



The Other Side of the Fence

E-News from ONI ~ June-July 2003

Enhancing the quality of neighborhoods through community participation.

Big News at ONI...

July 1, 2003 marks the biggest change in ONI since its inception as a bureau in 1974. Beginning Tuesday, July 1, the Neighborhood Inspections and Noise Control programs officially become a part of ONI. This move, approved by Council in the FY04 Budget, marks a decisive shift in the services and programs ONI will be able to offer neighborhoods. As you all know, we have already begun integrating these services into the Bureau. The physical moving of staff began last Saturday and we are planning an all staff session to work on developing a common mission, values, and goals for the new consolidated bureau.

This change brings many positive things to ONI. I am excited about the range of tools that we'll be able to provide to our neighbors. I think the concept of neighborhood teams and out-placing services and staff, where possible, in the neighborhoods will provide a greater opportunity for us. And I am excited about our increased capacity to solve problems that most affect neighborhoods.

Most of all, I'd like to officially welcome the 22 new staff to ONI. Many of us have already had the privilege of working with the NIT and Noise Control staff. I have been extremely impressed with their dedication to neighborhoods, professionalism, expertise, and enthusiasm for providing fair and competent services. I know you all will fit in wonderfully with the current ONI employees and their passion and expertise for neighborhood involvement services. Together we'll be able to meet the Commissioner's vision and continue to improve neighborhood services.

As we work through this transition--everything from new phones, payroll, computers, business cards, and letterhead--please bear with us. One of the key challenges is combining administration tasks and increasing bureau staff by 50 percent. ONI prides itself on lean administration--until this change we've had the same number of administrative staff--three--since 1974. This change provides us with some great support and administrative staff from NIT and Noise Control, but it will take a while to get out all the bumps in the road. In the meantime, your manager or supervisor should be the first place for information or questions. But always feel free to ask or call me if you need information, have a suggestion, and need a question answered. – David Lane, Director, 503-823-4134

Neighborhood Inspections Center

On July 1, the Neighborhood Inspections Center (NIC) became a part of ONI. Until the change, NIC had been a part of the Bureau of Development Services (BDS). NIC administers Title 29 of the Portland Code. Title 29 consists of two main parts - nuisance regulations and property maintenance standards including such items as leaking roofs, disabled vehicles visible on private property, trash and garbage in the yard, plus many more. NIC currently has 12 field

inspectors and 9 administrative and support staff. All of the staff are located in the lower level of the 1900 SW 4th Building.

One of the projects we will be working on in the next few months is to place at least one of the field inspectors out of the central office. This is part of Commissioner Leonard's vision of putting the City services for neighborhoods closer to the users. The first location will likely be the old Kenton Fire House in North Portland. There are a couple of issues that need some work before we can begin this pilot project, but we expect to start sometime this fall.

Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC)

In June and July, staff in the Neighborhood Resource Center (formally the Metropolitan Human Rights Center and the Civic Involvement Center):

- Presented an update on the county cultural competency policy framework to the board of County Commissioners. They were very pleased with the progress we've made. The final draft should be completed by the end of July. We are also in the process of re-vamping the Dynamic Differences curriculum and we are planning on training their trainers in this curriculum sometime in August.
- Submitted a proposal for an extension of Interwoven Tapestry for a 4th year. We will know sometime in September if that was accepted.
- Awarded 12 Interwoven Tapestry small grants, 6 competitive and 6 non-competitive distributed all over Portland.
- Assisted in the translation of a survey tool as part of a feasibility study for the development of a LGBTQ Community Center in Portland.
- Worked to implement the Public Involvement Standards Taskforce which is working with citizens and citystaff to develop citywide guidelines/standards for public involvement. Brian Hoop organized 11 constituent meetings to gather information. Laurel Butman from OMF, Joann Bowman, and Julie Odell are the co-chairs.
- Continued to staff the ONI Guidelines review committee (GREAT) work to revise city code (Chapter 3.96) and the ONI Guidelines. We thought we were going to go to Council in June with proposed changes in 3.96, but are now able to hold off until Fall to allow more time for feedback and discussion with City staff.

Community Residential Siting Program

Eric King is working to reorganize the Community Residential Siting Advisory Committee to focus on education and outreach activities during FY03-04. In addition, the CRSP is:

- Partnering with Portland Cable Access to produce a ½ hour show on siting special needs/affordable housing
- Working with the St. Francis Parish, Dining Hall Council, Police, the Buckman Community Association, and the Central Eastside Industrial District to develop an ongoing communications strategy to address neighborhood livability issues
- In the process of signing a Good Neighbor Agreement between neighbors, the Richmond Elementary School, School Police Division, and Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare (a mental health organization) to address neighborhood safety concerns

- Working to address neighbor concerns/issues surrounding the siting an apartment complex for individuals with a mental illness in East Portland. The provider and County worked to address neighbor concerns by reducing the building's mass from 3 to 2 stories.

Downspout Disconnection Program

The summer 2003 disconnection season continues to be a success. Over 280 volunteers have helped to disconnect millions of gallons of water from the sewer while they earn money for important local projects. June volunteer groups include the Native American Youth Association, Rose CDC Time Traders project, La Inglesia Apostolico Church, Woodstock NA, and Richmond NA. We have also hired three more canvassers to help sign folks up. The canvassers are continuing to have a great time signing up homeowners. About 35% sign up for the free City work right away and another 25% sign up to do the work themselves. So far, they have signed up 900 homeowners this summer!

