CHAPTER VI

DEEPER ANALYSIS AND CONFLICT—2000-2004

The early 2000s saw Portlanders engage in much deeper and more strategic thinking about how to involve a greater diversity of the community and what it would take to improve city government community involvement. During this time, Mayor Katz assigned ONI to three different city commissioners in fairly rapid succession. Conflicts between city council members and community activists rose dramatically as city commissioners tried to impose changes to "fix" the neighborhood system and city leaders and community members clashed over a number of high-profile planning processes and projects.

This chapter reviews a number of key processes that took place during the early 2000s and describes some of the efforts by city commissioners to shift the focus and practices of ONA and the neighborhood system. It also describes some of the major issues and community involvement themes raised during the 2004 city council and mayoral election.

The chapter begins with a review of the "citizen involvement" goal and objectives included in the Southwest Community Plan in 2000. Community members had developed the language for the goal and objectives to institutionalize the form of community involvement they wanted the City to provide related to planning in southwest Portland. The City Council adopted the goal and objectives by ordinance, technically giving them the force of law.

The chapter continues with a review of the 2000 Administrative Services Review (ASR), which was charged with finding administrative efficiencies in city government. The ASR committee that reviewed the City's public involvement and public information activities recommended a number of actions to centralize public involvement in ONI and to increase the consistency and effectiveness of City public involvement efforts. The chapter also examines attempts by ONI to implement some of the ASR recommendations and efforts by ONI Commissioner Dan Saltzman to implement some neighborhood system reforms.

The chapter then turns to three very innovative and influential processes that took on the challenge of how to increase the diversity of involvement in Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. The 2001-2003 Interwoven Tapestry process brought leaders and activists from Portland's growing immigrant and refugee communities together with neighborhood association leaders to find ways they could learn about each other and work together more effectively. This process was very inclusive and modeled many of the values and best practices of community involvement.

Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition followed up on the Interwoven Tapestry experience and created its own Diversity and Representation Committee (DRC). The DRC brought together leaders of communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities and other underrepresented groups in the community with neighborhood leaders to continue to learn about each other and promote greater involvement by historically underrepresented groups in the neighborhood system. The DRC again modeled a process that was very diverse, respectful of all the participants and included a

strong focus on relationship building. The DRC became the source of a new way of thinking about involving under-represented communities that focused on by helping people organize with their own community members first and building capacity in their own organizations before linking up with neighborhood associations and other community groups.

Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition followed up on the good work of the DRC by creating a Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee (DCLC) to develop and advocate for specific proposals to support leadership training and capacity building among communities of color and other under-represented groups. DCLC members lobbied hard with city council members for City support and funding for their proposals. They finally succeeded during Mayor Potter's administration and ONI's Diversity and Civic Leadership Program was started.

The early 2000s also was a time when very comprehensive and sophisticated thinking occurred about how to improve the willingness and ability of city government leaders and staff to work effectively and in partnership with the community. The ASR had recommended that a follow up process be established to develop guideline and standards for city government public involvement. Increasing conflict between community and city leaders helped convince the three ONI commissioners during the early 2000s to create the Public Involvement Task Force. The PITF developed a new set of public involvement principles and a series of recommendations to change the structural policies of city government, to build capacity for involvement both in city government and in the community, and to ensure good process design, greater accountability and

transparency of city government processes and regular evaluation of community involvement efforts. After the PITF finished its work, a Budget Outreach Study Committee (BOSG) formed (implementing on one of the PITF recommendations) that studied how to improve community involvement in the city's budget process.

Conflict between city leaders and community activists grew during the early 2000s. This chapter examines the controversial role of City Commission Randy Leonard and the major changes he attempted to implement for ONI and the Portland's neighborhood system and a strong critique of the direction Leonard was taking the system from former City Commissioner Margaret Strachan and others.

The 2004 city council and mayor election became a turning point in the history of community involvement in Portland. This chapter describes an attempt by neighborhood leaders to run against Leonard for his city council seat, and issues and themes of the mayoral race between City Commissioner Jim Francesconi and former Portland Police Chief and creator of Portland's community policing program Tom Potter. Potters election in November 2004 would open the door to significant reform and expansion of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system.

The chapter closes with a review of Mayor Vera Katz's five final mayor's budget messages.

Southwest Community Plan –1994-2000

The Southwest Community Plan (SWCP) was the focus of intense friction between community activists and city planners during the later 1990s. Hovey (2003) called it the Planning Bureau's "Vietnam" (153) and identified the SWCP as the

"apogee" of the trend in the late 1980s and early 1990s toward increasing friction

between city planners and community activists "over the imposition of regulation

stemming from evolving growth management policy" for the Portland region (142). The

final version of the SWCP, adopted by ordinance (Portland, City Council. *Ordinance*

174667, 13 July 2000.) by the City Council in July 2000, included a "Citizen

Involvement" policy and nine objectives that had been developed primarily by

community members.

The "Citizen Involvement" policy sought to institutionalize community

involvement in all phases of the development, amendment, implementation and

monitoring of the SWCP, as well as any other City policies or programs that might affect

southwest Portland. Because the City Council adopted the SWCP by ordinance, the City

was legally required to comply with the goal and objectives. The policy stated:

> Ensure that the policies and objectives of the Southwest Community Plan
> are used to guide the collaborative action so the city and Southwest
> citizens for the next 20 years. Involve citizens integrally in the Southwest
> Community Plan from concept through evaluation and revision (Portland.
> Bureau of Planning. *Southwest Community Plan: Vision, Policies, and
> Objectives*. July 2000 19).

The accompanying objectives laid out a vision for what community members

believed would be good community involvement by the City.

The "Citizen Involvement" objectives stressed that implementation of the plan—

and the creation, development, and implementation of any other policies and programs

that would affect Southwest Portland—should be done through collaborative partnerships

of community stakeholders, city officials and staff, and "all implementing bodies." The

"roles, rights, responsibilities, and degree of accountability of the participants, including

city officials, bureau directors, staff, citizen leadership, organization and individuals...."
were to be clearly defined. Community concerns and goals were to be "addressed"
"during the creation, development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and revision"
of the SWCP. Communication links "between the Planning Commission, City Council,
city staff, and citizens" were to be identified, strengthened, and used throughout the
"creation, development and implementation" of the SWCP. Policymakers were called on
to respond to community members and to explain the rationale for their decisions.

The "Citizen Involvement" objectives also required that the SWCP policies and
objectives be used "to create, develop, implement or evaluate new citywide policies,
programs or project proposals to ensure that the concerns of the Southwest community
are addressed." The City was called on to "Engage the Southwest community and all
relevant stakeholders" in a discussion of the economic and demographic factors the
current and future development and business needs related to the implementation of the
SWCP. One objective required the City to "Support the activities of recognized
organizations when creating, developing, or implementing policies or program for the
[SWCP] or Southwest area" (19).

The last two objectives required the City to involve southwest community
members in reviewing the progress of the SWCP "through ongoing monitoring and
periodic evaluation," and to ask "Southwest neighborhood associations, business
associations, and other community-based organizations" to recommend individual to
serve on any "citizen advisory committee" related to "any phase or facet of the [SWCP]

or plan area." The objectives call on the City to "Seek balance and variety on all citizen advisory committees." (20)

The SWCP Citizen Involvement goal and policies stressed broad and ongoing involvement of southwest Portland community organizations and interests in all aspects of the SWCP development and implementation. The goal and policies stressed partnerships between the city and community, clear roles and responsibilities, consideration of community needs and goals, strong and active communication between the City and the community, feedback from the City to the community on outcomes and the rationale behind decisions made, identification of economic and demographic trends in the community, City support to increase the capacity of community organizations, community involvement in monitoring progress of the SWCP, and invitations by the City to community organizations to recommend individuals to serve on any "citizen advisory committee."

Citywide Administrative Services Review (ASR) – 2000-2001

Mayor Katz, during her twelve years in office, strongly pursued efforts to improve customer service and business practices within city government and streamline and increase the accountability of government operations. One priority for Katz was to reorganize and centralize many city government administrative services that were duplicated across different city bureaus. Katz led the effort to create a new position of "Chief Administrative Office" for all of city government and initiated a major review of administrative services in 2000-2001—known as the "Citywide Administrative Services

Review" (ASR). One of the areas the ASR investigated was city government "public information and public involvement" activities.

Portland's commission form of government divides administrative responsibility for city agencies among the five city council members. This structure offers few incentives for city agencies to collaborate or for city officials to engage in city-government-wide strategic planning. In the late 1990s, most city bureaus received administrative services—such as human resources, information technology, purchasing, etc.—from units within their own agency rather than through any sort of centralized city government office.

In May 2000, the Portland City Council adopted Ordinance 174410, which reorganized city government administrative functions to increase efficiency and accountability to the City Council. The City Council defined administrative services as "all those functions that provide products, services, and support to city employees and programs that in turn provide direct service to the public." The City Council list of "administrative services" included: "accounting, debt, treasury, clerical, payroll, external and internal communications, training, education, outreach, grant administration and fee collection, risk management, facilities, fleet, human resources, information technology, legal, printing and distribution, public information, and purchasing" (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 174410* 3 May 2000).

The ordinance created the new position of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for city government to lead a new agency called the Office of Management and Finance (OMF)—OMF consolidated the city's existing Office of Finance and Administration,

Bureau of General Services, and Bureau of Purchases. The CAO would report to the entire city council, not just to one commissioner or the mayor. The City Council also created a number of centralized agencies including: the Bureau of Finance, Bureau of Human Resources, Bureau of Information Technology, Bureau of Risk Management. The City Council gave the CAO the authority to review and propose improvements for administrative service functions in all city bureaus (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 174410* 3 May 2000).

In fall 2000, the CAO began a citywide review of administrative services called the "Administrative Services Review" (ASR). The ASR was intended to seek opportunities to reduce costs and increase administrative service efficiency. ASR committees were set up to review fifteen different service areas—one of which was "Public Information/Public Involvement."

The ASR Public Information and Public Involvement (PI/PI) Committee was the first body to look specifically at the city-government side of Portland's community involvement system. While many of the committee's recommendations were not immediately implemented, the committee's work raised important issues that would be taken up by future review and reform efforts.

The ASR PI/PI committee included about fifteen people—a third represented neighborhood and community organizations and the rest represented city bureaus, including ONI. ONI Director Dr. David Lane chaired the group. The ASR PI/PI committee started meeting in September and completed its report by January 2001

(Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. ASR Team—Public Involvement and Public Information. *Meeting Summary* 27 September 2000).

The group's final report, dated February 1, 2001, presented findings, four major recommendations that focused on cost reduction and efficiency, and six additional recommendations intended to improve the quality and consistency of city government public involvement (Portland. Citywide Administrative Service Review. *Framework Plan: Public Information/Public Involvement* 1 February 2001).

The ASR PI/PI report states that the group was charged to:

1. "Improve public involvement and public information for citizens and bureaus. (ONI)"

2. "Look at 'new ways of doing business' (OMF)"

3. "Ensure the City is doing these administrative and support functions in the most efficient and cost-effective manner (Council)"

4. "Explore how technology could improve public involvement and public information administration (OMF)"

5. Meet target reductions—about 5.8% cut (Council)" (Portland. Citywide Administrative Service Review. *Framework Plan: Public Information/Public Involvement* 6).

The team reviewed PI/PI activities that included "public involvement outreach (both City-supported efforts and outsourced contracts), information and referral functions in ONI, Police Bureau (PPB), and the Bureau of Emergency Communications (BoEC),

media relations, crime prevention, mediation services through ONI, neighborhood outreach, public information, and public relations" (6).

The team started from the premise that "Public involvement and public information (PI/PI) are central to the City's mission, values, and programs. Citizen participation in civic decisions are at the heart of what makes Portland one of the most livable cities in the world. As city staff and as neighbors, we pride ourselves in the ability to involve our co-workers, neighbors, businesses, and community partners in programs and decisions" (4).[45]

The PI/PI committee members also took the important step of developing definitions that began formally to differentiate "public involvement" from other types of city agency outreach activities. Their definitions included:

- Public Information: "Fact-based educational tool, usually little opportunity for public feedback. Public learns from information they are provided. Purpose is communication, often of specific messages."

- Public Relations: "Marketing tool used to promote public understanding [of] an organization. Shines a positive light and gives company a positive image in the public eye."

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[45] Despite the PI/PI Team's optimistic statements and the recommendations, community activists in Portland continued to clash with city staff in an increasing number of high profile conflicts over city projects in next few years. The consistent disconnect between what community members and city staff considered good public involvement led three City Commissioners who had been in charge of ONI to create the Public Involvement Task Force in 2003 to establish clear public involvement guidelines and standards for city government.

- Public Education: "Provision of information and programs designed to inform the public, provide background history and information, and increase their knowledge, skills, and abilities to understand a specific situation or topic."

- Public Involvement: "Involves the public by requiring active participation and a feedback loop. Public is encouraged to provide feedback and participate in development and the decision making process. Public involvement is a process whose outcome is shared power."

PI/PI committee members focused on a fundamental concern—shared by both city staff and neighborhood district coalition representatives—that PI/PI activities should not be considered "administrative services" and should not be targeted for cost reduction strategies in the ASR review. They argued instead that PI/PI activities are "direct services" closely tied to the substantive work of different city agencies (7).[46]

PI/PI Team members noted that city agency budgets for public involvement and public information had remained "relatively stable with no major increases, except as dictated by the specific projects of new targeted programs." Some bureaus had increased their public involvement spending for specific projects, and ONI had partnered with some bureaus to help provide public involvement services for some of these projects. The team members recognized that budgets for the neighborhood district coalitions, funded through ONI, had remained flat.

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[46] The question of whether community involvement should be an integral part of a project's design and implementation or an add-on service—somewhat independent of the substantive elements of the project— would be discussed again and again in future efforts to improve city government public involvement activities.

The PI/PI Team members noted that while "PI/PI in Portland is central to every bureau's goals and mission," "the administration of PI/PI is very decentralized with very few citywide policies or standards, or direction." Their report identified key obstacles to moving forward, including:

1. "Lack of citywide standards, policies, and procedures for public involvement and public information;

2. Inability to gather data on current services because of a lack of databases to track PTE [professional, technical, and expert services] contracts and to get a clear picture of FTE [full time equivalent] designated to this area; and

3. Lack of clear definition of the role of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement in the city's public involvement and public information administration" (5).

Committee members also identified "key implementation issues for any administrative changes in public involvement and public information," including the need for the City Council to establish "standards, policies, and procedures for public involvement and public information;" the need to clarify "the public involvement and public information role" of ONI; and the need to determine "which parts of public involvement and public information are central administrative services and which are bureau specific direct services" (5).

PI/PI Vision and Core Values: The PI/PI Team members identified a number of core values to guide their own and "future discussion of PI/PI needs and changes.[47] The

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[47] It is interesting to note how often groups that have reviewed Portland's community involvement system and activities choose to go through a similar process and develop very similar principles and values—often

team members recognized that the City Council had adopted the 1996 "citizen

involvement principles" but went on to develop their own list of values, which included:

- "Community members will be involved

    - Open, fair process

    - Input will be utilized

    - Consistency in policy and methodology

    - Understandable by community

    - Opinions and the public role is respected

    - Engaging the diversity of Portland's population

    - Involvement must be relevant

    - Hearing the voice of the community

    - Public involvement adds value and improves community

    - Customer service mindset

    - Every voice should be heard and respected

    - Balance the needs of the stakeholders with the context of the

      system

    - Accurate information for the creating [of] sound decisions

    - Follow-through/feedback/close the information loop

    - Information easy for the public to find

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with little formal reference to similar lists developed by other review groups before them. Despite the frequent listing of public involvement core values and principles by these different groups, the lists often appeared to have little impact on changing the behavior of city staff or the nature and character of their interaction with the public. Clearly something else needed to be added to the mix. To learn more about how Portland began to move beyond these repeated but relatively ineffective lists of values, see discussion of the work of the Public Involvement Task Force (PITF) in 2003-04 and the later work of the Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) created in 2008 in the next chapter.

- Responsive relationship with the media

- Proactive information sharing

- Consistent quality

- Professional quality products

- Appropriate for audience and the internal needs of the organization

- Involvement and information in context with other efforts" (17)

The PI/PI committee members also listed in their report core values established by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2):

- "The public should have a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives."

- "Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision."

- The public participation process:

    - "communicates the interests and meets the process needs of all participants."

    - "seeks out and facilities the involvement of those potentially affected."

    - "involves participants in defining how they participate."

    - "communicates to participants how their input affected the decision."

    - "provides the participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way."

Existing Structures and Proposed Framework: PI/PI committee members reported that, at the time of their review, PI/PI activities in Portland city government were de-centralized—each bureau handled its own public involvement and carried out its public involvement its own way. ONI was seen as a leader in public involvement in city government because of its "guidance and maintenance of recognition of neighborhood associations, coalition contracts, and monitoring of compliance with" the ONA Guidelines. PI/PI committee members also recognized ONI's recent efforts to coordinate citywide PI/PI processes, including supporting networking meetings of city bureau public involvement staff (known as CPIN—"Citywide Public Involvement Network"), publishing a monthly citywide outreach calendar and a calendar of neighborhood association meetings, and a calendar of citywide bureau events. The PI/PI committee members found that while these efforts were useful and should be continued, "ONI's role in these efforts has not been clearly defined by the City and efforts to coordinate have based on voluntary, time allowed, basis by bureaus resulting in incomplete calendars that are not widely distributed" (21).

The PI/PI committee members recommendations proposed the creation of a new structure in which city bureaus still would "direct their individual PI/PI decisions and processes," and neighborhood district coalitions could continue to "establish direct relationships with bureaus" but also in which ONI would play a much more prominent and centralized role in managing PI/PI contracts, advising bureaus on their public involvement processes, and coordinating bureau PI/PI meetings, training, and public meetings.

Major Recommendations: PI/PI committee members developed and turned four major recommendations related to: coordination of public involvement PTE contracts, coordination of public involvement meetings, opportunities, and events; consolidation of the City's information and referral services, and creation of a city-wide public information officer position. The committee also developed additional recommendations after turning in its initial four recommendations. These recommendations are described below.

"Improve coordination, monitoring, and dissemination of public involvement professional contract dollars outsourced to consultants." Under this recommendation, ONI would: coordinate public involvement professional services contracts for other city bureaus that choose to participate; develop a request for proposal (RFP) from public involvement practitioners and use the responses to develop a list of prequalified public involvement consultants and invite the neighborhood district coalitions to submit proposals to get on the list. City bureaus who needed to hire a public involvement consultant could select a service provider from ONI's list without having to follow the City's policies that usually would require them to go through their own Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The "bureaus would discuss the scope and plans with ONI" and would consider contracting with ONI to provide the service. Bureaus would have the final say on whether they contracted with ONI, a consultant from ONI's prequalified list, or selected a consultant on their own (31).

The PI/PI committee members believed that implementation of this recommendation would save time and lower costs for bureau staff—who would not have

to do their own RFP processes—and reduce the time and process needed for bureaus to select consultants and get them on the job. ONI and the neighborhood coalitions might get contracts and earn revenue that would help them support their organizations. Community members would see better tracking and accountability for city bureau use of public involvement consultants (this information was not being tracked and some city commissioners had expressed concern about the lack of documentation and what they saw as the excessive use of consultants by city bureaus) (32).

 "Coordinate administration of the majority of public involvement/public information meetings, trainings, involvement opportunities, and policies in ONI." This recommendation included three major elements:

"*Stakeholder identification*": ONI would "maintain and administer a central citywide public involvement database that would assist bureaus in identifying and contacting stakeholders" for their projects. ONI would maintain and regularly update the contacts in the database. PI/PI committee members envisioned that ONI would document who received notification of a project and when they received it. ONI also would coordinate both mail and electronic notification services, use GIS to target "specific geographic areas," and target "special interest groups, businesses" and other stakeholder groups as needed.

