

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2010

Community Input Needed for East Bayside Plan

Portland, Maine—A national team of urban planners and architects will be in Portland March 30 through April 1 to develop a plan for improving East Bayside, Maine’s most diverse neighborhood. The team will seek public input at an open community meeting on Tuesday, March 30 from 5:00 – 8:00 at the Root Cellar, 94 Washington Avenue, and will unveil their proposed plan at a public presentation on Thursday, April 1, 6:00 – 8:00, in Ford Auditorium at Portland High School, 284 Cumberland Avenue. Both events are free and open to the public.

Portland is one of seven communities across the U.S. to win a prestigious, competitive grant from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for technical assistance to turn the city’s East Bayside neighborhood into a model for sustainable, urban design. The AIA’s 7-member Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT), along with staff from the AIA Center for Communities by Design, will provide consulting services on how to better utilize local assets, transform blighted areas and make the area more pedestrian friendly.

“It is essential that residents, business owners, and nonprofits from East Bayside and surrounding neighborhoods participate in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” said Alan Holt, adjunct professor at the Muskie School. “Combining this expertise from around the U.S. with local efforts and experience will provide the essential next step for realizing this neighborhood’s full potential.”

SDAT members include: **J. Todd Scott**, an architect from Seattle who specializes in historic preservation and downtown revitalization, **Richard Goll**, co-founder and principal officer of Onsite-Insights with over 35 year experience in youth development and public safety; **Reemberto Rodriguez**, Director of the Silver Springs Regional Center for Montgomery County, Maryland; creative economy expert **Neil Takemoto** of Cool Town Studios; transportation planner **Seleta Reynolds**; **Patricia Smith**, a landscape architect and urban designer; **Joel Mills**, director of the AIA Center for Communities by Design; and **Erin Simmons**, director of AIA design services.

Portland’s East Bayside neighborhood is bounded on the west by Franklin Arterial, the east by Washington Avenue, the north by Marginal Way, and the south by Congress Street.

The grant is a partnership between the East Bayside Neighborhood Organization (EBNO), the USM Muskie School of Public Service and the City of Portland.

More information about AIA visit, the SDAT members and the community events is available on the EBNO website, www.eastbayside.org, or by contacting EBNO at (207) 408-2431 or belinda@eastbayside.org.

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