West Side BIG Pipe Project—a BES/ONI partnership project

The West Side Big Pipe Project enters downtown with construction of two additional tunnel shafts. The Ankeny shaft, located in Waterfront Park across Naito from the Central Fire Station will be 52 feet in diameter. The Clay Street shaft located adjacent to the intersection of SW Clay and Naito Parkway will be 54 feet in diameter and will represent the upstream end of the tunnel.

The tunnel boring machines will have arrived in Portland by the end of June. They will enter the ground at the Nicolai shaft and one will begin digging under the Willamette River to Swan Island and the second will proceed south to the Clay Street shaft. The TBS's will dig an average of 120 feet below the ground surface. They even have names, Lewis and Clark.

If you would like to learn more about the West Side Big Pipe Project, call Joleen Jensen-Classsen at 503.823.2822 and book a tour. The dates are:

- Wednesday, July 9th from 8-9 a.m.
- Wednesday, July 16 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 12 from Noon-1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 20 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

In other NRC news....

- After 18 years of service to the City of Portland, Paul Kinh Duong is retiring at the end of July. We are currently planning a celebration and "happy retirement" party for him. If you would like to participate in the planning please let Amalia know.
- The Affirmative Action and Diversity Development office has done some preliminary analysis of the ONI diversity survey results. Once the analysis is complete we will develop focus group questions and will recruit ONI staff to participate in focus groups. We are hoping to get volunteer outside facilitators for these. If you think you may be interested in participating, please contact Diversity Committee members: Amalia Alarcon Gaddie, Carol Justice, Stephanie Reynolds, Brian Hoop, Joleen Jensen-Classsen, Amanda Shepard or Lauren Norris.

Coalition News

The coalition/neighborhood offices are preparing for a new fiscal year. They are facing a significant challenge in that the insurance company that provided liability coverage for them for in the beginning of July.

St. John's Window Project

The St. John's Window Project is a community event created by North Portland Neighborhood Services; Art on the Peninsula and St. Johns in the 21st Century. The goal of this project is to attract awareness to the St. John's Business community and to create exposure for North Portland artists who reside in the community. It is a positive way to bring people together to share an interest in their community, develop or learn something new about their neighbors and their neighborhood and to let those who live outside of the community to see what St. Johns has to offer. Contact Mary Jaron Kelley for information at 503.823.4099 or email at mkelley@ci.portland.or.us

Crime Prevention Center

Rhett Drennan is working with Marsha Palmer from Portland Police on the Block Captain recognition event scheduled for July 30, 2003 at Montgomery Park. Applebee's is sponsoring the event and we anticipate about 100 block captains attending. ONI will recognize key block captains for their contribution to the community. A survey was sent to 450 block captains and we are updating our records that will be shared with the Portland Police. Crime Prevention collaborated with Portland Police, Portland Parks, GREAT, Tri-met and Multnomah Department of Community Justice for Operation Safe Summer. A newspaper guide was published and is available at Police Precincts.

Information and Referral (I&R) Center

- The month of June got off to a rough start with short staffing and changing duties in the work group but finished out running smoothly. Amanda moved down to the 1900 building to do a cross-training stint in the Neighborhood Inspections unit. Carol Justice moved into her role at the City Hall office as the primary administrative support person. To fill Carol's I&R spot we hired a City temporary, Aaron Lucchesi. It took a couple of weeks to get through the recruitment and hiring process so we were down a person for several weeks. Also, we were able to sign on Doyle Thibert, to help out on a temporary basis as well. With a couple of temporary employees now on board our staffing level is back to where it needs to be to maintain our call percentages and both Aaron and Doyle are doing an excellent job.
- For about a week and a half in the month of June we had the opportunity to have Cynthia Strickland, from the North Portland Coalition office work with our I&R team. This was an opportunity for Cynthia to get a better understanding of the different City and County services available as well as see how the downtown ONI office operates. Cynthia was a great guest and chipped in and helped take quite a few phone calls during this time, which helped us out as well.
- A lot of projects are in the works for the I&R group. We continue our work with rewriting our database and we made significant progress during the month. We are within a month of completion of at least having this database in use by our staff. This rewrite will make possible the sharing of this database outside the unit through the Internet.
- We completed updating the County printed directory for the County Telecomm office. This document will be available online, in printed format and on CD. We are waiting on final word from the county on how many in each format before sending this to print. Along the way of updating this directory we adding a large amount of program contact data to our

services database which will make it easier for future updates and enhances the usefulness of the database.

- We are in the middle of another major 6-month update of our service database.
- We will be updating, printing and distributing the Pocket Directory in July.

ONI Web site

PortlandOnline went live and ONI has started our move to the site. Amanda, Carol, Brian and John attended a brief training with Dan Bauer on how PortlandOnline works. John is in the process of drafting up a category structure and will email the link to this draft to coalition office and program key staff for input before beginning to load the site with content. He is also working with Amanda and Carol on cleaning up the existing site using Dreamweaver to prepare for the transition. We hope to have a live presence on PortlandOnline by Mid-July.