PI/PI committee members believed that this recommendation would generate the greatest cost savings by reducing duplication and would increase the effectiveness of bureau outreach efforts. This centralized approach also would improve "identification

and notification of underserved communities" and improve customer satisfaction by helping city bureaus better coordinate their outreach efforts.

"Coordination and dissemination of general announcements, information to stakeholders about an issue, event, proposal etc." ONI would coordinate and take on a significant amount of the responsibility of delivering these services. Bureaus would have a one-stop place to go for assistance, and bureau staff time would be freed up to work on other tasks. This sub-recommendation included six separate services described below.

- **Develop a citywide PI/PI calendar**: This "comprehensive calendar" was intended to "list citywide events and include advisory committees, public meetings, forums, special events, neighborhood meetings etc." The calendar would be "web-based" and accessible to the public. Bureaus would "retain control" over what they listed on the calendar. PI/PI committee members saw this calendar as an extension of the calendar of events that ONI produced on an "'as needed' and 'information-provided' basis. Community members could view the calendar by day or by week and month. The calendar also would include links to the ONI I&R database to "facilitate communication and outreach" and link to bureau and neighborhood web pages. City bureaus would relay information to ONI about their meetings and events, and ONI would update the calendar daily (38).

  The PI/PI committee members intended that this calendar would provide a "centralized location for all public information, notification, and news

efforts," and would improve coordination between city bureau and neighborhood groups, and reduce duplication and overlap of meetings. Bureaus would increase their ability to disseminate information about their events, and staff time spent on duplicating this calendar service in each bureau would be shifted to ONI. Members of the public would be able to access the calendar from any place where they had access to the web.

Develop flyers to announce meetings and dissemination of meeting agendas and meeting minutes: City bureaus could send ONI content to distribute to the public and ONI would format the information "as flyers, postcards, fact sheets, email etc" and "distribute the information." ONI would look for opportunities to combine the outreach efforts of multiple bureaus. The PI/PI committee members noted that bureaus would still send out formal notification (e.g. land use notices) as required by City Code or state requirements. ONI would send out meeting notices, agendas, and meeting minutes for a wide array of city government advisory committees and task forces, city boards and commissions, public information meetings, special events, and public involvement events (39-40).

The PI/PI committee members believed that this centralization would increase collaboration and coordination among city bureaus and increase the professionalism of the layout and effectiveness of outreach materials. Bureau staff would be able to redirect some of their time to "content issues."

Community members would have a "centralized' one-stop shopping source of information" and less "information overload" and frustration because city bureaus would coordinate their outreach more effectively (40).

- **Coordinate public meetings**: ONI would help city bureaus schedule many of their advisory committee and board and commission meetings and public meetings and special events. ONI would advise bureaus on the time and location of the meetings, coordinate with other bureau and neighborhood meetings, take care of the meeting logistics, notify the public and stakeholders, and disseminate meeting agendas and minutes (41).

- **Coordinate public involvement and education opportunities**: ONI would support "increased City efforts to coordinate strategic planning opportunities" to "maximize public involvement and minimize duplication of effort." ONI also would coordinate "public information and education opportunities on specific topics" and create "citywide public information and education opportunities." PI/PI committee members anticipated that this would increase citizen participation "numbers, diversity, representation" and would create multiple opportunities for community members to build their skill and knowledge and capacity to participate effectively (42).

Provide bureaus with consistent citywide public involvement policies and procedures: ONI would coordinate and support regular meetings of city bureau public information and public involvement staff (i.e. the C-PIN group)

to allow these staff people to network and learn about new techniques and

technologies. ONI would use C-PIN as an advisory group to:

- o "Revise the 'Outreach and Involvement Handbook for City of

    Portland Bureaus;"

- o Create a PI/PI "'best practices' checklist;"

- o "Provide feedback and evaluation for ONI services;"

- o Explore opportunities for additional administrative efficiencies and

    savings;

- o Coordinate city PI/PI services beyond what ONI would provide;

    and

- o Host professional "in-service" training opportunities on PI/PI

    topics.

This recommendation was intended to lead to the development of consistent PI/PI

standards and guidelines and to support ongoing skills and capacity building for city

bureau staff.

- **Provide strategic development services for bureaus**: ONI staff would

    be available to help city bureau project teams to assess the need for PI/PI

    and to help them design appropriate involvement processes. ONI staff

    would help a bureau identify and clarify issues, identify potential

    stakeholders based on the likely impact of the project, identify appropriate

    outreach methods, develop an initial public involvement project schedule,

    advise bureaus on "mechanisms for assessment and evaluation of public

involvement," and consult with bureau staff on any process changes needed during a project. ONI staff also could discuss a bureau's "outreach program, public involvement need," and provide advice to bureau on how to work with "ONI staff, coalitions, or other city-supported staff" as resources for outreach efforts (44).

This recommendation envisioned ONI staff as public participation strategic consultants to City bureaus. ONI staff would use their expertise and connections to help city bureaus design better processes and more effectively reach out to and involve different groups and communities in Portland.

In the third element of recommendation #2, the PI/PI committee members recommended that "ONI, with cooperation from the bureaus, and with the C-PIN advisory group" "develop an evaluation/feedback mechanism to ensure that the new systems are working as designed and to make any adjustments needed once implemented." "Product and Process Benchmarks" and evaluation forms would be developed and used regularly depending on the frequency with which a city bureau used the services. PI/PI committee members also recommended that ONI report annually to OMF and the City Council "about the PI/PI process including suggestions for other possible administrative improvements and enhancement" (45).

PI/PI committee members recognized that a number of factors could make the successful implementation difficult. Bureau staff would have to devote significant

amounts of time to work with ONI initially to set up the "database, notification requirements, etc." ONI staff would need to "commit to understanding Bureau needs for public involvement." Bureaus would lose some independence as they gave up doing some of their own public involvement activities and relied on the citywide system instead. ONI would need to be "responsive and available to work on efforts within Bureau timeframes."

PI/PI committee members recognized that having ONI staff take on many public involvement responsibilities for city bureaus would mean that bureaus would not have their own staff doing these activities anymore. ONI staff would not have the same grounding in the substance of the work of the bureau, and bureau program staff would not have the same ability to have regular "face-to-face" meetings with their own PI/PI staff people.

The PI/PI committee members also recognized that its recommendations would significantly increase the amount of staff needed at ONI to take on all these new duties, and would "represent a significant change in the City's 'way of doing business.'"

Consolidate and improve City government information and referral services: PI/PI committee members also recommended further consolidation and improvement of city government "information and referral" services—especially relieving the "Police Bureau of some I&R tasks." The proposed changes would build on ONI's existing city/county I & R Program.

Establish a "Citywide Public Information Officer Position:" Communications, like other administrative services in Portland's city government, were managed

independently by each city bureau. Bureaus followed no consistent citywide standards and generally did not coordinate their communications with other bureaus. No standing capacity existed to manage citywide communication efforts. PI/PI committee members noted that when an unusual situation required a citywide response—such as "Y2k, weather-related emergencies, legislative support" and city wide celebrations—city leaders would "borrow" public information staff from different bureaus to staff these efforts. "Borrowed staff" achieved results, but had to add these duties to their existing workloads.

The PI/PI committee members explored the question: "How can the City best leverage shared multi-bureau and City media relations and public information opportunities without lessening Bureau-specific information programs" (52)?

PI/PI members found that no one in city government was tasked to "strategize or address the situations where public information efforts would be useful and desirable." They found that media relations were particularly important because "most residents form their understanding and perception of City services based on the information they gain through electronic and print media reporting." They argued that the city needed actively to plan its interactions with the news media, and that this would "offer residents greater access to information," a "better understanding of how the City works, how services are paid for, and how the City responds to the challenges of a more complicated and regulated world to improve residents' quality of life." They maintained that this was "full-time work" that deserved its own dedicated and ongoing staffing (52-53).

PI/PI committee members recommended that the City Council create a new position of Citywide Public Information Officer. This individual would "develop and manage a central information strategy to provide residents and interested others access to information" and be housed either in OMF or in the City's legislative relations office. In most cases, bureaus would retain their own public information staff.

The Citywide PIO would serve as the primary—but not exclusive—contact with media organizations, centrally coordinate "citywide information, concerns and opportunities," and "serve as a resource to Commissioners, Council offices, Office of Management and Finance, Legislative Office, City Attorney's Office" and city bureaus that did not have strong communication capacity of their own. The Citywide PIO would help develop media strategies, "messaging, news releases, news events, story placement, information gathering and fact finding," and "interview preparation." The Citywide PIO would work with bureaus to develop communications procedures and standards, provide strategic advice, and serve as the City's spokesperson as needed. City Council would hold an annual work session to help set the priorities for the Citywide PIO (53).

Other Recommendations: The PI/PI committee report included six additional recommendations, some of which were addressed to some extent by the four major recommendations. These recommendations did not focus specifically on cost reduction or efficiency but identified actions that would improve the quality and consistency of city government public involvement. The additional recommendations included: improved coordination of public involvement in the City's various capital improvement project identification processes, bureau consultation "with ONI on all public involvement

processes," invitation to ONI to "bid on all public involvement contracts," ONI

coordination of a "citywide discussion to develop common terms understanding and

expectations for outreach processes along with standard guidelines," ONI coordination of

"a citywide discussion to explore development of a common stakeholder identification

database with citywide availability," ONI and Bureau of Information Technology

coordination of "a citywide discussion on how bureaus might use information technology

to facilitate public involvement and public information."

The ASR PI/PI report was the first in-depth look at how to improve the efficiency

and quality of community involvement by Portland's city agencies. The report identified

a number of key problems, including the lack of consistent standards for community

involvement and the policies, mechanisms, practices, and staff and other resources

needed significantly to improve their community involvement.

The PI/PI committee recommendations represented a strong effort by ONI

Director David Lane and Commissioner Saltzman to create a new role for ONI and to

centralize in ONI many community involvement tasks that, at the time, staff in individual

city bureau were doing themselves. PI/PI committee members also hoped that bureaus

would shift from hiring outside contractors to do public involvement for them and instead

infuse additional revenue and funding into ONI and the neighborhood coalitions by

contracting with them for these types of services.

The PI/PI committee also raised an important strategic question about whether

public involvement is an "administrative service" that a bureau could farm out easily to a

provider outside the bureau, or whether community involvement should be an integral

part of a city agency's planning and implementation of its service to the community. Later reviews would reject much of the centralization model proposed by ONI City Commissioner Dan Saltzman (Saltzman was the commissioner in charge of ONI at the time of the ASR) and ONI Director Dr. David Lane (and the ASR PI/PI committee) and favor building strong community involvement capacity within each individual city bureau.

The ASR PI/PI committee report, for the first time, identified many important capacity areas city government needed to develop to be able to provide consistent, good quality and effective community involvement. Future reviews of city government public involvement would bring up many of the same issues again.

ONI attempted to implement some of the ASR PI/PI committee recommendations, but the City Council did not provide the significant increase in funding that would have been needed for full implementation. Some ONI staff did reduce their support for community empowerment and support for the neighborhood system so that they could provide community involvement support on some specific bureau projects. Most of ONI's attempts to implement various ASR recommendations ultimately were abandoned. The next section describes some of the post-ASR efforts and their results.

Post ASR—Attempts to Centralize Community Involvement Services

The ASR PI/PI committee laid out a broad plan for major reform of city government community involvement and communications roles and services. David Lane, ONI Director from July 1999 to January 2004, and Brian Hoop, an ONI staff

person hired by Lane in January 2000, offered some interesting context for ONI at the time and insights into ONI's efforts to implement some of the ASR recommendations.

Dan Saltzman served as the City Commissioner in charge of ONI from Jan 1999 to May 2002. Saltzman hired Dr. David Lane to serve as ONI Director in July 1999. Lane says that when he came in as ONI director ONI was suffering "from long-building angst, frustration, and apathy from City Hall and the Mayor." "Each commissioner...expressed the need to revamp the neighborhood system and make it work better. City Hall staff and neighborhood activists were uniformly frustrated with lack of trust from each direction. Activists were troubled by lack of support for NAs, and lack of 'letting the NAs do their work.' Many city hall insiders saw the NAs and coalitions as out of touch with the real neighborhood issues" and many referred to the neighborhood associations "as 'necessary but useless' and not really in touch with the real neighbors. [Neighborhood] Coalitions, of course, saw it differently and felt that many city hall and bureau leaders did not utilize them effectively. Funding was a huge issue, and each year I was there, we had to cut the [ONI] budget" (Lane email to Leistner, July 18, 2008). Hoop recalls that neither Mayor Vera Katz nor the other city council members strongly championed Portland's neighborhood system during the early 2000s.

Lane said that Saltzman's focus during his three years in charge of ONI was to "reactivate the neighborhood system," restructure, and reorganize ONI staff," "support NAs more from ONI Central," "re-energize [the Metropolitan Human Rights Commission]," "Expand the I&R line with [Multnomah] County," "Initiate the City-County Siting program" (to help with the siting of residential service facilities in the

community), and to "expand ONI's role in [public involvement] for all the City's bureaus."

PTE contracts: The ASR PI/PI report recommended that ONI develop and manage a centralized professional service contract process. Commissioner Saltzman directed ONI staff to develop a process by which consultant firms and community organizations could apply to be included in a city government flexible services contract for public involvement and public information services. The contract would establish a list of providers that bureaus could hire from without having to go through their own RFP process.

Hoop says Lane and Saltzman wanted to build the capacity of the neighborhood coalitions to offer provide public involvement services equal to those of other consultants and contractors. Hoop said Saltzman and Lane hoped to get city bureaus to hire coalitions instead of the private contractors who traditionally had received most of this work (Hoop. Conversation with Leistner, July 11, 2008).

ONI staff proceeded to set up the application process. Hoop reports that ONI staff encouraged all the neighborhood coalitions and also some community of color organizations to apply to be included on the list. Hoop said that some neighborhood coalitions responded with "angst" that taking on public involvement projects for city bureaus would pull their organizations away from the primary role to support and empower neighborhood associations. They also were concerned about potential conflicts of interest that could arise if the interests of neighborhood associations and city bureaus

diverged. Hoop said coalitions directors reluctantly agreed to apply because they saw it was in their best interest to do so.

ONI staff developed and issued a request for qualifications (RFQ) to provide "public information" and "public information and public involvement" services. A number of consultant firms and community organizations responded. In March 2002, the Portland City Council approved an ordinance that established a two-year "flexible-services contract" intended to provide city bureaus with "consistent, cost-effective, and fairly determined public involvement and public information services." In addition to many of Portland's traditional public involvement consultants, the ordinance approved a list of providers that included all seven of Portland's neighborhood district coalitions (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 176336* 20 March 2002). A later ordinance added organizations that worked with communities of color and immigrants and refugees to the list (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 176884* 12 September 2002).

The program was not successful. Hoop says ONI had intended to spread the work across all the providers on the list by rotating the firms and organizations the offered to bureaus seeking public involvement assistance. While bureaus liked the much easier process of hiring providers from the list, they continued to insist on hiring the consulting firms they had used in the past and already were comfortable with. Some community organizations complained that they never received any business from city bureaus, despite being on the list. The project ultimately was abandoned and bureaus went back to managing their own public involvement services contracts (Hoop. Conversation with Leistner. February 16, 2011).

CIP Process: The ASR PI/PI committee recommended that ONI help bureaus coordinate community outreach and input on capital improvement project planning. During the summer and fall of 2001, ONI staff worked with the "CIP Oversight Committee" to host a series of four open houses for community members. City Council had created the CIP Oversight Committee to "better integrate Capital Improvement Project planning, funding, public involvement, design, and construction phases." Representatives of all the major city bureaus that planned and implemented capital improvement projects participated. The fall 2001 open houses were one of the committee's "core strategies" for public involvement.

A formal evaluation report on the open houses—completed shortly after they took place—stated that "dozens of city workers helped over a six to nine month period with event logistics, web and database design, developing literature, maps and displays." Eight city bureaus actively sponsored the events and two additional bureaus presented displays at the open houses. After all this effort, only 154 community members participated in the open houses (an average of 39 people per event). The evaluation notes that thousands of other community members "learned about CIP efforts through web site visits, media stories," and presentations at about 50 neighborhood meetings. City bureaus also contracted with four neighborhood district coalitions to help reach out to neighborhood associations to encourage people to come to the events (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Evaluation Report: City Wide CIP Open House: Fall 2001* December 2001).

The open houses included presentations by bureau staff about projects in the planning phase or moving toward implementation. Community members could visit display stations for different bureaus and receive information about that bureaus projects and talk directly to staff people. The open houses also unveiled a new, web-based source of information on capital improvement projects called "PortlandMaps."[48]

Positive outcomes recorded in the evaluation report included reports from bureau staff who appreciated the opportunity to build relationships and coordinate across different bureaus and from community members who like the "fair-like atmosphere," getting to learn about "multiple projects at one time, building relationships with project managers, speaking on-on-one with upper level fiscal managers, and picking up lots of handouts" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Evaluation Report*. December 2001 4).

Critiques of the open houses included feedback from bureau staff who questioned their value, given the low community attendance and high level of staff time that went into organizing the events (at some of the open houses, more city staff were present than community members). Some community members were frustrated that the events were designed for bureaus to provide information about their projects, but did not include formal opportunities for community members to share their priorities for capital improvement projects or their ideas or concerns about specific projects being planned or implemented.

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[48] In 2013, PortlandMaps.com continued to be a widely used resource for community members and city staff. Individuals can use the site to access a wide range of information about different property locations, including: permitting, property assessor information, crime statistics, zoning, and a wide array of information about different infrastructure (e.g. roads, sewer, water, parks, etc.) and capital projects in the surrounding area.

Suggestions for improvements in the future included: "organize one large event requiring multiple city staff attendance" instead of multiple citywide events; more focus on training city staff to "make presentations to each neighborhood association;" expanded "use of the web site to provide year-round education and input; " more "localized marketing of open houses to emphasize local neighborhood projects; " and a suggestion to "create a City Fair at Waterfront Park" where community members could come to "learn about all City services," such as "abandoned cards, building codes, etc." that would include other jurisdictions, such as Tri-Met (the regional transit agency) and Multnomah County (4).

The varied community feedback in the evaluation also shows that community members came to the events with a diversity of information needs and ability to provide meaningful feedback to city bureaus. Some people just want to know what was going on, while others wanted to provide much more in-depth input to city staff on their own priorities and on specific projects. This feedback again reaffirmed the need for city government community involvement to be designed for and relevant to different audiences in the community and to provide the opportunity for meaningful community input that could make a difference in city decision-making and project implementation.

Brian Hoop reported that the ONI and city bureaus, after the experience with the 2001 open houses, chose not to try to host similar coordinated citywide capital improvement community outreach events. Hoop says this was in large part due to the "sticker shock" bureaus felt because of the cost of the events and the high amounts of

staff time required to plan and implement them, especially given the low community

participation in the events.[49]

ONI Assistance with Bureau outreach projects: ONI also aggressively pursued

opportunities to provide direct community involvement services to other city bureaus—

another ASR recommendation. ONI staff began to help city bureaus design and

implement community involvement activities for a number of specific bureau projects.

ONI pursued this work without hiring additional staff. As a result, Hoop says he and the

other ONI staff person dedicated to community involvement soon found that nearly all of

their time was taken working on a number of very demanding projects for other bureaus

city bureaus during the early 2000s. Their work on these bureau projects resulted in their

having almost no time to devote to supporting and strengthening the neighborhood

system or other community capacity building.

