

Chicago debrief notes

(captured as random comments...not sorted by common subject)

Day 1

- ▶ Chicago presenters had passion and commitment to city's agenda
- ▶ There are no small plans; marketing, marketing, marketing!
- ▶ Consistency in message; staff committed and comfortable
- ▶ Shared vision
- ▶ The value of having a strong mayor...stunning!
- ▶ Planning and Development staff work very well together; on the same page
- ▶ Sustainability agenda and work being done in Portland is much broader...but you wouldn't know if from Chicago's marketing! They tell much, much better story
- ▶ Impressed with clarity and focus
- ▶ Don't waste time/energy shooting high in abstract ways (practice that hurts us)
- ▶ City throws money at projects (overpays) to get work done
- ▶ Sustainability is a mandate in Chicago...it's a goal and ambition in Portland
- ▶ Work gets done ward by ward vs. citywide
- ▶ Good work being done is not necessarily being done citywide
- ▶ Remember Coletta's observation...many times things look better from a distance
- ▶ Marketing machine drives agenda in Chicago
- ▶ Willingness to take risk (fear of failure doesn't stand in way)
- ▶ We are radically underfunded to (attempt) accomplish same level of projects
- ▶ Portland must find new resources to augment current funding...without it we'll fail
- ▶ Need more funding
- ▶ Portland has such great opportunity, wonderful ingredients, and yet we're not moving forward; how are we going to accomplish more and be the best we can?
- ▶ Who is the 'we' we're waiting for? If not elected leadership, than who? We cannot just wait for the strong electorate to come along and move us to higher ground
- ▶ Business leaders/organizations need to make a 'to do' list and get to work pushing agenda, initiatives and projects along that need to be tackled (e.g. Commercial Club)
- ▶ City staff confident and comfortable vs. our local counterparts
- ▶ Chicago does not have comp plan process; Portland is all about the process
- ▶ Chicago planning takes much different path than Portland; we cannot move nimbly (could do better within current process)
- ▶ Chicago regional planning is business driven; in Portland region is led by bureaucrats (but with new faces this is getting better)
- ▶ Chicago looks at resources applied to their work as an investment vs. expense
- ▶ In Portland local tax generation does not stay local
- ▶ There are state (and local) electorate who believe new business investment will occur w/o government assistance
- ▶ Refreshing to hear that business, hospitality, sports and culture are viewed as important to quality of life and local economy
- ▶ Portland has attractive architecture but is definitely lagging...need to look like a creative city
- ▶ Why no Portland City Council on this trip
- ▶ We've had many missed opportunities to 'step it up' – e.g. building a museum that is true showcase
- ▶ Tram (even with missteps) is a good success story

- ▶ Sustainability is a good triple bottom line: job training, green/good for business, marketing
- ▶ Sustainability message in Chicago is clear, easy to describe and understand
- ▶ Chicago gives incentives for green building practices; in Portland it's more expense (and doesn't pencil out) to do the right thing
- ▶ People (in Chicago and Portland) respond positively to density...the urban lifestyle is hot
- ▶ Portland region is putting huge investment into regional transit...need same energy applied to transit oriented development
- ▶ Urban lifestyle is good for the environment...walk/public transit vs. car, amenities at your doorstep
- ▶ Portland's Interstate Corridor now asking for density
- ▶ Remember in Portland...process, process, process
- ▶ Portland is in midst of generational change of thinking on what's neighborhood quality of life – young (and empty nesters) are attracted to highly mobile lifestyle
- ▶ Portland needs to concentrate on public schools to keep young families in the city
- ▶ Portland should be concerned about keeping creative class in city core after they have children
- ▶ Remember Philadelphia: created downtown neighborhood attractive to creative class (singles and families) which included new school, park, and amenities
- ▶ Chicago Mayor tours teacher prospects around city on weekends as part of his initiative to attract new college grads to be teachers in the inner city
- ▶ Portland must concentrate on its own merits, distinctiveness and market itself
- ▶ There is merit in focusing on broader economic interests vs. business interests
- ▶ Housing being built in Portland core is not for families
- ▶ Portland school enrollment has leveled out but it is still only half of what it was few decades ago
- ▶ Some old family oriented neighborhoods (Alberta, Kenton) are hip, attractive to the young, and close to amenities AND you still can find affordable stock; unfortunately most mature neighborhoods are out of price range for many young families
- ▶ Schools must be addressed!
- ▶ Chicago's single-minded focus on marketing is the success story; Portland can do that too (Greenlight will be taking this on)
- ▶ Leadership matters!!!
- ▶ Chicago didn't talk about schools – they have challenges like us and others
- ▶ We can't forego thinking regionally; what's good for Portland is good for the region and vice versa – in next 20 years additional 400,000 people expected to live in Washington County
- ▶ Remember Chicago Commercial Club has driven much of the innovation, regional stewardship/planning
- ▶ Portland needs higher level of expertise within its planning department
- ▶ Suburbs growing faster than Portland
- ▶ Portland needs to concentrate on keeping blue (green) collar jobs inside the city

Day 2:

(Random discussion about professional sports and the WBC presentation)

Sports – Portland is only major US city with only one major professional sports team... that's why it's good for Best Practices trips to include sports components to the agenda.

What is the payback for increased sports teams in a city? Visibility for the city...and a common rallying point for the community.

Baseball:

- ▶ because of most recent high quality recruitment effort, Portland now sits atop the list for the next team relocation (no expansions will be allowed in foreseeable future)
- ▶ Stadium needs to be center-city, next to mass transit, small footprint (about 40,000 seats) w/parking
- ▶ Only two months of year present some weather concern – PDX-style canopy would be considered
- ▶ Region hasn't supported minor league Beavers because (according to consultants)
- ▶ Portland region has moved on to a major league state of mind
- ▶ Financing would come from ticket tax, LID, possible urban renewal, hotel/motel tax plus team \$

Soccer:

- ▶ Portland has willing ownership waiting in wings
- ▶ PGE park would be affordable site w/minor redesign required – little investment required

Hockey:

- ▶ Major league hockey is interested in Portland...remember Allen up to now has not been!

Football:

- ▶ This is the professional sports franchise that across the board is successful
- ▶ One possible stadium site would be the Stafford triangle

Business/Marketing

- ▶ World Business Chicago (WBC) model is similar to how Greenlight Greater Portland will be organized
- ▶ WBC is VERY well funded
- ▶ Strong leadership (again) is why Chicago's initiatives succeed
- ▶ Everyone we met is singing from the same sheet music; how do we learn from this and get it done in Portland
- ▶ Not only do we need to get everyone on the same message – we need to get our leaders, decision makers/influencers educated and informed so that our city and region can move forward and upward
- ▶ Portland needs to have a 30 second message that clearly articulates who we are and where we're going
- ▶ The PBA is writing regional business plan (compliment to the Oregon Business Plan) and the 'message' can be part of this document