



Information for Community Representatives

In Spring of 2024, Deschutes County, the City of Bend, and the Central Oregon Youth Action Board (YAB) partnered with the Central Oregon Civic Action Project (COCAP), Healthy Democracy, and DemocracyNext to facilitate a [Civic Assembly](#) that engages the community in discussions about the issue of youth homelessness in Deschutes County. The [Deschutes Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness](#) is reflective of Deschutes County's many diversities and brings new voices into the conversation. Delegates will meet in September and October 2024 to gather information and collaboratively write recommendations that will be considered by local governments and other stakeholders. This is a privately funded, nonprofit project supported by several local and national foundations, as well as by individual donations.

Community Representative Role

Community Representatives will provide Delegates with a wide range of information about the topic of youth homelessness. Delegates will spend about a third of their 30+ total hours gathering information – staying open-minded to new perspectives before generating recommendations. Delegates rely on Community Representatives like you to provide the information they will need to consider in answering the following question: **“What should our priorities be for building community solutions to prevent and end youth homelessness?”**

Workshop Structure

The workshop will take place from 1:55-2:55pm on Sunday, September 15th. You will sit at a table with fellow Community Representatives, and Assembly Delegates will rotate throughout the workshop to interact with different groups. Process staff will be keeping time and will signal when it is time to rotate groups. You will have the opportunity to share your experience and expertise related to this topic with the Delegates, and they will be able to ask you questions. This is a casual, conversation-style workshop. We ask that you arrive 15 minutes early just in case there are changes to the schedule.

Workshop Guidelines

Assembly processes are designed to be accessible, inclusive, and collaborative. Following these guidelines will help ensure Delegates get the most out of the information you share with them:

- **Speak to everyone.** As much as possible, please try to avoid technical language, jargon, or acronyms. You will be speaking to Delegates aged 16-85, with a wide variety of educational backgrounds and life experiences. Consider which key concepts you'd most like to emphasize, and please keep your comments brief, so that others in your group can jump in and/or ask questions.



- **Come with a collaborative attitude.** Delegates will be eager to hear what you have to say. They will have been asked to suspend judgment for the entire information gathering phase of the process, so that they can consider all perspectives on this topic. In our experience, Assemblies tend to react poorly to overly inflammatory or divisive messaging, preferring guests who seek to share their knowledge and experience to assist the Assembly's efforts.
- **Stick to content.** Please keep your comments directed towards the topic at hand, not toward other topics, long anecdotes, or specific individuals. Delegates are looking to you to learn about this topic and will appreciate information that aids them in moving forward in their work.
- **Use respectful language.** Do not use language that disrespects anyone's religion, culture, racial identity, appearance, gender, sexual orientation, etc. Those who speak and act respectfully toward the Assembly are most likely to receive a positive reception to the information they present. Be aware that eye rolling, crossing arms, or turning away from someone while they are speaking may send a disrespectful message. Assembly members, staff, and visitors will all be expected to abide by a set of Discussion Agreements that the Assembly will approve on Day 1. These will be visible in the room at the event.

Logistics

The Assembly sessions will be held on the Oregon State University-Cascades campus in the Charles McGrath Atrium (Edward J. Ray Hall). Please check in at the sign-in table with a member of the Healthy Democracy staff about 15 minutes prior to the workshop.

A limited number of stipends are available upon request, to help make attending this workshop more accessible. They are intended especially for those contributing their time on a volunteer basis. Please email Grace Taylor (grace@healthydemocracy.org) to request a stipend.

Questions

If you have any questions or require accommodations, please contact Josh Burgess (josh@edgeeffectgroup.com) and Lauren Babcock (lauren@healthydemocracy.org). You may also have the opportunity to discuss this information and any other questions you have during a phone call with Josh and/or Lauren, if you would find it helpful to have a more in-depth conversation (we're happy to chat – send us an email and we'll set something up).