Hoop said that by 2003, ONI started to pull back from this attempt to serve as a

community involvement contractor for other city bureaus. At that time, Hoop was the

sole ONI employee dedicated to supporting the neighborhood system. Hoop said his

major focus became supporting the third round of review and revision of the ONI

Standards and another major process to review and improve city government community

involvement, known as the 2003-2004 Public Involvement Task Force (described below).

Other ASR recommendations: Other recommendations of the ASR PI/PI

Committee were not implemented. The City Council did not create a central PIO position

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[49] It is interesting to note that community members, since the founding of the Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system in the 1970s, have continued to ask city government leaders and staff to provide opportunities for them to have a voice in determining priorities for the capital improvement projects. They also have asked that city bureaus do a better job of coordinating their projects in the community, and to provide a centralized source of information about city government capital projects.

or pursue the development of a coordinated strategy for city government communications. ONI also did not take on the formal role of reviewing most bureau community involvement plans and advising bureau staff on best practices. Community members and some city staff continued to call for better coordination and consistency of communications across city government as well as the need to improve the quality and consistency of community involvement by city agencies and leaders. Both issues would be a major focus on the Public Involvement Task Force.[50]

As described above, the ONI did try to implement some of the ASR recommendations to centralize public involvement services. Generally, these attempts were not successful and were not continued, in large part because the City Council did not make available the resources that would have been required to implement some of the recommendations. The ASR experiment also surfaced the important question of whether it was better for city agencies and the community to integrate public involvement into their agency's work and develop the internal capacity to plan for and implement community involvement rather than contracting out public involvement services to outside contractors or a centralized public involvement agency.

Commissioner Attempts to Improve the Neighborhood System

ONI Commissioner Dan Saltzman developed and attempted to implement number of ideas that he thought would improve Portland's neighborhood system. All the ideas ran into opposition from neighborhood district coalition leaders. Commissioner Francesconi,

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[50] These same issues still would be a subject of reform and improvement efforts ten years later by the City of Portland's Public Involvement Advisory Committee.

when he became the ONI Commissioner, advocated for the implementation of a
neighborhood grants program. This section examines each of these efforts.

Re-examine and Reconnect—2001: During the early 2000s, City
Commissioners in charge of ONI would engage in a number of different attempts to "fix"
Portland's neighborhood system. In March 2001, City Commissioner Dan Saltzman
surprised neighborhood association leaders at the 2001 Neighborhood Summit by
announcing his proposal to initiate yet another review of Portland's neighborhood
system, which he called "Re-examine and Reconnect." The *Oregonian* reported that
Saltzman told the assembled neighborhood leaders that Re-examine and Reconnect
would help broaden participation by neighborhood residents, "especially renters and
minorities," in their neighborhood association. The *Oregonian* quoted Saltzman as
saying, "We need to move away from structured connections and the them-or-us attitude
that is too often the way we do business." "With people moving around so much, I'd like
to see something like a welcome wagon in each neighborhood that would encourage
every new renter and homeowner to get involved." The *Oregonian* reported that many of
the neighborhood activists at the summit also said they "wanted to strengthen ties with
local business, school and civic organizations" (Fitzgibbon. *Oregonian*. March 5, 2001).

A press release from Saltzman's office about Re-examine and Reconnect stated
that it would be a "focused, systematic look at the neighborhood system." Saltzman said
that "Portland's landmark system of 95 neighborhood associations and public
involvement system is a leader worldwide," but that "To retain our leadership and to have
the best access for neighbors to their city government, we need to periodically take a hard

look at our system. We have to look at how our resources are spent and ask what can we do to make our system better" (Portland. City Commissioner Dan Saltzman. Press release. "Saltzman Announces New Neighborhood Focus" 7 March 2001).

The press release stated that Re-examine and Reconnect would focus on three key areas, which included: an investigation by ONI of "how best to support neighborhood associations and their connection to the coalitions;" how to "increase the number and representation of neighborhoods in our neighborhood associations; and an effort to "improve partnerships within the City and [an examination of] how to get more resources for neighborhoods and more involvement with neighbors."

Saltzman planned to have ONI reach out to "neighborhood associations, neighbors, and coalitions," "community partners" and "underserved communities" in a "bureau-wide effort to make sure that every aspect of ONI is exploring how to support neighborhoods and neighborhoods." ONI also would reach out to community partners and underserved communities, because, according to Saltzman, "If we want our neighborhood system to continue working, it has to include and represent **every** Portland neighbor" [emphasis in original]. Saltzman also made a point of mentioning in the press release his desire to establish "a way that neighbors are notified about their neighborhood associations when they move into a neighborhood."

Neighborhood coalition leaders pushed back immediately. One neighborhood coalition director emailed ONI Director David Lane a couple days after the Neighborhood Summit and noted that "Saturday was the first I had heard of this new campaign" and wondered "why this campaign is new news to me" given the long-

standing assumptions that "the coalition offices are and should be the key support system for neighborhood associations…." The neighborhood coalition director called for a discussion about "the goals of this effort and each party's roles" at the next monthly meeting of the neighborhood coalition directors and ONI. She emphasized that "integral to the neighborhood structure is the notion that the coalitions are free from the constraints of a city bureau and free to serve as advocates for the concerns of the neighborhoods." She urged the city to "consider looking at how it uses the neighborhood system and the role it expects citizens to play. Public involvement is much different than leadership development and organizing. I would love to see ONI get behind supporting the coalitions and neighborhood associations with the kind of resources it takes to develop a truly activist neighborhood association structure" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Email from Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong to David Lane and others, March 5, 2001).

David Lane emailed back right away saying that ONI planned to have neighborhood coalitions "play an integral role in 'Re-Examine and Reconnect'" and that "coalition staffs, their Boards, and their neighborhood associations," "many, many neighbors," ONI staff, other bureau staff, other community partners, and [City] Council offices" all would be involved as well (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Email from David Lane to Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong and others, March 5 2001).

In his email, Lane also suggested that Re-examine and Reconnect "complements and fits in well with several efforts (ongoing and soon-to-be-starting) which we've been discussing in the last weeks and months…." He said ONI proposed that the Re-examine

and Reconnect effort would combine a number of "already planned efforts into a 'focused systematic look" at Portland's neighborhood and public involvement system. Lane identified these other efforts as:

1. Implementation of the Administrative Services Review ("ASR") recommendations;

2. Review and development of the next iteration of the ONI Guidelines [required by City Code to be completed by 2002];

3. Development of a new coalition funding formula to ensure greater equity in the distribution of resources across the neighborhood system;

4. "[ONI] BAC discussion around funding and ONI programs in general….";

5. "Input from coalitions, boards, coalition staff about the roles of coalitions"; and

6. "Input from coalitions, boards, coalition staff and others about the need to document the purpose, roles, and effectiveness of coalitions and the neighborhood structure."

ONI documents show that ONI staff and the neighborhood coalition leaders began formal discussions about the goals, process, roles and timeline for Re-examine and Reconnect in late march at the monthly meeting of the coalition directors. One document prepared by ONI staff characterized the proposed Re-examine and Reconnect as a "review of how the neighborhood is working" as a complement to the ASR examination of the city government side of public involvement in Portland.

ONI staff and the neighborhood coalition directors continued to go back and forth about the goals, scope, timeline of Re-examine and Reconnect as well as the composition of the steering or advisory committee that would lead the process. ONI staff maintained that a key catalyst for the process had been "neighbors and neighborhood associations and coalition staff" who had "asked ONI and the coalitions to re-visit the [1996 TFNI Report], look at the role of ONI, look at what neighborhood offices should be doing, and figure out a way to get more money for neighborhood associations" and the ASR review of city public information and public involvement (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Joleen Classen, "overview of R&R spring 2001" [saved June 7, 2001]).

Coalition directors continued to be concerned that ONI was driving the process and not working in a partnership with the coalitions to develop the process. One coalition director argued that the "effort should be led by representatives from each of the affected parties" and noted that the scope of the project still was not clear—"Are we looking at ONI, all of its services and its constituents? Or are we looking exclusively at ONI/Coalition/NA."? She recommended that this "steering committee" should "define the goal of the effort," "define the process," "oversee implementation," and "make recommendations." She asked whether the goal of the project was to look at ways to "implement the recommendations of the 1996 Task Force? Are we looking to overhaul the system entirely? Are we looking to see if there are problems or are we assuming there are problems?"[51] She asked for a formal statement from Commissioner Saltzman on his

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[51] It is somewhat ironic that this same individual a few years later would oversee another major review of Portland neighborhood and community involvement system as a staff person in Mayor Tom Potter's office and would face many of the same questions by neighborhood activists and community members about the lack of clarity regarding the charge, goals and scope of that process. Some important lessons here are that

goals and intentions for the process and what commitments he would be willing to make. She also suggested that the process could be "an excellent opportunity to educate both the city and community about who we are and what we do." She suggested that the process mirror and support the Southeast Uplift neighborhood coalition's outreach and self assessment process for its neighborhood associations, known as the "Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative," and similar efforts by the Metropolitan Human Rights Center and Latino Network (i.e. the 2001-2003 Interwoven Tapestry Project described below) (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong. Memo to coalition directors and David Lane 2001).

At the same time that ONI staff were trying to work with coalition leaders to develop a process to move forward with Re-examine and Reconnect, Saltzman plunged the parties into further conflict by insisting that the neighborhood coalitions should compete for their traditional ONI contracts in an open bidding process.

Commissioner Saltzman's attempt to require district coalitions to compete for their ONI contracts: In the spring of 2001, Saltzman further strained his relationship with the neighborhood district coalitions by declaring that he was going to open up their long-standing ONI contracts to outside bidders and requiring them to compete against other potential providers to receive funding to support the neighborhood associations in their districts. David Lane said that "the coalitions…were uniformly upset" and refused to comply. Lane identified the resulting conflict between Saltzman

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good process design, and designing the process with input from the people you want to involve, is very, very important and that it is easier for people to identify poor process design in someone else's process than it is to ensure good process design and implementation in one's own processes.

and the neighborhood coalitions as the "biggest controversy" during his time as ONI

director (Lane. Email to Leistner, 2008).

Since the founding of Portland's neighborhood system ONA/ONI had contracted

with individual neighborhood district coalitions to provide public involvement and

capacity building services and support to the neighborhood associations in their districts.

ONA/ONI never had submitted the contracts to an open bidding process. David Lane

noted that Saltzman became aware that city government regulations required city

agencies to go through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process when engaging in contracts

over a certain dollar amount. Lane says that "Saltzman wanted to follow city law and

thought a competitive RFP would help support the coalitions as realistically few

organizations would meet the criteria of the RFP except for the existing coalitions" (Lane

2008).

One current coalition executive director who was in the same role at the time, said

that initially the coalitions "took a wait and see what it means approach" as they often did

with other city commissioner ideas on how to "fix" the neighborhood system. He said

that Saltzman and ONI staff told the coalitions that this is a chance to show their value by

bidding for these contracts. This coalition director said that the attitude of the coalitions

at the time was "why should we bid for what we are already doing?" They also asked,

"Who else could play this role?" given that district coalitions are defined in city code and

the ONI Guidelines are governed by a board of representatives of their neighborhood

associations. The executive director said that Saltzman stubbornly refused to back down,

and coalition representatives began to lobby other city commissioners to block

implementation of the requirement (Sieber. Phone conversation with Leistner, March 16, 2012).

In mid-April, neighborhood coalitions leaders issued a press release accusing Saltzman of acting hastily and "'radically undermining' the city's 27-year-old neighborhood system." They criticized Saltzman for dictating top-down changes instead of working in partnership with the district coalitions. Saltzman maintained that he wanted "the coalitions to address problems he sees with the neighborhood system, including difficulties between the coalitions and member neighborhood associations, and low involvement of new residents and minorities." The *Oregonian* quoted Saltzman as saying:

> In the two years I've been in charge of this bureau, I've found there are neighborhoods that question whether the coalitions are representing their interests." "I view this as an opportunity to ask the coalitions to make sure they are really representing the neighborhoods, and that to me is their mission in life.

Saltzman suggested that "other nonprofits such as the Urban League could bid on the services" (Learn. *Oregonian*, 20 April 2001).

Neighborhood coalition leaders argued that the neighborhood coalitions are governed by boards of directors made up of representatives from their member neighborhood associations and receive City funding through ONI to help their neighborhood associations and community members "weigh in on city policies." Some also raised concerns that ONI could use the contract bidding process to remove funding from and punish coalitions that pushed back to hard on the City on controversial issues thereby undermining the independent voice of the neighborhood system.

Saltzman also decided to require coalitions to submit letters of support from their member neighborhood associations and to require the coalitions to "develop outreach plans to renters, ethnic minorities and new residents" as part of the contract proposal process (Learn. *Oregonian* 9 May 2001). This in part was an attempt to respond to complaints from neighborhood associations that some coalitions were pursuing their own agendas and not providing adequate attention and service to their neighborhood associations (Learn. *Oregonian*, 20 April 2001) and an effort to increase the diversity of participation in neighborhood associations.

ONI's deadline for receiving proposals from the district coalitions for their ONI contracts was May 18. By mid-April, no other non-profit organizations had bid for the contracts, and the neighborhood coalitions continued to boycott meetings ONI tried to set up with them to explain the process by which they could submit their proposals (Learn. *Oregonian*, 20 April 2001).

Saltzman received little support from his fellow city commissioners. Neighborhood coalition leaders had mounted a lobbying campaign to encourage other city council members to oppose Saltzman's proposal. The *Oregonian* reported that, as of April 20, three of the five city council members (a majority of the city council) had asked Saltzman to withdraw his request that the district coalitions compete for their ONI funding. A article reported that City Commissioner Jim Francesconi said "The system is set up to have the neighborhood associations—not city officials—control the coalitions." The article quoted Francesconi as saying "The idea that we're going to pick neighborhood leaders from City Hall makes no sense to me." "The neighborhood

associations need to do more to represent the neighborhoods but this isn't the way to proceed." Another city council member, Erik Sten is quoted as saying "I think Dan has some pretty good points on things that could be improved, but it's not clear how this process is going to accomplish that." The article closed with Saltzman stating that he was "listening to what my colleagues have to say, but at this point I'm still committed to going ahead…and to just trying to de-escalate the situation" (Learn. *Oregonian*, 20 April 2001).

Neighborhood leaders appeared at the City Council's sole city budget hearing in the community at the end of April and again asked Saltzman to "back off putting neighborhood coalition services up for bid" (Learn. *Oregonian* 30 April 2001*).*

A few days later *Oregonian* columnist, Renee Mitchell (who often championed community causes) blasted Saltzman in her column and accused him of having "made a mockery of the bureau title under his charge: the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. She wrote that "there was no public involvement before Dan decided to tinker with a nationally admired model of citizen participation. No warning given to City Hall. And apparently no foresight into the firestorm this bright idea would generate." She asked "But how's this for a strategy to propose a significant change initiative: Don't ask for advice, don't think about the implications, and don't involve the stakeholders." Mitchell quoted one coalition volunteer leader who noted that the ONI/coalition contract says that ONI will come out and review each coalition's activities and finances. The coalition leader said "That's not been done for two years, and now they want to come out and tell us that we're not doing our job" (Mitchell. *Oregonian* 2 May 2001)?

Mitchell did recognize that "Dan's blundering, though, should not be used an excuse to hide from change. He actually does have good intentions despite a flawed process." "Yes, the coalitions need to be more accountable to the residents they were designed to serve. And, yes, they need to make an extra effort to reach out to renters, young families, low-income residents and recent immigrants." She gave Saltzman credit for embarking on the Re-Examine and Reconnect process to "recruit more residents to get involved in the process." But she also made the point that "those are also issues that can easily be negotiated in a yearly contract—tied with a few more dollars to make it happen." Mitchell closed her column with some lively advice for Saltzman: "Re-examine. Reconnect. Involve your constituents. Get a clue….It's time to cancel this power trip, Dan. Unpack your bags and make new reservations. 'Cause this bull-headed train ride will not take you where you really want to go."

Saltzman, finally bowed to weeks of pressure from neighborhood leaders, and, on May 8, withdrew his proposal to require neighborhood coalitions to complete for their contracts. Saltzman told the *Oregonian* that he still wanted to "consider bidding out services as part of a larger push to help associations diversify their membership" and wanted to change "this year's contract to ensure that the coalitions are meeting neighborhood needs." Saltzman claimed to have support from other city council members for the changes, but, the *Oregonian* reported that it was unclear whether coalition leaders who had opposed Saltzman would agree to the changes (Learn. *Oregonian* 9 May 2001).

ONI staff at the time and others report that they believed Saltzman lost interest in reforming the neighborhood system after his clashes with coalition leaders and turned his

attention elsewhere. Hoop said that ONI staff soon thereafter dropped the efforts to initiate the Re-examine and Reconnect review process, in part also because the city budget was heading for more cuts and no new funding likely would be available to implement any major recommendations that might come out of the process (Hoop. Email to Leistner, December 2, 2010).

The controversy over Saltzman's efforts to initiate the Reexamine-Reconnect process, require neighborhood coalitions to compete for their ONI contracts, and to impose additional contract requirements illustrate the danger of not following the basic principles of good public involvement (identified in many previous system reviews in Portland), especially within a community involvement system. The importance of city leaders having the interest in and ability to work effectively with the community would be reinforced again in the early 2000s.

City Commissioner Francesconi's Attempt to Create Neighborhood Grants Program: In June 2002, Mayor Katz reassigned responsibility for ONI from City Commissioner Dan Saltzman to City Commissioner Jim Francesconi. Francesconi served as the ONI commissioner for six months, from June 2002 through November 2002. Lane says that Francesconi continued the ONI staff reorganizations begun under Saltzman and oversaw the spinning off of the mediation services long provided by ONI's Neighborhood Mediation Program to the private, non-profit, Resolutions NW (Lane 2008).

One interesting initiative pursued during Francesconi's short tenure in charge of ONI was the attempt to create a neighborhood grants program. The 1996 TFNI report

recommended the creation of grant program. Brian Hoop, one of the two ONI staff

people who worked on developing the proposed grant program said interest in creating a

grants program even pre-dated the 1996 TFNI process. He said that in doing the research

to create the program proposal he talked with a former ONI employee who had

researched the development of a grant program years early and showed him two or three

binders of material from that process. Hoop also talked with Sam Adams, who, as Mayor

Katz's chief of staff, had researched the creation of a neighborhood grants program back

in the early-mid 1990s.[52]

In November 2002, City Council passed a resolution, prepared by ONI staff, that

directed ONI to create a neighborhood grants program. The resolution made the case for

the grants program by noting that "neighborhoods have a myriad of needs…that, if met

would improve the quality of our neighborhoods," and that the City Council "encourages

partnerships among neighbors, neighborhoods, businesses, and our City Bureaus" to

improve neighborhood livability, and that the neighborhood system and ONI encourage

"residents to be active stewards of their neighborhoods and to volunteer their time and

resources in their neighborhoods." The resolution also noted that other Cities had small

grants programs and, in particular, mentioned the City of Seattle's very successful

Neighborhood Matching Fund program, which had given out $4.5 million over the

previous two years to support local projects. The resolution also recognized that

"Portland's neighborhoods, businesses, and community groups have a strong history of

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[52] Adams, later, as a city council member, supported the neighborhood grants program implemented under Mayor Tom Potter and continued to support the program when he himself became Portland's mayor (from 2009 to 2012).

leveraging small funding opportunities into projects of immense community benefit," and

that "neighborhood projects involving the community encourage community cohesion,

self-reliance, and a sense of place in today's very mobile society. The resolution closed

by stated that while "neighborhood groups work very hard to leverage other community

resources" they had "very limited access to small grants" like the ones proposed by this

grant program. The resolution also recognized that the City Council would realize some

saving by contracting out mediation services formerly provided directly by ONI's

Mediation Center, which could be used to help fund the grant program. The resolution

directed ONI "to develop a neighborhood small grants program that allows

neighborhoods to leverage community resources, encourage volunteerism, and carry out

local projects," and directed ONI to "craft program guidelines, approval process, and

budget recommendations for Council review no later than February 1, 2003…" (Portland.

