

# Community Assembly for a People's Budget

May 5, 2012

Chart Paper Notes by Participants

## Worksheet #1 – Introductions

*Please note: Records from the table discussions are organized by question & sorted into categories of responses. Some similar comments are combined, with a number showing the number of tables that recorded this idea, question, or suggestion appeared.*

### Purpose:

- Get to know who is at your table.
- Get a quick “pulse” of where people in the room are as we begin.

### What needs to be discussed today?

#### 1. Solidarity / unity of purpose / coalition

- a. How we can work together better (3)
- b. How to build solidarity, unity of effort, and large numbers. Numbers talk. (3)
- c. Get to know each other's issues, experience, expertise better (2).
- d. How to help and support each other
- e. How to create a coalition to create change
- f. Create a tighter community.
- g. Social status differences

#### 2. Agreement on priorities / values / strategies

- a. Collectively coalescing on a strong list of priorities (3)
- b. When is compromise acceptable?
- c. What priorities do we see? (3)
  - Education K-12, teachers (7)
  - city budget / public jobs/ services / parks (3);
  - housing / un-housed (3);
  - libraries (2)
  - healthcare
  - public transit
  - seniors

#### 3. Our Issues / learn more

- a. Water—Bull Run. Stop the debt swamping, Privatization, Nestle (2)
- b. Underserved neighborhoods
- c. labor / jobs / unemployment (4);
- d. police budgets / transparency / accountability (2)
- e. Urban planning
- f. Campaign finance

#### 4. Solutions / changes

- a. Sources of revenue; new streams (2)
- b. Community resources / public spaces
- c. Building organizations to facilitate community goals
- d. Community rights; people's charter of basic rights (2)
- e. climate change / jobs

#### 4. How to implement new budgeting:

- a. Transparency
- b. Learn the budget—where is the money coming from? Where is it going? Where should it go?
- c. Access / having a voice in city budgeting (2)
- d. a People's Budget--common priorities and human needs budgeting
- e. How to gain decision making power

## Worksheet #2 – Our Priorities & Strategies

**Purpose:**

- Get familiar with local campaigns & struggles against austerity
- See how our issues connect.
- Identify ideas for lasting funding solutions for top community priorities

<b>Priorities for Participatory Budgeting—the outcomes we want from a democratic process</b> (numbers in left column reflect check marks participants put by items they wanted to pursue)	
<b>40</b>	Education—Education as a human right; equalize public school funding, regardless of wealth of neighborhood. Preventive programs. School failure and incarceration rates are correlated. Provide skills and activities for youth--cost is less in the end.
<b>28</b>	Housing
<b>23</b>	City services, parks, infrastructure, streets, utilities
<b>21</b>	Transportation
<b>21</b>	Well paying jobs
<b>20</b>	Health care, mental health,
<b>8</b>	# 1 priority: Fund the most vulnerable people first!
<b>8</b>	water
<b>8</b>	Food security / safety

<b>Strategies for working together / building coalition strength</b> (numbers in left column reflect check marks participants put by items they wanted to pursue)	
<b>11</b>	Be conscious of wedges; defend ourselves by uniting. Philosophy of unity—everybody in, nobody out
<b>9</b>	Forge broad alliances committed to equity and inclusion; turn concerns into action
<b>6</b>	Advocate for responsible government—i.e., no corporate money in elections; publicly financed elections, accountability of elected officials
<b>6</b>	People powered press—change the terms of the debate. (Media!)
<b>5</b>	Power from the bottom up
<b>5</b>	Access to decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency / education / information about how things really work</li> <li>• Empowerment—outreach and organizing</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legalize marijuana</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	Educate public to rally around important policies (e.g., taxing the rich)
<b>2</b>	Return of the middle class

<b>Ideas for how to fund these priorities</b> (numbers in left column reflect participants' check marks on ideas they would like to pursue).	
<b>19</b>	Clear, transparent, open, inclusive, accountable democratic budget process. Community planning of projects 7 budgets. Budget process that shows everything, not "cuts only." Find the \$, direct it to the right things. Create a space place to channel community anger / frustration constructively. Right now, it is in the streets, spontaneous, not organized.
<b>16</b>	Corporations pay fair share of taxes; no tax giveaways—will increase revenue
<b>14</b>	Fair tax structure--new tax sources, new revenue streams, based on criteria of fairness (tax the rich)
<b>4</b> <b>1</b> <b>7</b> <b>1</b>	Collaborative governance to agree on new revenue streams, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon tax</li> <li>• Real estate transfer tax</li> <li>• Tax on highest incomes—raise taxes (a LOT) on the wealthy, on city, state, and federal level.</li> <li>• Parking lot taxes, tolls</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	Community policing instead of paramilitary, over- policing Cut "security spending"—military surveillance
<b>10</b>	PDC—follow the money; raid the PDC funds; allocate urban renewal and PDC funds to the people who need it for housing and other needs.
<b>10</b>	Re-direct taxes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From military spending</li> <li>• From "big development"</li> <li>• From prison spending</li> </ul>
<b>9</b>	Stop bogus foreclosures. Make banks pay taxes and HOA fees on foreclosed properties MERS credit default swaps
<b>8</b>	Shift funds; redirect money to human needs.
<b>6</b>	Less jail time for non-violent crimes. Cut at the state level to prisons; re-invest in education, healthcare, transportation, housing, city services, social services.
<b>6</b>	Create City-Works program with living wage jobs (tax the rich for funding)
<b>4</b>	Open empty buildings & houses for use
<b>4</b>	Retro-fit buildings; climate jobs
<b>3</b>	Elect our own people
<b>2</b>	De-fund the judicial branch of PDX
<b>2</b>	6-hour work day=more workers, more taxes paid
<b>1</b>	Policies like inclusionary zoning to require affordable housing
<b>1</b>	Instituting a "metro tax
<b>1</b>	Tax the things we don't want that are bad for us—pollution, sugar, tobacco