-08/IOPE guide successful in creating more inclusive public involvement practices?
7. How are you encouraged (or not) to use the IOPE guidebook?
8. How do you perceive the community's view of the IOPE guidebook principles?

Potential Follow-Up Questions

Training & Education

9. Did you receive training on how to use (or implement) the IOPE guide? Or, on creating inclusive public engagement strategies in general? If so, where?
10. What training opportunities or educational programming have you accessed? Which did you pursue on your own and which did the City of Seattle host/promote?
11. What training or education was required for your job when you were hired for your current position? Was that part of the job application criteria for your current position?
12. What kinds of other resources (e.g. books, pamphlets, electronic files, best practices info) does the City offer you to support you in doing public involvement work?

Culture

13. How would you describe the culture of public involvement in your office? The City as a whole?
14. Has the "culture" of governance/public involvement changed in response to the RSJI/Executive Order 05-08/IOPE guide?

Coordination

15. Do you coordinate the logistics of your public involvement efforts with staff within your department? With staff from other city departments?
16. Do you collaborate with other city staff to do public involvement work? This could be correspondence about lessons learned or ideas, or assisting one another with project implementation.

Funding

17. How does the city fund your public involvement project(s)?
18. Was funding changed to support the implementation of the Executive Order 05-08IOPE guide?