City Council. *Resolution 36110*, November 13, 2002).[53]

However, before much progress could be made on moving forward with the grant

program, Mayor Katz, in January 2002, reassigned responsibility over ONI to City

Commissioner Randy Leonard. Hoop says the neighborhood grants program was not a

priority for Leonard, and ONI staff stopped working on the project. Leonard was to bring

to his new leadership role over ONI his own ideas for significantly redirecting the focus

of ONI and the neighborhood coalitions away from community empowerment and

toward using the system to provide city services at the neighborhood level. Leonard's

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[53] Mayor Katz, in her "mayor's message" that accompanied the FY 1996-97 City Budget reported that $750,000 had been allocated, in response to the TFNI Report, to fund a neighborhood grants program. The funding for the grant program would be directed to other city priorities that budget year, and the grant program was not established.

leadership over ONI led to some of the most significant conflicts between the ONI Commission and neighborhood activists since the founding of the neighborhood system.

By the early 2000s, repeated reviews of various aspects of Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system had revealed a fairly consistent assessment of what was and was not working. The clear challenge was how to develop design a process to develop a strategy to identify positive reforms and how to implement it successfully.

On the community side neighborhood associations and other community groups needed more capacity and resources, and needed to do a better job of involving a greater diversity of the their communities. Neighborhood associations and coalitions both needed to find ways to reach out to and be more responsive to their community members and member neighborhood associations, respectively.

On the city government side, city leaders and staff continued to be criticized for not involving the community effectively. People inside city government needed help in seeing the community as an important part of their work and in developing the skills to engage the community collaboratively and constructively in ways that would give community members the opportunity to shape local priorities and decision making.

Both community members and city government leaders and staff appeared not to have a clear sense of how to act on the problems and solutions that had been identified. Many people felt ONI could play a valuable role, but disagreed on what that role should be. At the same time, no one on the city council, acted as a strong political champion for public involvement or provided effective leadership to identify a reasonable path forward

and the policy and program changes the would be needed and to advocate the resources to develop and implement them.

Saltzman and ONI—under David Lane's leadership—put significant energy in trying to move the agenda forward on both the city government and community sides. Unfortunately their efforts were too "top-down" and did not seem to be grounded adequately in the actual needs and interests of neighborhood activists and community organizations or of city bureau staff.

ONI's effort to improve city government public involvement through centralization of community involvement services in ONI was not successful. City bureaus resisted because they wanted to retain control and preferred the status quo. While they were happy to have ONI take over the administrative work of getting access to public involvement consultants, they were not interested in hiring neighborhood coalitions or community organizations to do the work, preferring to go with the consultants they had used in the past. The City Council did not strongly support the policy changes or funding needed to implement many other ASR PI/PI recommendations, such as having ONI review bureau public involvement plans or a centralized effort to increase the quality and consistency of city communications with the community.

A question also arose over the value of centralizing public involvement service delivery in a single agency in city government and encouraging city bureaus to contract out their public involvement needs versus integrating planning for and implementation of public involvement services as an important part of the substantive work of each bureau.

Another related question that arose is over the extent to which ONI and the neighborhood coalitions should devote energy to competing to provide direct public involvement services to city bureaus versus focusing their staff and resources on their traditional role of community empowerment, capacity building, and supporting what one coalition director described as a "truly activist neighborhood association structure" with a strong focus on developing leadership capacity and helping community members organize and have a voice in local decision making. community activism.

Saltzman's actions and comments seemed to support David Lane's contention that city council members thought that they had "fixes" that would solve the problems they saw with the neighborhood system. Saltzman's actions and comments give the strong impression that he felt that the coalitions needed to be reined in and redirected. His attempts to impose new requirements on the neighborhood coalitions without involving them were unsuccessful. They instead generated opposition in the community and undermined trust in ONI's intentions. Coalitions used their ability to organize and apply political pressure on other city council members to stop Saltzman's proposed changes.

Other city council members, even though they thought the neighborhood system had problems, had little political incentive to support Saltzman's proposals especially when they had no authority over or direct responsibility for ONI or for fixing the problems. Lane said he was frustrated by the fact that "behind close[d] doors, every city commissioner and the Mayor was VERY critical of the coalitions and NA system and had ideas on how to fix it. Yet when each ONI commissioner tried to openly address the issues, the other commissioners' public stance was vastly different." Lane says that

during his time with ONI, Mayor Katz and her chief of staff Sam Adams (who later successfully ran for a seat on the city council and then served as Portland's mayor from 2008 to 2012) "were notably silent on virtually all ONI initiatives except for budget— which they usually cut or questioned." Lane, in reflecting on his time as ONI director, said he wished, "in hindsight, that I had funds to bring in outside review to facilitate an open dialogue about the function and role of ONI" (Lane 2008).

The lack of city council consensus on and support for any particular strategy for improving the system made it difficult to move forward. Four different city commissioners were responsible for ONI during Mayor Katz's twelve years as mayor. Mayor Katz herself did not articulate any particular vision for the system (her annual budget messages rarely mention community involvement and focused more on community members as "customers" of city services rather than active partners in governance). As Katz shifted responsibility for ONI from one city commissioner to another, each commissioner tried to pursue their own strategy for "fixing" the system, usually with little input from the community. ONI staff provided some continuity and pushed from behind the scenes for more funding for the system and for programs like the neighborhood small grants program.

Portland would continue to struggle with how to improve the neighborhood and community involvement system during the early 2000s. However, some very good deeper thinking began to take place on how to reach out to and involve immigrants and refugees and other groups that historically had been underrepresented in Portland

community and neighborhood involvement and in local decision making and on how to improve city government public involvement.

From 2001 to 2003, ONI and community members would explore better ways to involve immigrants and refugees through the "Interwoven Tapestry" project. Then Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition would take the lead in initiating and supporting a community discussion about how the neighborhood system could do a better job of involving historically underrepresented communities, especially communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities. On the city government side, community members and city staff would support the creation of a new task force to follow up on the ASR PI/PI report and take a much deeper look at how to improve the quality and consistency of city government public involvement—this new group was known as the Public Involvement Task Force (2003-04).

On the political front, rather than working more collaboratively with neighborhood and community leaders and groups, City Commissioner Randy Leonard took responsibility for ONI in January 2002 with an even more aggressive, top down and un-collaborative approach to imposing his ideas for "fixing" ONI and the neighborhood system. Leonard's heavy handed approach would lead to some of the most intense clashes between city government and neighborhood activists in the system's history and make the need to reconnect the community and city government a driving issue in the 2004 mayoral and city council election.

Communities Beyond Neighborhood Boundaries—Reaching Beyond Traditional
Neighborhood Associations

Many of the reviews of the Portland neighborhood and community involvement

system in the 1990s and early 2000s highlighted the need to increase the diversity of

people involved in Portland's neighborhood system and to improve city government's

outreach to and involvement of a greater diversity of Portlanders. This section describes

some of ONI's structural and programmatic efforts to respond to this need—some were

effective and others were not. This section also describes two major efforts to increase

the involvement of historically underrepresented groups in civic life in Portland:

Interwoven Tapestry and Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition's Diversity and

Representation Committee and Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee.

Portland Future Focus (PFF) had called for greater community involvement in

local governance and civic life and greater recognition of the growing diversity of people

living in Portland. PFF particularly called on ONA, neighborhood associations and

neighborhood coalitions to do a much better job of reaching out to and involving

historically underrepresented groups in Portland.

The first City Budget adopted after PFF (FY 1991-92), for the first time, formally

stated that ONA's responsibilities included involving diverse communities. The

document stated that "The overall mission of the Office of Neighborhood Associations is

to provide advocacy and direct avenues for citizen participation in local government

decision-making processes and to promote neighborhood livability through the

involvement of citizens in the life of the community." The budget directed ONA to

increase the "effectiveness of citizen participation in City government" and to "Increase representation of Portland's diverse communities in ONA programs" and to work with neighborhood and community representatives to develop and implement a plan to "enhance cultural diversity in ONA programs" before the end of the fiscal year (Portland. *City Budget* FY 1991-92 204).

In 1996, the Neighborhood Involvement Task Force (TFNI) again advocated for broader involvement in the neighborhood system and recommended that a strategy be developed to reach out to and involve "communities beyond neighborhood boundaries"— communities in which people found their sense of community, not through a connection with the people in their physical neighborhood, but with people with whom they shared cultural ties. The TFNI particularly highlighted the need to reach out to and involve immigrant and refugee communities.

Changes at ONI: The 1996 TFNI task force established a strategic vision for a Portland's community involvement system that built on Portland's traditional geographic neighborhood system but recognized that the system needed to expand to involve people who defined their community through shared identity rather than geography. In the following years, city commissioners and ONI staff attempted to implement some of the TFNI recommendations.

In 1998, the City Council, implemented an TFNI recommendation and changed ONA's name to the "Office of Neighborhood Involvement" (ONI). The City Council justified the change by stating that ONA's "role in coordinating and facilitating citizen

participation activities extends beyond the basic foundation of the neighborhood association system" (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 35667*, January 7, 1998).

The City Council, at the same time, adopted the 1998 revision of the ONA Guidelines. The 1998 revision, in addition to updating rules for neighborhood associations and coalitions also included for the first time mechanisms by which "neighborhood business associations and ethnic communities beyond neighborhood boundaries" could be "acknowledged as important aspects of Portland's neighborhood association system…" (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 35667*, January 7, 1998).

1998 ONA Guidelines—CBNBs: The 1998 ONA Guidelines defined Communities Beyond Neighborhood Boundaries (CBNBs) as: "ethnically based community organizations whose members face unique differences, particularly in the areas of language and cultural adjustment" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Guidelines for Neighborhood Associations…*, 1998 2).

The Guidelines offered CBNBs the opportunity to be "acknowledged" formally by ONI if they met the following requirements:

- Be registered as a nonprofit corporation with the State of Oregon;

- Have bylaws that asserted that no "dues or other contributions or fees" were required to be a member of the organization; and

- Be included on the "data/mailing list maintained by the [ONI] Metropolitan Human Rights Center. (MHRC) in coordination with the [ONI] Refugee Coordinator" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Guidelines for Neighborhood Associations…*, 1998 18).

An acknowledged CBNB was to receive the following benefits and services:

- ONI would help the CBNB receive "public notices and mailings from the bureaus of the City of Portland on livability issues, decision-making processes, and policy development….";

- At the CBNB's request, ONI would send the organization "newsletters and neighborhood information from ONI, the district coalitions/neighborhood offices, and from neighborhood associations…."; and

- ONI would "make every attempt to ensure" that a CBNB organization that requested specific land use notices for a specific geographic area would receive them (18).

The Guidelines encouraged CBNB organizations to communicate with neighborhood associations, district neighborhood bodies, and neighborhood business associations on "pertinent matters and issues of mutual interest" and to seek opportunities to discuss taking action on these issues (19). The 1998 Guidelines also required CBNB organizations to "encourage their members to participate directly in appropriate neighborhood business associations," "work with neighborhood associations to facilitate such participation," and encouraged them to seek mediation assistance if disagreements arose between their organizations and any neighborhood associations, district coalitions, business associations, other CBNB's, or other entities (19).

The Guidelines language appears to view CBNBs as though they were "membership organizations" similar to neighborhood associations and business district associations. The requirements and services offered in the Guidelines was similar to that

offered to neighborhood associations. The primary benefit ONI offered to CBNB organizations was the receipt of mailings and notices from city bureaus and other organizations in the ONI network.

An interesting clue to the degree to which the neighborhood leaders and ONI were committed to CBNB involvement was that the 1998 Guidelines stated that "Delivery of these services and any others that CBNBs may receive are dependent upon the resources available to ONI, the district coalitions, and neighborhood associations"—a requirement that was not applied to services to neighborhood associations (19). The 1998 Guidelines included a similar caveat with regard to services to business associations (17).

1998 ONA Guidelines—Business Associations: The 1998 ONA Guidelines also offered business associations the opportunity to apply for formal acknowledgement. The Guidelines defined "neighborhood business association" as "an organization within a specific geographic area, often along a commercial strip or in an industrial area, which promotes the general well-being of the business community and neighborhoods in that area" (1).

The requirements and benefits for business associations were more similar to those for neighborhood associations than were the requirements for CBNBs. The 1998 Guidelines required acknowledged business associations to be a registered non-profit corporation, open their membership to any business licensee or commercial property owner in their district, clearly define the association's geographic boundaries in the organizations bylaws, not charge dues, not discriminate against individuals or groups, and file its current bylaws with ONI. The 1998 Guidelines also required that the business

association bylaws include provisions for "adopting and amending bylaws, establishing a quorum, and setting the agenda," establish a formal grievance resolution process, provide for regular meetings, and follow to the same open meeting and open records requirements that applied to neighborhood associations (15-16).

The 1998 ONA Guidelines encouraged business associations to affiliate with the citywide coalition through which the City coordinated its interactions with business associations (i.e., the non-profit Association for Portland Neighborhood Business Associations (APNBA)) and to "attend and participate in" and communicate with the appropriate neighborhood associations, district coalitions, and CBNB organizations in their area. Business associations were encouraged to seek mediation to resolve disagreements with other community organizations in the ONI system (16-17).

The 1998 ONA Guidelines offered acknowledged business associations a higher level of support than that was offered to acknowledged CBNBs. Like the CBNBs, ONI would include acknowledged business associations in the ONI Neighborhood Directory, which many City bureaus used to mail out notices and information on "livability issues" and decision-making and policy processes. Unlike the CBNBs, the 1998 ONA Guidelines also offered additional support to business associations, including "assistance with general communications, newsletter production and distribution, activity planning, public relations, and general information and referral, with the caveat that ONI only would provide these services if resources were available (17).

Hoop remembers that when David Lane first hired him to work at ONI in 2000, Lane asked him to look into the CBNB issue and see what could be done to move it along

(Hoop, May 29 2013). In the fall of 2002, Hoop and the committee preparing the next revision of the ONI Guidelines (known as the GREAT Committee (Guidelines Review, Empowerment, and Assessment Taskforce) reviewed the impact of the CBNB acknowledgement provisions in the 1998 ONA Guidelines. They found that no community organizations eligible for CBNB status had applied to ONI for formal acknowledgement.

The GREAT Committee members asked Hoop to reach out to nearly 100 organizations representing communities-of-color and immigrant and refugee groups to raise awareness of and ask for their assessment of the value of this opportunity.[54] After distributing a survey and directly contacting many of the organizations, Hoop reported back that these organizations were not interested in what ONI was offering—primarily inclusion on the formal on list of community organizations and public notices from city bureaus. Hoop concluded that "there is a growing clarity that the CBNB policy is an ineffectual and insignificant opportunity for expanding public involvement for communities of color." Hoop found that what these organizations did want was to hold "City bureaus accountable to incorporating outreach to people of color in their public involvement strategies" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Interwoven Tapestry Project Monthly Update*. December 2002). and funding support from ONI—similar to the City's funding support for neighborhood coalitions and neighborhood associations (Hoop. Conversation with Leistner. May 29, 2013).

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[54] The requirements in the 1998 ONA Guidelines really did not fit most of these organizations. Many were more likely to be community advocacy groups and/or groups that provided services to members of the ethnic community they served, rather than "membership" organizations like neighborhood associations.

Members of the Southeast Uplift Diversity and Representation Committee (DRC) (described in more detail below) offered a number of suggestions for language to strengthen the relationship with and opportunities for CBNBs. According to Brian Hoop, the co-chairs of the GREAT Committee did not have a strong interest in or strongly support addressing CBNB's in the ONI Guidelines. Moshe Lenske, one of the co-chairs, talked with the DRC members at one of their meetings in June 2003. He discussed a number of challenges GREAT Committee members had in trying to formalize roles and responsibilities for CBNBs in the ONI Guidelines when no program yet had been established to define the relationship between ONI and the CBNBs, especially given that no CBNB had applied for the formal acknowledgement the 1998 ONA Guidelines offered them.

Ultimately, the GREAT Committee dropped the references to CBNB's from the ONI Guidelines 2005 and instead included language that directed ONI and the neighborhood coalitions to develop action plans to reach out to and involve individual and organizations from under-represented communities.

Business associations also showed little interest in formal acknowledgement by ONI.[55] Similar to the CBNB's, no business associations ever applied for the ONI acknowledgement offered in 1998 ONI Guidelines. Business associations did not want to have to comply with the ONI requirements (e.g. no dues, open meetings, etc.). They were more interested in advocating with the City for the interests of their local businesses than

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[55] It's interesting to note that the lack of interest by business association in a relationship with ONI was predicted in 1992 by the two business association focus group participants in Margaret Strachan's report. They had said that business associations thought PDC was a better fit to support business associations.

being part of a broader city-wide community involvement network. Business associations continued to organize through the APNBA and to advocate for additional City funding support. ONI ended up including business associations in the ONI Directory anyway, which allowed them to receive formal notices from city bureaus. The City continued to provide some financial support to the APNBA to support business associations but did so outside the ONI network.[56]

ONI's effort to expand Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system by offering formal acknowledgment to CBNBs and business associations was not successful. No eligible CBNB or business association ever asked to be acknowledged by ONI. Hoop later remembered that neither Mayor Katz nor the other city council members saw engaging CBNBs as a priority. As a result, the committee that reviewed and revised the 1998 ONI Guidelines dropped the CBNB language from the 2005 version of the ONI Standards (Hoop May 29, 2013). The GREAT committee instead included language directing ONI and the neighborhood coalitions to make an effort to reach out to and include a greater diversity of community members. Also, no business association ever applied for formal acknowledgement from ONI. In 2013, as ONI prepares for the next review and update of the ONI Standards, one of the items up for discussion is dropping the business association section that remains in the 2005 ONI Standards.

ONI MHRC and Refugee Coordinator: The 1998 ONI Guidelines required potential CBNB's to be included in the list of organizations maintained by the ONI

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[56] Under Mayor Sam Adams (2008 to 2012), the City continued to support business associations through the Portland Development Commission which provided financial support to the APNBA (later called Venture Portland), including a significant small grants program that supported individual business association projects.

MHRC and the Refugee Coordinator. Both of these ONI programs already were providing some support and assistance to a wide range of diverse communities and historically under represented communities.

The Refugee/Immigrant Coordinator position at ONI was created in 1980 to "serve the growing refugee and immigrant communities in Portland." For many years, it was part of ONI's Crime Prevention Program and focused on "resolving crime problems involving members of the refugee community" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 1989-99 168). The FY 99-00 City Budget document identified the position as assisting "Portland's 24 refugee and immigrant communities in their resettlement efforts," and provided "City officials and staff improved access to and understanding of the different communities and individuals" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 1999-00 502). In the early 2000s, the position was included under the organizational umbrella of the MHRC.

