

Elders in Action City funded Programs and Services Update

October 2007

Elders in Action, a powerful voice for local seniors since 1968, is pleased to be an active partner with the City of Portland to help ensure that city services are “Elder Friendly” and that City staff and Bureaus are prepared to meet the needs of the growing senior population. Elders in Action believes the quality of life should never depend on age.

- Elders in Action in achieving its mission “*to assure a vibrant community through the active involvement of older adults*” continues to be actively involved with ONI, its many city wide partners, and other City Bureaus. Our work is carried out by harnessing the wisdom, talent and experience of our senior volunteers. We help connect Portland seniors to critical services so they may remain independent and involved in their neighborhoods.
- Our Elders in Action Commission in the official advisory group for the City of Portland on aging and issues affecting its senior citizens. Our Commission members meet monthly and also meet one on one with City Commissioners and various City Bureau personnel to help them better serve the growing older adult population. Our volunteers contributed 2,463 hours of service in 06-07.
- Our volunteers attended 8 city budget hearings.
- As a follow up to visionPDX, we conducted an “Elder Friendly Community” Survey of 213 residents.
- Our volunteers continue to advise and promote the Portland Department of Transportation’s “Senior Strolls”, and Pedestrian Safety Activities. We also have provided input on the PDOT Senior Bike program, which transferred to Portland Parks and Recreation Senior Leisure Program in August 2007.
- We continue to work with PDOT on activities to improve local strategies to assure safer traffic, streets and walkways, including media events and cross walk enforcement activities. We actively promote the 823-SAFE # and distribute these cards.
- We hosted 5 focus groups and recruited seniors, businesses, and agencies for the World Health Organization’s Age- Friendly Cities Project conducted by the Institute on Aging at Portland State University. Portland was the only US City to participate in this international study.
- We work with the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) and its Elder Crime Response Team and advocated for the \$400,000 add package to expand the PPB’s Elder Crime Response Unit. We advocated for an add package to

provide a volunteer coordinator to assist in the Community Policing program. 3 Commission members met 2 times with Police Chief Rosie Sizer, once with Deputy Chief Lannae Berg, and other Police officials regarding these 2 add packages and to acquaint them with how Elders in Action Personal Advocate and Aging Awareness programs can assist elderly victims of crime.

- In FY 06-07 we have followed up on 495 police reports from seniors referred from the Portland Police Bureau.
- Our Police Chief Forum Member, Gussie Hayter, attended 12 Police Chief Forum Meetings and participated in the PPB Budget workshop.
- Lenore Bijan is our representative on the Mayors Citizen Corps and we are actively promoting the Voluntary Emergency Registry that was kicked off on September 24, 2007.
- Last year, our Personal Advocate volunteers assisted hundreds of City residents with problems related to housing, health care, crime or abuse. We continue to get referrals from the City/County I & R, City Housing Inspectors, and the City Auditors office.
- Elders in Action has provided 5 Elder Friendly evaluations by trained senior volunteers for City offices this past year.
- An “Elder Friendly” evaluator was involved in the SAFE Oversight Committee bench placement for additional benches in the downtown area.
- Elders in Action staff and volunteers connect with City Bureau staff and ONI neighborhood contacts on a regular basis. Don McGillvary, Commission member has been a great liaison with ONI and shared information about Community Connect
- Elders in Action City funding supports 2 FTE and materials and services for operating the Commission, Personal Advocate, and Elder Friendly Certification programs for the City of Portland.
- 8,000 a day are turning 60 in the US today. Elders in Action looks forward to helping the City of Portland be prepared for the “Age Wave”, as an “Elder Friendly” community benefits everyone. As people age, accessible neighborhood services become increasingly important, as 21% of people over 65 do not drive. We want to develop a network of neighbors to keep older adults involved in our community, and to care for our elders, neighbor by neighbor. We want to celebrate the talent and experiences that seniors bring to our community, and build more avenues for seniors to actively contribute to our community.