The roots of the MHRC were established in 1950 when "the City of Portland formed the Portland Inter-Group Relations Commission to advise the Mayor on multicultural relations. In 1969, Multnomah County joined Portland, and the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission was created." While the name of the MHRC changed over time (from a "commission" to a "center"), the city-county partnership continued, and the basic mission remained the same: "To foster mutual understanding and respect and to protect the human rights of all persons...regardless of socio-economic status, religion, ethnicity, race, national origin, disability, age, gender, and sexual orientation." In 1979, the Disability Project was added to the MHRC (Portland. *City Budget* FY 1999-00 504).

In 1989, the City Council transferred the MHRC and two other entities from the City's Human Resources Bureau to ONI (the other two were the Metropolitan Youth Commission and the City/County Commission on Aging). The FY 89-99 City Budget justified the move by saying that "The youth, aging and human rights constituencies are a natural complement to the neighborhood network in that they serve as a vehicle for citizen participation and advocacy on social issues of concern to neighborhoods. The agendas of both programs will be enhanced by integration into one bureau. The agendas of both programs will be enhanced by integration into one bureau" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 1989-90 134).

The FY 91-92 City Budget identified the purpose of the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission as providing "resources for evaluating public programs for non-discrimination and to promote equal opportunity. The program handles complaints on civil and human rights, facilitates mediation and provides education for the development of improved intergroup relations" and researched "issues of discrimination," disseminated information to the public" and provide advocacy and information and referral support (Portland. City Budget FY 1991-92 204).

Ten years later, the FY 01-02 City Budget described the purpose of the Metropolitan Human Rights Center (MHRC) as reaching out to:

> both individuals as they confront their own human rights problems and the community at large as it faces overriding human rights issues. The MHRC maintains a broad base of information and has established a strong capacity to listen to civil rights complaints and troubleshoot the process. The MHRC Disability Project has been a prime mover toward universal access in the city and county for people with disabilities. Likewise, MHRC's free Anti-Bias Training Program, Dynamic Differences, and its Community Dialogues on Race Relations,

foster a climate of mutual understanding and respect for all members of the community (399).

The same budget document described the Refugee/Immigrant Coordination program as working "to coordinate the information and service needs of Portland's refugee and immigrant communities. Working with organizations as well as individuals, the Refugee and Immigrant Coordinator helps these communities work with law enforcement and other agencies to effectively provide services and resolve problems" (400).

However, the MHRC and Refugee Coordinator positions were on their way out. The FY 03-04 City Budget, eliminated the Refugee and Immigrant Coordinator position (403), and the following year, the City Council effectively eliminated the MHRC "after three years of budget cuts by both the City and Multnomah County." The MHRC nominally was combined with ONI's Citizen Participation program, which primarily supported the neighborhood system, to create a new Neighborhood Resource Center. The budget document states that "While NRC will retain some human rights-related information and referral and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) functions, it will mainly focus on providing support and technical assistance to Portland's neighborhood system" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 2003-04 410). The MHRC manager, Amalia Alarcón de Morris, became the manager of the new Neighborhood Resource Center, which primarily provided support to the Portland's neighborhood association system.

While the MHRC and Refugee Coordinator provided some services to communities of color and immigrants and refugees, these programs did not focus on

bringing these groups formally into Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system as envisioned in the TFNI.

In the years after the TFNI report was released, ONI staff worked on and advocated for structure and program changes to better serve historically-underrepresented communities. These efforts were not a priority for Mayor Katz or other city council members. In fact, a number of programs and structures originally intended to engage a greater diversity of people and perspectives in the community were eliminated. The CBNB language in the ONA Guidelines was dropped and the MHRC and Refugee Coordinator programs were discontinued.[57] The City Council also shifted the Youth Commission out of ONI to Multnomah County and dissolved both the Disabilities Commission and Human Rights Commission.[58]

One initiative that did make a difference was ONI's involvement in the Interwoven Tapestry Project. This three-year project helped lay the foundation that finally led to the formal inclusion and funding of communities of color and immigrant and refugee organizations within the ONI structure.

Interwoven Tapestry: From 2001-2003, ONI's MHRC partnered with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) to administer and support an innovative project called "Interwoven Tapestry." The project was intended to help

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[57] In 2003, the Diversity and Accessibility Workgroup of the City of Portland Public Involvement Task Force noted that City bureaus and ONI had had "minimal success in engaging diverse constituencies traditionally not engaged in City public involvement efforts" and that the defunding of the MHRC led to the loss of a "key resource in the City's ability to build relationships with diverse community leadership and organizations." (Portland. Public Involvement Task Force. *Accessibility Workgroup Priority Recommendations* November 17, 2003.)

[58] Mayor Tom Potter a few years later would reestablish the Disabilities Commission and the Human Rights Commission. He also created a new Human Relations Office that took up many of the training and awareness raising activities of the MHRC.

immigrants and refugees in Portland and local neighborhood associations learn about each other and facilitate immigrants and refugees becoming more involved in local civic life.[59].

Interwoven Tapestry was part of a national project lead by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and funded primarily by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement called "Building the New American Community" (BNAC). The project sought to explore ways in which "governments and civil society can co-operate to achieve positive integration outcomes." The project focused on building relationships between local organizations and institutions that worked with immigrants and refugees and "receiving communities" to "capitalize on existing resources and opportunities, as well as to foster two-way integration" (Migration Policy Institute. *Building the New American Community*. Executive Summary 2004 1).

Four principles guided the BNAC initiative's concept of successful integration:"

1. "New Americans should be involved significantly in decision-making processes."

2. "Integration is a two-way process that implicates and benefits both new Americans and receiving community members."

3. 'Coalitions are among the vehicles that can foster effective and meaningful collaborations in order to tackle the numerous challenges and opportunities associated with socio-economic, cultural and demographic change. These involve public-private partnerships that reach across levels of government and

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[59] The Portland City Council authorized ONI's participation in the Interwoven Tapestry project through its adoption of Ordinance 176247 on February 6, 2002.

include a broad array of non-governmental organizations, as well as

institutions and individuals from many different segments of society;" and

4. "Resources should be devoted to <u>integration-focused interventions</u>, as well as

coalition building and training opportunities, which lead to systemic change"

[emphasis in original] (Migration Policy Institute. *Building the New American*

Community. Executive Summary. 2004 1).

Initially, both the ONI MHRC and IRCO independently submitted proposals for

funding under this grant. NCSL responded that, while both proposals had value, NCSL

only would consider funding one project in Portland and encouraged MHRC and IRCO

to join forces on the project—which they did. They called their project "Interwoven

Tapestry" [60] (Alarcón de Morris. Conversation with Leistner. June 3 2013). Ultimately,

the NCSL chose to fund projects in three cities: Portland, Oregon; Lowell,

Massachusetts; and Nashville, Tennessee (Migration Policy Institute. Building the New

American Community. [no date]. Web.

<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/BNAC_REPT_SUM.pdf> . Downloaded on May

28, 2013).

NCSL required each project to assemble a coalition of partner organizations that

would develop and implement a plan for the project. ONI MHRC and IRCO led the

coalition of organizations for Portland. The coalition partners represented an array of

immigrant and refugee organizations and neighborhood groups including: three

neighborhood coalitions (Central Northeast Neighbors, Northeast Coalition of

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[60] Charles Shi had used a similar term for one of his proposals to serve "communities beyond neighborhood boundaries" during the 1995-1996 TFNI process.

Neighborhoods, and Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition), immigrant and refugee community organizations focused on particular cultural groups (African Refugee and Immigrant network of Oregon (ARINO), Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), Latino Network, and Russian Oregon Social Services), and organizations with a broader focus (ONI, Oregon State Refugee Program, Portland Public Schools/ESL-Bilingual Program, Refugee/Immigrant Consortium of Oregon and Southwest Washington).

Interwoven Tapestry brought together leaders of immigrant and refugee organizations with a strong interest in helping their communities have a greater voice and role in local decision making and civic life and neighborhood coalition leaders and staff interested in building bridges between neighborhood associations and immigrants and refugees who lived in their areas. These individuals met regularly during the course of the project. Together, they conducted a needs assessment and developed an overall strategy and work plan for the project.

Some of the challenges the group identified early on in the process included:

- "Distinguishing between newly-arrived and established immigrant/refugee communities"

- "Distinguishing the various assets/needs of each community"

- "Lack of information about population and demographics"

- "Honoring diversity vs. homogenization"

- "Working with cultural differences (i.e. nuances, gender roles, communication styles, etc.)"

- "Current outreach strategies do not include all immigrant/refugee communities"

- "Current outreach strategies do not acknowledge existing leadership within immigrant/refugee communities"

- "Not enough participation/representation of diverse communities at all levels"

- "Not enough culturally-specific, culturally-appropriate, culturally-relevant activities"

- [lack of] "Representation in mainstream media" (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. Receiving Community Retreat, Saturday, August 25, 2001, "Tapestry Community Group Recommenations.doc" [saved September 17, 2001]).

The Interwoven Tapestry Advisory Committee members designed and implemented many different actions, events and products to respond to these challenges. Some of the primary activities and products included:

Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan: The Interwoven Tapestry Advisory Committee members worked together to assess the needs in the community and to establish the goals and workplan for the project. They also reviewed what was working and was not and made adjustments to the workplan during the process.

Workshops for emerging immigrant and refugee leaders: The Interwoven Tapestry Advisory Committee designed and hosted a series of workshops for community leaders and members from the immigrant and refugee communities represented by the coalition partners. The workshops helped create "a space for developing a shared analysis

specific to the challenges facing our communities." Interwoven Tapestry Advisory Committee members based the workshop design on the "popular education model, which encourages participants to work with their own knowledge and experience to develop strategies to improve their situations" (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. Accomplishments 2001-2003,""Accomplishments 4.10.03.doc" [saved on April 22, 2003]).

Workshops for neighborhood leaders and activists: The Interwoven Tapestry Advisory Committee developed a series of workshop for the "receiving community"—targeted primarily at neighborhood association leaders and volunteers. These workshops were "intended to promote awareness of immigrant and refugee issues" and to "improve the readiness of the mainstream community in their struggle to improve immigrant and refugee integration." The workshop topics included: "Immigrant and Refugee Cultural Overview," "Shifting Neighborhood Demographics," "Racism," and "Outreach Strategies to New Neighbors." The workshops were well attended. Participants included "neighborhood activists and mainstream service providers seeking cultural competency training and ways to connect to immigrants in their neighborhoods" (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. *Accomplishments 2001-2003* 2003).

Conference: In September 2002 Interwoven Tapestry hosted a one-day community conference called "Our Community, Our Voice: Making Change Happen." Over 200 people came to discuss "how immigrant, refugee, and mainstream communities can improve integration through education, advocacy, and policy analysis." Specific discussion topics included: "New federal policies, citizenship, utilizing the media,

popular education, media literacy, voter education, leadership development, parent

involvement, oral history and a three part workshop series targeted to mainstream [e.g.

neighborhood association] groups" (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry.

Accomplishments 2001-2003).

Small Grants Program: The purpose of the small grants program was to "foster

integration by funding projects that encourage civic participation and community

engagement between refugee and newcomer communities." A project summary stated

that "These small grants brought groups of people together [and] built relationships

between groups that that haven't existed before. The small grants projects supported

understanding and collaboration between New Americans and the main stream through

events and projects." "The 2002 grant cycle funded 6 projects for a total of $11,000." The

2003 grant cycle gave out $11,350 in competitive grants to ten projects and $10,000 for

one non-competitive project (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. *Accomplishments*

2001-2003). Some examples of grant projects include "a community garden, a forum

with state legislators and participation in local business district and transportation plans"

(Migration Policy Institute. Press Release. December 9, 2004).

Other Interwoven Tapestry achievements and products included:

Support for Slavic and African Coalitions: Interwoven Tapestry helped the Slavic

and African communities, which had not been well organized before, become better

organized. Interwoven Tapestry supported the coordinators of these groups in their

leadership roles and helped organize "events, trainings and meetings for the

coalitions…." An Interwoven Tapestry summary document stated that this "support to the

African and Slavic coalitions has been critical to their development" and increased the self sufficiency of each coalition (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. *Accomplishments 2001-2003*).

Directory of Immigrant and Refugee resources: ONI staff helped develop a resource directory of immigrant and refugee communities for use by neighborhood associations "and other mainstream organizations" to "better understand how to reach and work with immigrant and refugee groups." The directory listed 250 listed community-based organizations for both immigrants and refugees and for communities of color (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. *Accomplishments 2001-2003*).

Citizen Involvement Handbook**:** ONI staff led the effort to develop a handbook, "Making Room at the Table" for neighborhood association leaders. This "how-to manual" was intended to help neighborhood association leaders "build relationships with immigrants and refugee groups" and included "information about how to make meetings more culturally appropriate and accessible to immigrants." The handbook drew on materials developed for the September 2002 conference to help the "mainstream community" "build working relationship with diverse racial and cultural groups" (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. *Accomplishments 2001-2003*).

Interwoven Tapestry also had other positive effects. Members of the organizing committee and ONI staff successfully advocated that the subsequent Public Involvement Task Force (which would examine how to improve overall community involvement by city government) specifically consider how City bureaus could do a better job of reaching out to and involving immigrant and refugee communities.

Interwoven Tapestry paid special attention to increasing services to and encouraging youth involvement. Project staff and coalition immigrant and refugee leaders reviewed and provided input "on policy development, planning, and implementation" of Multnomah County's "new policy framework" for 'assessing the County's impact on refugee youth. As a result, the County expanded this policy to recognize that African and Slavic youth need "culturally specific services" (Portland. Project Interwoven Tapestry. *Accomplishments 2001-2003*).

Critics of Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system for many years had said the system needed to do a better job of reaching out to and involving historically underrepresented communities in Portland. The Interwoven Tapestry Project offered interesting insights into what it would take to achieve and sustain this. Rather than just trying to get more people to neighborhood association meetings, Interwoven Tapestry took a much more sophisticated and multi-layered approach.

Interwoven Tapestry strongly focused on bringing together affected and interested parties and to collaboratively assess and define community needs and then develop and implement an action plan designed to meet them. The project raised awareness and built capacity and skills among both immigrant and refugee communities and neighborhood association leaders and activists. Interwoven Tapestry also stressed the importance of building relationships between individuals as a foundation for future progress. The project also pushed resources out into the community through the grant program and gave people a reason and the means to work together. Funding and strong staff support were vital to the project's success.

Amalia Alarcón de Morris, who led the Interwoven Tapestry Project for the ONI MHRC later reflected on the Interwoven Tapestry project and its longer-term impacts. Alarcón said Interwoven Tapestry helped reveal that before immigrants and refugees can integrate with main stream structures and processes they first need to organize within their own communities; then they need to build relationships and work with other similar groups; and then they can engage much more effectively with mainstream society.

Alarcón said that Interwoven Tapestry helped immigrant and refugee organizations start working together. When Interwoven Tapestry organizers asked a number of different immigrant groups, at the outset of the process, whether they wanted to work together, the groups said "no." Alarcón said the groups had not worked together in the past and did not trust each other. They did not see that they shared common interests. Alarcón said that by the end of the Interwoven Tapestry process, when these same groups were asked if they wanted to work together, they said "Of course!" (Alarcón de Morris. Conversation with Leistner, March 6, 2011).

Alarcón said that at the outset of the project, neither the Slavic nor the African immigrant communities were well organized. Tensions within these communities between people from different countries and cultures sometimes had made coordinated action difficult. Interwoven Tapestry helped the African community come together, whereas earlier attempts to do so had "imploded." She said the African community coalition continued to evolve and went through couple additional major reorganizations over time, and, in 2013, continues to function. By the end of the project, both communities had stronger leadership and organizational structures and improved

capacity. One positive impact of the Slavic communities improved organization was that "Multnomah County hired people to work with the Slavic community on health issues."

Alarcón said that neighborhood leaders who participated in Interwoven Tapestry learned about the value of working with immigrant and refugee communities and organizations, the priorities of these communities, and how to approach and engage with these groups more effectively. They also developed contacts with leaders in these communities that made it easier to work together in the future.

Many of the people who participated in Interwoven Tapestry went on to work together in other settings. Some served together on the subsequent Public Involvement Task Force. Relationships formed through Interwoven Tapestry also helped spur Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition to carry on the conversation by creating its Diversity and Representation Committee (DRC) and then its citywide Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee (DCLC). This process led to the creation of the ONI Diversity and Civic Leadership program at ONI under Mayor Tom Potter in 2006.

Many organizations involved in Interwoven Tapestry, such as IRCO and Latino Network, helped create and then formally participated in ONI's DCL program. Kayse Jama, who was organizing Somali Youth during his involvement with Interwoven Tapestry, went to work at Southeast Uplift, and then to create the Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO), which became a formal ONI community organization partner. Individual neighborhood system representatives and staff who participated in Interwoven Tapestry continued to advocate for greater awareness and cooperation between

neighborhood associations and immigrant and refugee communities for years after the program.

Alarcón said another very important, broader impact of Interwoven Tapestry was that "It opened the door a crack to people accepting that neighborhood associations can't be all things to all people." It opened up the opportunity for neighborhood associations to work with other organizations to reach different groups in the community instead of "neighborhood associations saying give us money and we'll do it." Alarcón said that Interwoven Tapestry helped neighborhood leaders begin to see the value of specialization and that it's helpful to work with groups that know different communities rather than advocating for additional funding and staffing for neighborhood associations to reach out to these communities on their own.

Alarcón identified other important lessons learned through the Interwoven Tapestry process. She said the project showed the importance of allowing enough time for people to "identify ideas they share…to build relationships…and to develop common messaging." When people first get together they may have many different viewpoints. Given enough time a group can develop shared ideas and goals. She also emphasized the importance of "having the right people on staff" to support a project. These staff people need to have strong community involvement values and need to have the skills and experience to work with diverse communities and to support effective project planning and implementation. Alarcón said support from ONI director Dr. David Lane and ONI's city commissioner, Commissioner Dan Saltzman, also were important.

It's important to recognize, however, that Interwoven Tapestry did not lead to widespread increases in cultural awareness and skills across among neighborhood association volunteers in Portland's neighborhood associations. These benefits went mostly to individuals who actively participated in the project.

One very important effect of Interwoven Tapestry was the decision by the executive director of Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition (who had participated in Interwoven Tapestry) to create the Southeast Uplift Diversity and Representation Committee (DRC) to continue the effort to help neighborhood associations and immigrant and refugee organizations and communities of color work together better. This effort was ultimately led to the formal inclusion of these groups in Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system under Mayor Tom Potter.

Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition--DRC and DCL

After Interwoven Tapestry, the initiative to involve historically underrepresented communities in Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system shifted from ONI and the City to the community. Southeast Uplift—Portland's largest neighborhood district coalition— built on the awareness gained and relationships built through Interwoven Tapestry and initiated a number of projects to increase the involvement of people from underrepresented communities in neighborhood associations and in civic decision making in Portland. Two of these projects were Southeast Uplift's Diversity and Representation Committee (DRC) and Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee (DCLC).

Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong started working at Southeast Uplift in 1998 and became the organization's executive director in early 2001. She said her awareness of social justice and equity issues and institutional racism was raised when she and other Southeast Uplift staff and some board members participated in community organizing training at the Western States Center. Once she became the executive director at Southeast Uplift, she recognized that she had an ability to respond and "move this agenda forward" (Kennedy-Wong. Elizabeth. Conversation with Leistner, February 17, 2010).

Southeast Uplift had been an organization partner in the Interwoven Tapestry project, and Kennedy-Wong had participated in the project's committee work and events. She began to have individual conversations with many of the immigrant and refugee and community of color leaders she had met through the project. Kennedy-Wong said she wanted to help initiate a process that would be driven by them—not by neighborhood activists—and would attract and sustain their involvement. Her initial goal was "to get more people of color to participate in neighborhood associations." One of the leaders, Rey España, with the Latino Network, told her that many people from communities of color needed to meet separately first and get organized themselves before they would be interested in interacting with traditional neighborhood associations. Kennedy-Wong said she initially thought that was a bad idea, but over time came to see that this was the right strategy. In May 2001, Kennedy-Wong hired a new Southeast Uplift staff person, Amy Dudley. Kennedy-Wong said she was impressed by Dudley's passion for social justice and working with underrepresented groups. Dudley immediately began to work with a

group of neighborhood activists and representatives of CBNBs that would become the

Southeast Uplift Diversity and Representation Committee (DRC).

In fall 2001, Southeast Uplift, sponsored a "Making Room at the Table"

workshop, which included a panel and small group discussion that focused on

underrepresented communities in Portland (Southeast Uplift. *A Brief History of the DRC*

[no date]). Linda Nettekoven, a long time and very active neighborhood leader,

remembers that this workshop for neighborhood activists, presented data from the 2000

U.S. Census and had participants "answer questions about the makeup of our

neighborhoods." Nettekoven said "It helped us see trends and understand how little we

knew about who live in our communities." Leaders from different communities of color

and immigrant and refugee organizations served on a workshop panel and talked with

neighborhood activists about "about some of the misunderstandings in neighborhoods

among the groups who lived there…" (Nettekoven. Email to Leistner, June 5, 2013).

In early 2002, Dudley followed up on "Making Room at the Table" workshop and

contacted neighborhood leaders and representatives of community of color and

immigrant and refugee organization and invited them to continue the conversation and

work they all had begun at the workshop. Nettekoven says she and a few other

neighborhood activists started meeting with Dudley to strategize how to carry on this

work.

In May 2002, DRC members identified and discussed "assumptions" they held

that would frame their participation in the group. Group members shared the following

"assumptions:"

- "Neighborhoods need to be invested and interested and make this a priority. Currently only 3 of 20 Associations are involved on the [DRC]."

- "There must be cultural change of NAs"

- "System is not in place for dialogue or outreach, but is set up for information from the city, request for input and then output from an association"

- "NAs don't know who is in the neighborhood"

- "A lot of education—community has problems but we are not bringing to associations"

- "We (as white people) need to build personal relationships with people of color and that requires an effort when we live and work with only white people"

- "We also need to build relationships with groups and organizations, not just looking for that one person to go to a meeting. Ex. Churches, Urban League, NAACP."

- "SEUL needs to recruit Board members from organizations that work with people of color and immigrant groups" (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Meeting Notes* June 25, 2002).

DRC members concluded that "Increasing participation and engagement with underrepresented groups in Neighborhood Associations requires issues to be addressed where decisions are made and change can happen. Ideally change should happen on multiple levels, including: Individual—opportunities for training and dialogue designed to increase awareness on the part of current and new Neighborhood Association leaders;

organizational—analysis of individual Associations and at a Coalition level; and systemic—accountability of Neighborhood System" (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Meeting Notes* June 25, 2002).

The DRC members laid out a workplan for their effort that included: asking the Southeast Uplift board of directors to formally designate the DRC as a committee of the SE Uplift board; training and dialogue events and activities "to increase awareness and support skills and leadership development;" "Ongoing research and education efforts regarding neighborhood demographics and community organizations and institutions that facilitate access to underrepresented community members, leaders and partners;" and "Creation of materials that would assist Neighborhood Associations in considering issues of representation and diversity in their self-assessment" (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Meeting Notes* June 25, 2002).

In June 2002, the Southeast Uplift board voted to establish the group as the Southeast Uplift Diversity and Representation Committee (DRC). The board charged the group to "play a leadership role in the goal of encouraging Neighborhood Associations to explore what it means to be representative of all neighborhood members" (Southeast Uplift. Board of Directors. *Minutes* June 3, 2002).

During 2002 and 2003, the DRC meet monthly and scheduled a series of "community dialogues" with different underrepresented groups and hosted some major community workshops that showcased and highlighted the issues of different under-represented communities in Portland.

One of the DRCs first "community dialogues" was with residents of Dignity Village (Portland's semi-permanent encampment of people who are homeless). This discussion led Southeast Uplift to create the Homelessness Working Group (HWG). The HWG grew into a major awareness raising and advocacy project. Southeast Uplift staffed the HWG, which included active participation from neighborhood associations and neighborhood activists, service providers and advocacy groups who work with people who are homeless, and a number of individuals experiencing homelessness. The HWG focused on "issues regarding homeless people in the inner southeast neighborhoods of Portland" and sought ways to "address the impact of homelessness." The HWG members participated in over one hundred "community conversations" about homelessness with neighborhood groups and other community-based organizations. The conversations usually included participation by a representative of the homeless community. The conversations were intended to raise awareness in the community and identify community-based solutions. The HWG issued its report in August 2004.[61] The HWG work helped shape the City of Portland subsequent "ten-year plan to end homelessness" (Portland. Citizens Commission on Homelessness. *Home Again: A 10-year plan to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County* December 2004).

DRC members also engaged with other projects and processes. In late June, DRC members participated in the Interwoven Tapestry "receiving community" workshop. They also began to track the work of the committee that was updating the ONI

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[61] Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program, Inc. *The Homelessness Work Group: Summary Report* August 2004.

Guidelines (the GREAT Committee). DRC members advocated for stronger language in the Guidelines on CBNBs and the inclusion of underrepresented communities.

In late September 2002, DRC members hosted an evening event called "Make Your Voice Heard: Understanding the Neighborhood System and How it Can Work for You." The event goals were to "bring together people who are low-income tenants, homeless, immigrants and people of color to talk about organizing in their communities and the role of Neighborhood Associations," to inform the work of the DRC, and to support the DRC's efforts to continue to build relationships and encourage participation in the DRC by low-income tenants, homeless, immigrants and people of color. The twenty-three people who participated included people of color, people with low income, renters, people who were homeless, and people born outside the United States. The participants together represented 17 different community organizations. Participants shared dinner, introduced themselves, and then talked about what it meant to them to be part of a neighborhood (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Make Your Voice Heard!* Report October 2002).

In January 2003, the DRC members adopted a set of "guiding principles" for their work that grounded the group in a strong commitment to social justice and to working with and honoring the full diversity of people in the community. The DRC's principles established ambitious goals to promote significant changes in Southeast Uplift, neighborhood associations in southeast Portland, and the broader community. The principles described who should be involved, how the committee members would work together, and established criteria for meaningful involvement in decision making in the

community. The tone set by these principles were a major reason representatives of non-neighborhood association communities believed it was worth their time to participate on the DRC (España. Conversation with Leistner. June 2013)

The DRC's principles stated that the group was to "include as many groups as are represented in our community, particularly groups who have been historically underrepresented in the neighborhood associations of SE Portland." DRC members committed themselves to modeling the kind of inclusive and power sharing principles they hoped to promote throughout the neighborhood system and in other community organizations. They committed to working "toward a membership that is more than 50% low-income people, people of color, immigrants and refugees, homeless people, and renters…" and to "employ a trusting, collaborative process that supports the leadership of underrepresented community members, namely low-income people, people of color, immigrants and refugees, homeless people and renters and communities who are underrepresented in decision making" (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Guiding Principles* January 28, 2003).

DRC members sought to ensure that "all people" would be "effectively engaged in the decisions that affect their lives" and maintained that that "should lead to a more just society, not tokenizing individuals or merely changing the makeup of the group at the table.'" The DRC Guiding Principles stated that meaningful engagement in these decisions requires that "everyone receive the same information, be notified early in the process and have access to the decision making process." The DRC recognized that institutional factors often lead to both "conscious and unintentional" exclusion of people

from underrepresented communities from decision making processes while "other people who benefit from institutional advantages are more able to participate and be heard" (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Guiding Principles*).

The principles set a broad and ambitious goal for the DRC: to serve "as a nucleus and catalyst for change in Neighborhood Associations, Southeast Uplift," "other community groups and the whole community." The group committed to drawing on the wisdom of group members and other organizations to help it advise others on how to improve their outreach in the community, supporting social justice work by other groups, building relationships, friendship, and trust to encourage mutual support, and to taking the initiative to reach out and build relationships. Each DRC member committee also committed to continuing their own personal growth and increasing their "self-awareness of privilege and oppression." (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Guiding Principles*).

In March 2003, the DRC hosted four leadership development trainings for low income people. Topics included: "Media, ""Public Speaking and Advocacy," "Introduction to Grant Writing," and "Facilitation and Democratic Group Process."

In April 2003, the DRC hosted two Saturday workshops called "Community Dialogues 2003: Livable for Who?" Publicity for the event described the DRC's purpose as the following:

- "Support the leadership, issues and campaigns of immigrants, people of color, low income, and homeless community members and the organizations they support."

- "Affirm that immigrants, people of color, low income and homeless people are members of the community that Neighborhood Associations represent."

- "Educate, build understanding and relationships between Neighborhood Association members and traditionally underrepresented community members."

- "Create actions of solidarity that support immigrants, people of color, low income, and homeless people and build relationships with Neighborhood Association allies."

The workshops included a wide array of presentations by individuals and community-based organizations that represented people who are homeless, people with disabilities, day laborers, affordable housing and renter's rights advocates, environmental justice, many different immigrant and refugee groups, including a presentation by IRCO on Project Interwoven Tapestry, and presentations from the African Community Center of Oregon, the Latin American Asia Pacific Youth program of the American Friends Service Committee, the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon. Portland Impact led a discussion on youth issues, and Elders in Action discussed the "unique needs of the neighborhood's growing aging population."

In February 2004, Southeast Uplift and the DRC hosted "a daylong series of discussions...aimed at getting underrepresented groups more involved in the neighborhoods" called "Building Representative Community Agendas (Chuang. *Oregonian*. 17 February 2004). Dudley said the event would bring together the immigrant and refugee, low-income and homeless communities with neighborhood association

activists." Dudley described the DRC as a "cross-class, cross-race and cross-perspective committee" that sought to "reach more people who aren't involved in their neighborhoods already."

The topics of the panel discussions and group dialogues included "Local Democracy," "Immigration and Community Organizing," "Introduction to Neighborhood Democracy: Your Neighborhood Association," "Reaching Out for Leadership and Representation," "Transportation and Environmental Justice: How Long Can I Drive and Breathe?" and "Community Policing and Police Accountability." Presenters included community activists and representatives of community-based groups, the ONI director and ONI staff, and DRC members.

DRC policy proposal: In addition to planning and hosting leadership training and skill building activities, the DRC members also attempted to develop policy and program proposals and to influence other policy development processes. DRC members, led by Rey España, developed a proposal for leadership training and funding to support community projects that bring neighborhood associations and other community groups together. DRC members also tracked and submitted comments and recommendations to the GREAT Committee that was updating the ONI Guidelines and to the Public Involvement Task Force, which had been charged to developed consistent guidelines for public involvement by city government.

In September 2003, DRC member Rey España, submitted a memo to DRC members in which he proposed that the DRC develop and advocate for funding for and

implementation of a community outreach and capacity building project.[62] By October

2003, DRC members had adopted España's proposal and forwarded it on to the Southeast

Uplift Board.

España grounded his proposal in two principles. He asserted that the project

should "Promote active and representative citizen participation so that community

members can meaningfully influence decisions that affect their lives;" and "Actively

work to increase leadership capacity (skills, confidence, and aspirations) in the

community. The overall goal of the project would be to develop "neighborhood capacity

to directly involve residents in efforts intended to influence the systems and or

institutions, policies, or practices that impact their neighborhood or community." The

program also would seek "broader participation of targeted communities in the current

neighborhood association system." The objectives of the project would be to help

residents get the information they needed, help them learn about and understand the

various system in the community that affected their lives, and to review and improve

channels of communication for neighborhood association to help them be more inclusive

and responsive to the needs and concerns of target communities.

España suggested three strategies for the project. The first was to support for

communities to learn about community building. España wanted people to know that

anybody can get involved and make a difference—the first steps are the desire to take

action and to get more information. The second was to support communities in learning

about themselves. España emphasized the importance of building relationships and

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[62] España's proposal marked the beginning of discussions that, a few years later, would lead ONI to establish a formal, ongoing program to support leadership develop and community organizing among communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities.

"social capital" in a community and building momentum for change by helping people recognize their successes and sharing innovations, experiences, and learning with others. The third, was to help communities learn about opportunities to effect change. España argued that essential to any strategy for change is the need to build the ability and skills of community members to "monitor, research accurately and effectively (to gather and analyze data) on targeted government or private sector institutions, policies, or practices…."

España initially suggested that Southeast Uplift would lead the project and provide funding and staff support. He suggested a one-year pilot and suggested that the project would need about $6,000 to $8,000 for "trainings, newsletters, mailings, meeting support" and other expenses (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Proposal for Community Outreach* 8 October 2003).

DRC members shared España's proposal with the Southeast Uplift board and other neighborhood and community organizations. The proposal later would be taken up by a new city-wide advocacy group set up by Southeast Uplift in early 2004—the Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee (DCLC).

DRC Input to the ONI Guidelines Review: DRC members also advocated for the inclusion of strong language supporting CBNBs in the ONI Guidelines. DRC members periodically attended meetings of the GREAT Committee subcommittee that was working on the CBNBs issue and received progress reports from GREAT Committee members and Brian Hoop from ONI who was staffing the GREAT Committee.

Moshe Lenske, co-chair of the GREAT committee and a board member of the SE Uplift board, came to a DRC meeting in June 2003 and described what he saw as some of the challenges the GREAT subcommittee on CBNBs was facing. Lenske said GREAT Committee members were finding it challenging to draft "useful and appropriate language to describe the roles, responsibilities and mechanisms" for involving these groups and organizations. He said some key questions needed to be answered: "What does term 'representation' mean? How should 'underrepresented' be defined? Do these groups currently participate in City processes and if so, how? Where should language about such groups and about business groups be incorporated within the Guideline language?" He noted that the 1998 ONA Guidelines made support for CBNB organizations contingent on funding being available for this purpose. Lenske asked what the mechanism would be to get these groups more funding when the City budget already was not adequately funding the needs of the established neighborhood association system. He also said ONI's existing system was built on relationships with "groups and not individuals." Lenske asked "Can any individual form a group and gain access to City information/support?" He noted that no CBNB group had applied for acknowledgement from ONI, and asked "What part of the system should handle immigrants and refugees?" (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Meeting Notes* June 24, 2003).

In October 2003, DRC members sent a formal memo to the GREAT Committee subcommittee on CBNBs with a number of suggestions. They said they felt it was important to "list the types of groups that are traditionally underrepresented in

neighborhood decision making" to "remind ourselves of those who are often not involved in the neighborhood system" (1).

DRC members also argued that assistance to "neighborhood associations in reaching out to and including all the groups that are represented within their communities" should not be "seen as an optional activity to be taken on only when funding is available." (They were referring to the language in the 1998 Guidelines that said services related to CBNBs were to be provided "subject to the availability of resources.") They explained that elected officials and city staff often dismissed the "recommendations and concerns of neighborhoods by characterizing neighborhood associations as elitist or not representative." They argued that services to support inclusion of CBNBs and underrepresented communities should be at the same level of priority as other ONI services.

DRC members stated their belief that "all people should be effectively engaged in the decisions that affect their lives." They said this requires "that everyone receive the same information, be notified early in the process and have access to the decision making process." They argued that participation by the diversity of the community in neighborhood associations should be of a depth and quality that would "lead to a more just society not merely to the tokenizing of individuals or [merely] to a change in the makeup of the group 'at the table.'

DRC members suggested that language be included in the ONI Guidelines that would:

- "Maintain an ongoing awareness of the demographic makeup of our neighborhoods and the larger community."

- "Strive to avoid being closed or exclusive by continually engaging in outreach to all groups represented within our communities."

- "Employ processes designed to develop trust and collaboration in order to support the leadership of underrepresented community members."

- "Seek the input of those who are not at the table by always asking, "Are there others affected by these decisions that need to be included in this decision making?"

- "Work to adequately answer that question by maintaining links with other community groups that will help us to understand and access the perspectives of underrepresented communities."

- "Share power within our neighborhood associations as a model for power sharing throughout our community."

- "Consider different models for how people might be engaged in neighborhood decision making."

- "Gather and create information about how to make the process open and accessible to all who are part of our neighborhoods" (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Memo to GREAT Committee on Communities Beyond Neighborhood Boundaries*, October 10, 2003).

Ultimately, the new ONI Standards (2005) dropped the language allowing CBNBs to apply formal acknowledgement. Instead, language was included—under the

heading "inclusion and participation"—that stated the system's interest in responding to the "need for participation and inclusiveness in Neighborhood Associations" and in increased involvement by "Portland's diverse communities." The new ONI Standards also directed neighborhood coalitions and ONI to develop action plans to support this increased involvement.

The ONI Standards (2005) defined "diverse communities" as including "communities of people of color, renters and low-income individuals, working families with children, immigrants and refugees, seniors, students, young adults, people with disabilities, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and trans-gendered people."

The ONI Standards (2005) required both neighborhood coalitions and ONI to include action steps in their required annual workplans to support increased involvement by "diverse communities." The ONI Standards required neighborhood coalitions to include action steps to:

- Reach out to and build partnerships, a sense of community, and trust with "diverse communities and organizations."

- Help NAs increase their "effectiveness in recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers and leadership from diverse constituencies" and encouraging their participation in neighborhood activities.

- Help NAs make their meetings and communications more accessible and inviting through the use of culturally appropriate strategies, translation, interpretation, childcare, transportation, and accessible meeting locations.

- Encourage business and BDA representatives to participate on district coalition and neighborhood association boards and in the activities of these organizations (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Standards for Neighborhood Associations* 2005 16-17).

The ONI Standards (2005) required ONI to develop and adopt action steps to support the district coalitions by:

- Providing technical assistance, including neighborhood demographic data.

- Supporting the development of partnerships with diverse community and organizations, including the development of a database of community organizations.

- Assisting coalitions in their effort to help NAs recruit, train, and retain volunteer leadership from diverse constituencies and encouraging their participate in neighborhood activities.

- Providing resources and assistance to help coalitions assist neighborhood association make their meetings and communications more accessible (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Standards for Neighborhood Associations* 2005 26-27).

DRC Input to the Public Involvement Task Force: DRC members also tracked the progress of the City's Public Involvement Task Force (PITF). The PITF was developing guidelines and standards for city government public involvement. DRC members advocated for the PITF to follow the a similar representation and co-production/collaboration approach used by Interwoven Tapestry. DRC members

recognized that city government public involvement was hampered by a "cultural gap" that caused city bureaus not to understand the cultural perspectives and day-to-day realities of people in historically underrepresented communities. Many people in these communities were not used to dealing with big bureaucracies, and were more used to working with people they know and in smaller social and community systems. City government really did not have any mechanisms to find out what underrepresented groups are concerned about, or have need for, or dream about. Also, language could be a barrier at times (Southeast Uplift. Diversity and Representation Committee. *Meeting Notes*, August 26, 2003).

The PITF Diversity and Accessibility Workgroup developed a recommendation that incorporated and responded to many of the DRC comments ("Recommendation 2: Initiate popular education and training on how City processes work and advocacy skills for diverse constituencies").

The PITF Workgroup found that "Many individuals from diverse constituency groups are generally unaware of how to work with the City's processes and how to advocate for their issues." The City also was not connecting with diverse community organizations and community leaders who could assist City staff in reaching these communities. The PITF Workgroup found that ONI and "most city bureaus have had minimal success in engaging diverse constituencies traditionally not engaged in City public involvement efforts."

PITF Workgroup members recognized that elected officials and bureau management consistently have "identified lack of diverse participation in public

involvement efforts as a significant shortcoming of City bureau public involvement programs." Group members suggested that city bureau that partnered with community organizations could help build capacity in the community to get involved. They also found that diverse community organizations, like neighborhood associations, need training to build leadership skills, and that this type of training is a high priority with community leaders of color. Leadership training for underrepresented communities could be coordinated with similar neighborhood association trainings. Workgroup members recognized that more leadership training will require more resources—ONI and most neighborhood coalitions had not had the resources to meet the existing support needs of the traditional neighborhood association system.

Workgroup members recommended that leadership training programs be open to the public. Trainings should use culturally appropriate training models, such as popular education. Topics for the trainings could include "training on how the city operates" and on "City decision-making processes" as well as leadership skills such as parliamentary procedures, organizational development, conflict resolution, how to research an issue, public speaking, and basic land use concepts.

The PITF Workgroup set specific objectives for this recommended training, including the development of partnerships between "culturally-specific community-based organizations" and between the City of Portland and other local agencies that need to reach out to and involve "diverse constituency groups;" culturally-specific leadership trainings; and the development of leadership skills and organizational capacity in

culturally-specific organizations that would allow them to "provide outreach services to City bureaus" through City contracts.

The PITF Workgroup members also recommended the ongoing funding to "culturally appropriate organizations serving African-American, Latino, American Indian, Asian American, and immigrant/refugee communities," and support for "culturally appropriate skills training for youth [and] people with low-incomes in City public involvement processes."

Rey España—Seeding Change on the Southeast Uplift DRC: A number of people mentioned the key role Rey España played in shaping the thinking and direction of the DRC and DCLC and the policy and program proposals these groups developed. España's recollected his involvement the DRC and DCLC as follows (España. Conversation with Leistner. June 22, 2013).

España moved to Portland from California in 1990. He had worked with City of Santa Monica and had become familiar with that city's neighborhood system. In Portland, España was hired by Jim McConnell with Multnomah County to do community development and community organizing work within the county's Aging and Disability Services program. Rey later did similar work in other units of county government until 2003[63]. During his involvement with the DRC, in addition to working with the county, España was helping to organize the Latino Network in Portland.

España said his experience with neighborhood associations in Santa Monica gave him the idea of trying to work with the neighborhood system in Portland. España

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[63] España now works as a community development staff person with the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), one of ONI's long-term DCL partner organizations.

discovered that Portland's neighborhood system had a strong history of positive achievements but that it did not engage or represent everyone in the community. The system focused primarily on the traditional system of geographic-based neighborhood associations. España said that people of color he talked with said the system was not responsive to their needs or cultures. España said he believed the neighborhood system needed to grow beyond its traditional roots.

España said he strongly believes in "neighborhood and community based solutions" for people of color, especially those who did not have a lot of resources to help them be engaged and that it is important to align resources to create opportunities for self-empowerment. He said his focus went beyond "participation" and "tokenism" and centered on developing a process to support neighborhood and community engagement through leadership training, skill building, empowerment, advocacy, and preparing people for meaningful roles on boards and decision making bodies.

España said that while Portland had a fairly progressive culture, when it came to substantive policy initiatives and commitment of resources, leaders and decision makers would "tighten up," resist changes, and would "water down" efforts to expand and diversify involvement. España said if he heard people talking about "inclusion" he would say "show me" what you're doing to make it happen. He argued that people needed to "be intentional" and think about how to "operationalize" these efforts. People must "commit resources" and ensure that programs are "not underfunded." These efforts must provide a good "return on investment" and result in "authentic and meaningful engagement."

España said he learned about Southeast Uplift through his boss at Multnomah County, Jim McConnell, and through Steve Rudman, who managed the community develop program for the City of Portland (Rudman previously had been the executive director at Southeast Uplift).

España read up on Southeast Uplift. He found that the organization had a very open philosophy about representation and engagement and was sincere and genuinely interested in greater inclusion. España said Southeast Uplift was unique in Portland's neighborhood system. He recognized that the organization was "swimming upstream" against the general current of the neighborhood system, which generally was resistant to expanding inclusion. España said Southeast Uplift was willing to challenge and push against this current.

España said he saw an opportunity to improve involvement opportunities and capacity in communities of color by working with Southeast Uplift. "If I could get the neighborhood system to be supportive," together we could influence policy for people of color and "disenfranchised communities" and engage them in creating better policies. By working with allies, such as neighborhood association activists, España said these communities could make better strides in addressing the disparities between their communities and the majority community "that we've all seen in Portland."

España said the early 2000s were interesting times in Portland. Many Portlanders were starting to recognize the growing diversity of people living in Portland, a view supported by data from the recent 2000 U.S. Census. Some neighborhood leaders were starting to understand that traditional neighborhood associations were not working for

everyone. Also tensions were running high between communities of color and Portland Police. The 2001 shooting by Portland Police of day laborer Jose Mejia Poot in a mental health facility was one in a number of incidents that exacerbated tensions between communities of color and Portland city government.

España said he saw an opportunity, through the DRC, to get the neighborhood system to acknowledge that the traditional approaches were not working for many people and to shift priorities and make a real effort to listen to and engage with people who had been left out.

España remembers that the individuals involved in the DRC played a major role in making the process a positive and rewarding experience for him and other DRC members. España said agreed to participate partly because of the strong neighborhood activists he saw involved with the organization. Neighborhood activist Linda Nettekoven was one of these people.[64] España said Linda was very strong, progressive, and sincere about engagement, which encouraged him to commit his time and energy to the project. España remembered that "Linda was wonderful from day one." "She typified someone I'd want to spend time with." Her deep commitment to engagement and the respect she showed "touched me personally."

España also fondly remembers Southeast Uplift staff person, Amy Dudley. "She was deeply, deeply committed" to "social justice." Dudley's manner and approach also showed "respect" for others. España said Dudley was "the model of the ally you need"—

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[64] In the 1970s, Nettekoven lived in Eugene, Oregon and worked for Lane County helping to organize rural community organization. She moved to Portland in the 1990s and quickly became involved in her neighborhood association in inner southeast Portland and then became involved with Southeast Uplift. Nettekoven has been involved in nearly all of the major policy reviews of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system during the 2000s and 2010s.

she knew when to contribute and when to support leadership by others. "She was very skilled."

España said he strongly believed in creating "a voice for people who had been silent" and a shared "sense of vision" that encouraged their active engagement and their being part of the solution. España said the DRC provided a vehicle for him to seed his ideas by developing a proposal that laid out principles, goals, strategies, and structure for a program that could move this agenda forward.

España is credited by many for encouraging the shift in thinking among neighborhood leaders away from the traditional approach, which had been to ask for more resources for neighborhood associations to help them do a better job of getting people from underrepresented communities involved in neighborhood meetings and activities. España helped some neighborhood activists begin to see that the system needed to dedicate resources directly to help build strong organizations for people of color that would build leadership and organizing skills and capacity among their own community members.

España believed the emphasis needed to be on building capacity, not trying to get people to go to neighborhood association meetings. "It's not as though people in communities of color were looking for a meeting to attend." España said the 1998 ONA Guidelines language on CBNBs illustrated the City's interest in involving these organizations and communities. However, the City had not funded these efforts. España said he used this existing policy language to bolster his argument that action was needed.

España said it also was important to recognize that different ethnic and cultural groups in the community were in very different stages of development and organizing. He said they needed to engage in self determination at a pace comfortable for each of those groups. For instance, España said the Latino and Native American communities were just starting to get organized, while the African American community in Portland already had a strong history of organizing and advocacy. Some groups were fairly sophisticated; others were just starting to organize.

España also championed community groups working together. He said that initially the African American community was concerned about other communities becoming more organized and worried that these groups would start competing for the very small pie of resources available at the time. España said he always maintained that having more groups organized and taking collaborative action together would give them all more power. He said he has been glad to see that the different groups "got beyond that" and have worked together on "leadership development," creating a "collective voice," and engaging in "collective advocacy." España said that his view is that "we all need to support all of our children—not one over another."

España said he moved on from his involvement with Southeast Uplift when he saw that the Southeast Uplift DCLC was moving forward with proposals for funding for leadership development and organizing and that a number of good people were involved and going in the right direction.

España remembered that advocating for programs to support leadership training and organizing in communities of color "was a tough sell." He said "there was passive

resistance on the city council" and council members were only interested in a "slow start." City Council members initially "just threw some funding at it," but it not enough to fully fund the effort. España said "The progress was slow, but that's o.k." The DCLC members were happy to get even "one-time" funding—it was a start. España said the initial one-time nature of the funding made it easier for some decision makers to look at the DCL project as a "special project" that could go away. "It made it less scary and less of a commitment for them."

Mayor Potter soon increased funding for and expanded the DCL program. The program now has become an ongoing element of the ONI system. España remembers that Mayor Potter was a "kind man with a real sense of community." He was "genuinely open, respectful, and supportive" of people in communities of color and immigrants and refugees. Mayor Potter had a "bigger vision" and had "learned a lot about what's important through his community policing work."

Thinking back on his involvement with the DRC, España says he feels "good about those times" and the people he worked with—"They had values I could rely on." España said the DRC process built support in the community—support that the DRC and DCLC and other community organizations could use to push ONI and the City to support and change how it involved the broad diversity of people in the community. At the same time, activists in the community were helping "develop a network of community organizations—like APANO [Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon]—that didn't exist before." "This was great organizing work." "We're all much better together. Remember 'Nothing about me, without me.'"

Southeast Uplift—Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee (DCLC): In 2004, Southeast Uplift formed a new group—the Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee (DCLC)—to build on the work of the DRC and to develop program proposals and advocate for increased funding from the City Council to further advance the goal of increasing the involvement of under-represented communities in the neighborhood system and in local decision making. The DCLC also built on Southeast Uplift's early efforts to identify neighborhood association priorities and to build support for them across southeast Portland.

In the fall of 2001, Southeast Uplift initiated the "Healthy Neighborhoods Project." SE Uplift staff "worked with neighborhood associations to identify the strengths and challenges present in each association and to determine how [Southeast Uplift] could best support their efforts." SE Uplift staff distilled thousands of comments generated in this process into ten vision statements that represented the needs and objectives identified. SE Uplift staff then reached out to 750 residents who were not involved in their neighborhood associations "to verify how accurate neighborhood associations were in identifying the priorities of its non-affiliated residents—the responses closely tracked the input from the neighborhood associations. The top two priorities of the neighborhood associations were:

- "Neighborhoods want to increase the diversity and involvement in their associations by expanding and improving their outreach," and

- "Neighborhoods want to reinvent the relationship between themselves and the City" (Southeast Uplift. Kennedy-Wong memo to Mayor Katz, March 24, 2004).

In January 2004, Southeast Uplift convened a meeting of neighborhood association and some community organization representatives—called "Launching Our Community Agendas"—to choose three priorities for Southeast Uplift's 2004 "Neighborhood Agendas Campaign." (Some members of the DRC also participated in this meeting.) Southeast Uplift staff believed that the identification of a few key priorities would allow Southeast Uplift to "marshal its staff and the collective organizing weight and stature of its neighborhoods to advocate for a policy platform with the City" (Hoyt. Email to Leistner, June 6, 2013).

Participants at the event identified three district-wide priorities—two focused on improving transportation and the design of infill development in southeast Portland. The other was to: "Secure funding from City Council to fund outreach and civic education to increase the diversity of neighborhood associations and build civic leadership among traditionally under-represented Portlanders" (Southeast Uplift. Hoyt memo to DCLC members, April 26, 2004).

Southeast Uplift staff later would remark on what an achievement it was to have neighborhood association representatives identify increasing diversity as a major priority (Hoyt, June 6, 2013). This is especially noteworthy, given that some neighborhood leaders continued to question why Southeast Uplift was putting so much time and effort into serving the needs of under-represented groups—"Why are we supporting special

interests? We don't have enough resources" to serve the needs of the neighborhood associations (Kennedy-Wong. Conversation with Leistner, February 17, 2010).

Once Southeast Uplift had determined the three district-wide priorities, Southeast Uplift staff began to organize advocacy efforts for each priority. In February 2004, Southeast Uplift Executive Director Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong hired Steve Hoyt to support all three advocacy efforts.

In March 2004, Southeast Uplift convened the first meeting of a new, city-wide "Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee" (DCLC) dedicated to advocating for funding for outreach and civic education to increase the diversity of neighborhood association and to build civic leadership in historically underrepresented communities. Hoyt reported that Southeast Uplift "invited people throughout the city to participate in the DCLC, and for the first year it was a very diverse and large committee." (Hoyt said much of the energy that had been going into the DRC shifted to the DCLC.) ONI staff person Brian Hoop also participated in the DCLC meetings.

The DCLC was constituted as an independent body and not as a committee of Southeast Uplift (Southeast Uplift. Hoyt memo to DCLC members, April 26, 2004). Representatives of about 20 different neighborhood and community organizations participated in the DCLC's weekly meetings. They worked on developing a proposal to submit during the upcoming City budget process. The organizations represented included a few neighborhood associations, most of the neighborhood coalitions, and a number of immigrant and refugee and community of color organizations and community advocacy groups (some of the individuals and organizations had been involved in Interwoven

Tapestry and had participated in the DRC and/or the DRC "community dialogues" events).

In late March 2004, Kennedy-Wong sent a memo to Mayor Katz that described the DCLC origins, purpose, and participants, and asked that the mayor include $350,000 in the city budget to demonstrate the City of Portland's "commitment to a more diverse and inclusive neighborhood system and an enhanced civic life" (The $350,000 amount was based on $50,000 for each of the seven neighborhood coalitions.) Kennedy-Wong proposed that the funds be allocated across all seven neighborhood coalition areas, and that "any coalition office, organization or group, working with individuals not traditionally participating in the neighborhood system could receive the funds."

Kennedy-Wong identified the purpose of the project as providing "adequate funding for outreach to under-represented groups in the Portland community" and supporting "staffing dedicated to increasing the participation of under-represented individuals in the neighborhood system." Staff would "support and build the leadership skills of under-represented community members and increase their participation in the neighborhood system" and educate community members in the use of city processes, policy analysis, advocacy, and the working of neighborhood coalitions." Kennedy-Wong defined "under-represented groups" as including "people of color, immigrants and refugees, low-income people, renters, and homeless people." "Kennedy-Wong reminded the mayor that ONI had added requirements to its contract with the neighborhood district coalitions that the coalitions do more outreach to underrepresented communities but that ONI never had provided additional funding to support these new activities.

A later draft proposal from the DCLC asked the City to commit to budgeting $350,000 for each of five years "for the purpose of increasing diversity in neighborhood associations and building civic leadership among traditionally under-represented groups." The proposal listed potential project activities that included: "surveys of under-represented groups," "diversity education or neighborhood associations," resident/citizenship/community training" to help people learn "how the neighborhood association works" and how to reduce "speeding and crime in your neighborhood," "cross-cultural events," and "translation services." The DCLC proposed that ONI administer the funds and that community groups, neighborhood associations, and neighborhood coalition offices could apply for the funding through a competitive grant process (Southeast Uplift. "diversity_project_summ_draft.doc" [saved June 24, 2004]).

DCLC members lobbied heavily for their proposal. They met with all the city commissioners and testified at a community budget hearing. Mayor Katz initially committed to providing $50,000 (not the $350,000 requested) in funding for the FY 2004-05 budget, but she ended up shifting this money to help pay for a settlement of a police pay dispute.

Mayor Katz did include a budget note in the FY 04-05 budget that read:

"Outreach to Diversify Neighborhood Involvement: The Office of Neighborhood Involvement will develop and present a proposal for a pilot project to increase the involvement of under-represented community members in neighborhood associations. The ONI proposal will include a work scope with measurable deliverables, a budget that identifies matching resources including grants, and an evaluation plan" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 2004-05 412).

Hoyt said that, after all the effort DCLC members had put into advocating for their proposal in the City budget process, "there was a fair amount of deflation among the community members on the [DCLC], but [staff] and a smaller group of activists kept on pushing." Over the subsequent years, the DCLC proposals continued to evolve.

ONI followed up on Mayor Katz's budget note by asking the DCLC to lead the development of a pilot project proposal (Southeast Uplift. *DCLC working draft proposal*. [dcl_pilot_jan_19.doc, saved on January 19, 2005] 2).

In November 2004, Mayor Tom Potter was elected on a platform of reconnecting community and city government and ushering in a new "community governance" culture in Portland. Potter had a strong commitment to supporting communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and other underrepresented groups and to ensuring that they would have a much stronger voice in local decision-making and civic life. Mayor Potter hired Kennedy-Wong to serve on his staff. The Southeast Uplift board of directors hired Cece Hughley Noel to lead the organization. Hughley-Noel continued to push the City to fund some sort of DCLC proposal. [65]

A number of DCLC members, with support from Southeast Uplift staff and ONI staff, continued to meet and worked on developing a "pilot project" proposal to introduce in the next City budget process. In 2005, a DCLC working draft pilot project proposal affirmed the DCLC's commitment to "building and supporting equal access to

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[65] Hughley-Noel continued SE Uplift's leadership in the neighborhood system and on diversity issues by co-chairing Mayor Potter's comprehensive review of Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system, known as "Community Connect." This process would establish a new vision for Portland community and neighborhood involvement system and a strategic plan for implementing this vision. Community Connect would propose the implementation of a leadership training and organizing capacity building program for communities of color and immigrants and refugees similar to the proposals developed by the DCLC.

participation in the neighborhood system by under-represented groups." The DCLC defined "under-represented groups" as including: "people of color, renters, immigrants, refugees, homeless, low-income individuals, racial minorities, people with physical and mental disabilities, gas, lesbians, trans-gendered individuals, and youth" (Southeast Uplift. *DCLC working draft proposal*).

The DCLC's objectives for the pilot project included:

- Increase participation of under-represented groups "in Portland's civic society and the neighborhood system;"

- Expand the "knowledge, skills, attitudes and tools for [under-represented group] leaders to effectively organize their constituency, collaborate with neighborhood associations, and advocate before local government;"

- Expand the "knowledge, skills, attitudes and tools of neighborhood association leaders to form and maintain the involvement of [under-represented groups] by building coalitions with organizations" that represent them;

- Remove "barriers to effective participation of [under-represented groups] in neighborhood association activities;"

- Increase "awareness and ability for [the] neighborhood system to engage and maintain involvement of [under-represented groups] in areas of mutual interest between neighborhood associations and [under-represented groups];"

- Expand "working relationships and collaborative efforts between neighborhood associations, community-based under-represented organizations and [under-represented groups];"

- Create "a model for the neighborhood system with greater accountability to more fully engage Portlanders from all cultural, social and economic walks of life;"

- Expand "collaboration between [the] neighborhood system, e.g. coalitions, neighborhood associations, community-based organizations, local schools and [under-represented groups]."

The DCLC members considered a number of proposals generated by DCLC members, including:

- **People of Color/Racial Minority Leadership Academy**: The purpose of the academy was to "prepare natural community leaders of color who desire the advancement of policies to achieve economic and social equity based on the wisdom, voice, and experience of local constituencies." The proposal determined that "leaders of color who understand the needs and assets of community residents and organization will best be able to effectively drive policy efforts" and be aware of issues that affect their communities. The academy curriculum was to include training in "analysis, negotiation, diplomacy and advance" as well as providing tools "to support creative and critical thinking and public speaking; collection management and presentation of information; use of technology; and the development of media and public

education strategies." The target audience for the academy was to be about twenty leaders from "Communities of Color: Asian and Pacific Islander, African American, Latino and American Indian and Native Alaskan." The proposal anticipated the funding needed or the academy at $67,000 (Southeast Uplift. *Project Concept #1*. [people_of_color_acad.doc", saved February 2, 2005]).

- **Community and Neighborhood Engagement Initiative**: This proposal sought to "provide leadership opportunities to neighborhood association leaders to engage and build relationships with under-represented groups" through training for neighborhood association board and general members in effective outreach techniques, demographic information about populations in a neighborhood, contacts with leaders from under-represented communities in the neighborhood, efforts to make the neighborhood association's meeting more inviting to these communities, "one-on-one and/or small group discussions between leaders of the neighborhood association and the under-represented communities, and, if these leaders identify issues of interest to both groups, support in joint organizing the issue or to host an event. The ultimate goal of this proposal continued to be increased participation by member of under-represented communities in neighborhood association and community-sponsored events. This proposal anticipated a two-year commitment of $50,000 per year (Southeast Uplift. *Project Concept #2*. [2_system_imprv.doc, saved April 27, 2005]).

- **Targeted constituency issue-based campaign**: This proposal envisioned an "organizing campaign to build working partnerships between Neighborhood Associations with families with K-12 school-age children and existing community-based and government school support organizations with a goal of building stronger involvement with and public support for targeted neighborhood schools." The idea was that members of traditional neighborhood associations and under-represented communities could come together around their shared interested in improving public education for their children. The proposal included "two annual board meetings/retreats for target neighborhood and partnering community organizations to develop issue priorities to work together on;" "one-on-one and/or small group discussions;" the identification and cultivation of new leaders; development of a joint community organizing campaign; a joint communication outreach strategy. The proposal sought to increase participation by under-represented community members in "project meetings with neighborhood associations" and that some of these individuals would hold leadership positions in their neighborhood associations. This proposal also anticipated a two-year commitment of $50,000 per year.

- **Portland Community Leadership Academy**: This proposal was similar to the proposal for a "People of Color/Racial Minority Leadership Academy," but expanded the target audience to include not only communities of color, but also emerging neighborhood association and neighborhood district

coalition leaders, emerging leaders from the schools communities—including

youth, PTA or Site Council members, and "SUN Community School

volunteers," low-income housing, welfare and homeless advocates, and other

constituencies. The academy curriculum was to include "community

building;" "community organizing;" "Diversity: examining white privilege,

outreach, being allies with underrepresented groups;" "advocacy;"

"communication;" technology;" organizational development, and "public

education" strategies and techniques. The program contract funding would be

"split between one organization with majority leadership from communities of

color and one a neighborhood district coalition." The program would include

"four two-day intensive retreats" over a nine-month period, caucuses for

targeted trainings and small group breakouts for communities that request

them, mentoring for individual participants b community leaders, and a

"$2,000 organizational grant" for each participant for "a project to apply the

skills they're learning." The proposed funding for the project was $310,000,

which included $60,000 each for two contracted organizations (Southeast

Uplift. *Project Concept #4*. [4_Academy_Broad.doc, saved January 20,

2005]).

Mayor Potter choose not to fund any DCLC proposals in his first city budget (FY

2005-06). Amalia Alarcón de Morris remembers that Potter planned to initiate

"Community Connect"—a major review of Portland's neighborhood and community

involvement system—in the summer of 2006, and he did not want to make any changes

until he had heard back from that process (Alarcón de Morris. Conversation with Leistner, June 12, 2013).

DCLC members continued to refine their proposals and started working with the members of the ONI Bureau Advisory Committee on a proposal for the FY 2006-07 City Budget. The members of the DCLC and the ONI BAC agreed to advocate for funding for Leadership Academy and NCEI. Mayor Potter funded both the Leadership Academy and NCEI that year as part of a larger $500,000 package of new spending at ONI to "support a community governance model" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 2006-07 412). The budget included $70,000 for a "Civic Leadership Academy" (split between Latino Network and Oregon Action); and $45,000 for the "Community Engagement Initiative."

In November 2006, ONI hired Jeri Williams, an experienced and skilled community organizer, former executive director of the Environmental Justice Action Group (EJAG), and Native American woman with strong credibility among communities of color to support the development of and coordinate ONI's Diversity and Civic Leadership Program.

Southeast Uplift Focus on Diversity and Inclusion Winds Down: Southeast Uplift, after a number of years of intensive community organizing and advocacy to broaden diversity in the neighborhood system, and the success in getting the City Council to fund the creation of the DCL program at ONI, disbanded the DCLC and began to wind down the DRC and shift its focus back to providing services to neighborhood associations. Despite all the great work that had been done—as in the case of Interwoven Tapestry—the work of the DRC and DCLC primarily affected the neighborhood

association activists who actively had participated in their activities. The DRC and DCLC did not have much impact on the awareness or perspectives of most neighborhood associations leaders and activists in Portland. The key staff people at Southeast Uplift who had worked with the DRC and DCLC had moved on. Kennedy-Wong had gone on to work for Mayor Potter. Dudley left to work with the Rural Organizing Project. Steve Hoyt was hired by the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

In summer 2005, Southeast Uplift hired Afifa Ahmed-Shafi and assigned her to help increase diversity in the neighborhood associations. Ahmed-Shafi also came from a strong community organizing and social justice background and was a skilled trainer on issues of diversity, cultural competency, and equity. Ahmed-Shafi staffed the DRC until Southeast Uplift dissolved the group soon thereafter. She also worked with neighborhood associations interested in diversity by providing them with outreach support and helping them network with organizations. Ahmed-Shafi worked with ONI and other neighborhood coalitions on three citywide diversity workshops, which featured panels of people from different cultures (Ahmed-Shafi. Conversation with Leistner, March 15, 2011).

Ahmed-Shafi remembered that she felt that the overall focus of Southeast Uplift and the staff there had begun to shift away from the diversity work she was doing. Afifa did not see a major impact from the DRC/DCLC work in the neighborhood associations. She saw that the other neighborhood coalitions also were not as focused on diversity issues as Southeast Uplift had been. Ahmed-Shafi said the one exception was Central

Northeast Neighbors (CNN), where CNN staff person Sandra Lefrancois had been part of Interwoven Tapestry project and continued to host panels and workshops on diversity.

Ahmed-Shafi asserted that moving forward on diversity and inclusion faced major capacity and funding issues, especially for neighborhood associations. "They are expected to be utopian societies—representatives as well as volunteer-based." Many neighborhood associations "barely have the capacity to run themselves" let alone actively working to be more inclusive. Ahmed-Shafi said some neighborhood associations were interested in greater diversity, and she would work with them. However, many neighborhood associations were not interested and Ahmed-Shafi said, if she brought it up, she felt as though she was trying to push an outside agenda on the group. This only aggravated the suspicion some neighborhood associations already held that neighborhood coalitions push agendas on neighborhood associations that neighborhood associations do not want and that are unrealistic. "We were asking for something that didn't want to stick…that felt uncomfortable."

Ahmed-Shafi concluded that "It comes down to capacity and leadership." She said it would be good if neighborhood leaders naturally had those skills, however, neighborhood associations have a lot of needs, even without taking on an effort to increase diversity, and adding on a focus on diversity does not seem like a natural fit for many neighborhood associations in Portland. "It's hard when you're working with volunteers." They are unpaid and did not see it as their duty to be more inclusive, however, some did. Ahmed-Shafi said some neighborhood associations did want to work on diversity issues, especially those that had more diversity in their communities. They

were better able to see the "stark contrast between who's in the neighborhood and who's on the neighborhood association board. It's harder for neighborhoods that don't have higher levels of diversity to move forward on this."

In 2007, ONI hired Ahmed-Shafi to coordinate a new ONI program focused on building the capacity within city government to engage the community. A significant portion of her work included consultation with and training for city bureaus on equity issues and how to work more effectively with historically underrepresented communities. Ahmed-Shafi said that she was able to engage in much higher-level discussions about issues in her new role at ONI.

Ahmed-Shafi would help develop and then coordinate the City of Portland Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC). The creation of Ahmed-Shafi's position at ONI and the City Council's creation of PIAC in 2008 both implemented recommendation made by the PITF.

Involving underrepresented communities—some lessons learned: For many years, different reviews of Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system identified the need to involve a greater diversity of the community in the Portland's neighborhood system and in civic life and local decision making in general. Little progress was made at moving beyond "progressive talk" about the problem to actually achieving this goal. The attempt to expand the system and create a formal role for ethnic-based community organizations and business district associations by offering them formal recognition through the 1998 ONA Guidelines, was unsuccessful. The Southeast Uplift DRC and DCLC--building on the Interwoven Tapestry experience—finally

showed a viable path forward. This section identifies some of the key lessons from the DRC and DCLC.

Leadership: Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, prompted by her strong commitment to social justice and inclusion, used her authority as executive director of Southeast Uplift to begin to look for a way to bring together representatives of communities of color and other underrepresented groups with neighborhood leaders to find ways to diversify involvement neighborhood associations and to help people in these communities have a stronger voice and power in local decision making. She continued to support the DRC and DCLC throughout the course of their activities.

Relationships and Trust: Kennedy-Wong started the process by reaching out to and building relationships and trust with individual leaders from communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities. España made clear that a major reason he and other representatives of communities of color and immigrant refugee communities participated in the DRC and DCLC was that they believed that Southeast Uplift leaders and staff and the neighborhood association representatives who participated in the DRC and DCLC strongly supported social justice, treated people with honor and respect, and were committed to having a meaningful impact.

Strong Staff Support: Much of the success of the DRC and DCLC was due to strong staff support from Dudley and then Hoyt. Both had a deep commitment to social justice values and had very strong community organizing and group process skills. They were able to help convene the DRC and DCLC members, support them in their discussions and strategizing, and then assist them in planning and implementing their

outreach activities, workshops, community dialogues and their advocacy campaign to get the city council to support and fund the DCLC proposals.

Neighborhood Allies: The neighborhood leaders and activists who participated on the DRC and DCLC also had strong social justice values, visibly respected the other DRC and DCLC members, and were committed to pursuing meaningful change. Their visible support particularly was valuable in the face of suspicion—and in some cases, hostility—from some neighborhood leaders to the idea of helping underrepresented groups organize outside the traditional neighborhood association system.

Good process principles and design: Good process design and implementation were important strengths of the DRC and DCLC. These processes were designed collaboratively with the participants and, early on, committed themselves to a set of principles that embodied a strong commitment to operating in collaborative and inclusive ways and honoring, respecting, listening to the participants and members of different communities. The DRC and DCLC strategies, products, and activities were co-produced and implemented by the participants. The DRC and DCLC both strived to model community involvement best practices in the way they functioned.[66]

Policy Entrepreneur: España played a valuable role as a "policy entrepreneur" by recognizing Southeast Uplift's willingness to work on inclusion and the creation of the DRC as vehicle to help him move forward his concept of building community capacity and power. España saw that traditional neighborhood system approaches were not

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[66] Too often in Portland's history, processes that were intended to promote better community involvement have been structured and have functioned in ways that violated many of the basic principles and best practices of good community involvement. Any process established to study and/or promote community involvement offers and important opportunity to model what good community involvement looks like.

working for many people. He brought to the DRC and DCLC processes his strong belief in neighborhood and community based solutions for people of color. He also challenged people who talked about inclusion to show how they were going to help make it happen, including the commitment of resources to ensure that the actions or programs are effective. España's goal was to develop a process to support neighborhood and community engagement through leadership training, skill building, empowerment, advocacy, and preparing people for meaningful roles on boards and decision making bodies. España played a key role in shifting the thinking of many neighborhood leaders away from just trying to get a greater diversity of people to participate in regular neighborhood meeting to supporting people in communities of color and other under-represented groups to organize themselves and develop capacity in their own communities.

Capacity Building Approach: España championed the idea of recognizing where each community group was in its evolution and then helping them build the capacity to organize themselves and advocate for their issues and priorities. He suggested a strategy that included helping communities learn about community building and their ability to have an impact, supporting communities in learning about themselves and building relationships and social capital, and then helping communities learn about the opportunities by which they can achieve change. España also argued that any strategy for change needs to build the ability and skills of community members to "monitor, research accurately and effectively (to gather and analyze data) on targeted government or private sector institutions, policies, or practices…."

Partnerships between Organizations: Interwoven Tapestry, DRC, and DCLC showed the advantages of different community groups working together to magnify their power. During the course of these projects, organizations of people of color and immigrants and refugees, went from not seeing an advantage from working together— and often seeing each other as competitors for limited government and private funding and support—by the end of DCLC were at least willing to work together.[67] and funding, the outset value showed that power….challenge for URG groups that initially did not work together…getting them to work together and also to join forces with neighborhood leaders…power….had happened in Portland in that way…Politicians who had been criticizing the system for not being inclusive…saw URGs and neighborhood leaders working together—got people's attention. The DRC and DCLC process helped URG groups get beyond their initial differences and work together to advocate for support for leadership development for their community members, the creation of a collective voice, and collaboration on advocacy efforts.

Structural Opportunities that Fit Different Groups: ONI's failed experiment with creating processes to formally recognize CBNBs and business district associations showed the importance of not using a "one-size-fits-all" approach to incorporating new types of community organizations into Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. The DRC and DCLC offer a good example of the alternate and much more promising approach championed by España of assessing the capacity of needs

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[67] Relationships, trust, and collaboration between these groups continued to grow and strengthen through their participation together in ONI's Diversity and Civil Leadership program. ONI, as part of its coordination of the DCL Program, helped coordinate monthly meetings of the community organization partners in the program. These regular meetings supported continued relationship building and cooperation.

of each community and working with representatives of that community to develop an approach that works for them.

Realistic Expectations of Neighborhood Volunteers: The DRC and DCLC processes helped many people in the neighborhood system let go of the idea that neighborhood associations were likely to be effective at serving the community organizing and involvement needs of all the groups in the community.

Even though the Interwoven Tapestry, DRC, and DCLC processes had a major effect in shifting thinking about the structure of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system, they had little effect on the general awareness among neighborhood leaders about the diversity of people in their neighborhoods or on their willingness and capacity to reach out to and work effectively with diverse individuals and groups in their community. Neighborhood associations are made up of volunteers, many of whom get involved with their neighborhood association to work on particular issues or projects that interest them.

Ahmed-Shafi noted that few neighborhood associations have the leadership capacity and skills to actively work to be more inclusive. She said that some neighborhoods were interested—often those in which the diversity of their communities was very visible—she worked to support their efforts. Other neighborhoods were suspicious that Southeast Uplift was trying to force an outside agenda on them. Many neighborhood association leaders and members—all of whom are unpaid volunteers—did feel it was their duty to take on additional responsibilities for trying to be inclusive, in addition to all the existing neighborhood work they were doing. Any expectations that

neighborhood associations should become significantly more inclusive and diverse would require all more staff support.

Effective community organizing and advocacy**:** Another success of the DRC and DCLC processes was the understanding by Kennedy-Wong and others how to use different strategies and vehicles at different stages of the process. The DRC was the right vehicle to help bring together individuals from different communities, primarily in southeast Portland, to learn about each other and to develop a shared set of principles and design and deliver a number of success community outreach events. When it came time to try to seek city council support, Kennedy-Wong helped create a new group, the DCLC, that included representation from organizations from across the city (including many DRC members), with the specific purpose of developing program proposals and advocating with the city council to fund them.

Another success of the DCLC was to persevere in the efforts. Despite the disappointment that many DCLC members felt when the city council did not fund their proposal, group members kept coming back to the council with further evolved proposals. Their ongoing advocacy helped familiarize city council members with the rationale for and nature of their proposals and "softened up" some of the city council's initial resistance. DCLC members also showed strategic flexibility by being willing to accept a smaller amount of funding to get their "foot in the door" and create the opportunity for expanding the program later.

City Agency Allies: ONI staff participated in the DCLC process as part of ONI's ongoing interest in finding way to broaden community involvement in Portland and

specifically to involve historically underrepresented communities. ONI staff, including Brian Hoop and Amalia Alarcón de Morris were able to provide important guidance and assistance to the DCLC members to help them write up their proposals and strategize about how to lobby effectively for funding during the city budget development process.[68]

Political Champion: Mayor Katz and other city council members did not particularly support the DCLC recommendations initially. The election of Tom Potter as Portland's new mayor put a much more sympathetic leader in charge. Potter was a strong champion of community involvement and especially a stronger voice in decision making for people or color and immigrants and refugees. Potter ultimately did support and fund a new leadership training and community organizing program similar to the DCLC proposal. Potter continued to support and expanded the program during his time in office. Mayor Potter's role and the resulting DCL program are described in more detail in the next chapter.

The next section focuses back on city government and describes the work of the 2003-2004 Public Involvement Task Force to improve the quality and consistency of city government's community involvement.

Public Involvement Task Force--"A Strategic Plan for Improving Public Involvement in the City of Portland"—2003-04

Community members had been calling for Portland's city government to improve its involvement of the community since the founding of the neighborhood system. A

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[68] Alarcón de Morris was the project lead on the Interwoven Tapestry project and then became the manager of ONI's Neighborhood Resources Center. She also served as the volunteer chair of the board of the Latino Network in Portland and had long history of working to empower communities of color on health issues. Mayor Tom Potter would appoint Alarcón de Morris as the new Director of ONI in January 2006.

number of high-profile clashes between community members and city government over city projects during the early 2000s increased the political pressure for the City Council to do something to improve city government interaction with the community. City Council members responded by creating a new task force—the Public Involvement Task Force (PITF)—to develop consistent guidelines and standards for city government community involvement. The PITF process would be Portland's first comprehensive examination of how to improve the city-government side of the community involvement equation. The PITF recommendations would shape a number of follow up efforts to reform and improve city government public involvement, including the creation of the standing City of Portland Public Involvement Advisory Council in 2008.

Relations between city government and neighborhood and community activists deteriorated significantly during the early 2000s. City leaders and staff clashed repeatedly with neighborhood and community activists over projects including the Southwest Community Plan (see Irazabal and Hovey), the Northwest District Plan, the Water Bureau's plan to cover Portland's historical open reservoirs, the aerial tram to OHSU, the siting of off leash dog use areas in city parks, and others. Community members accused city leaders and staff of trying to impose top-down policies and projects with little effort to listen to the community or to consider community needs, priorities, and impacts.

Community members often claimed that city staff did a poor job involving the public and did not followed established public involvement best practices. City staff often claimed that they *were* doing a good job involving the public. To many community activists, the City Council's adoption of the 1996 public involvement principles and the

development of a Community Outreach Handbook for city staff appeared to have had little effect. Community members also complained that the quality of public involvement varied significantly from one bureau to the next and even from one project to the next within the same bureau. This disconnect revealed a significant lack of shared understanding of what good public involvement looks like and then how to achieve it.

It was in this context of heightened conflict that, in October 2002, ONI Commissioner-in-Charge Jim Francesoni directed ONI to initiate a process to involve community members and city staff in the development of consistent guidelines and standards for city government community involvement. In a press release, Francesconi stated "The need for consistent standards to involve the public in city discussions and projects has been brought up to me numerous times during my visits with neighborhood activists." He added "I have often heard concerns about inconsistent approaches by bureaus on issues important to community members. For both public involvement and public information, we must look at developing clear guidelines or standards that are applied consistently across the city [government]." Francesoni noted that the ASR had recommended that ONI coordinate a "city-wide discussion" to develop "common terms, understanding and expectations for outreach processes along with standard guidelines for public involvement." Francesconi asserted that "the development of clear, consistent public involvement standards can reaffirm and improve upon Portland's strong history and commitment of involving citizens in decision-making and help us work together to

ensure that the city continues to be the *City that works*"[69] (Portland. Office of City

Commissioner Jim Francesconi. Press release. October 30, 2002).

City Commissioners Dan Saltzman and Randy Leonard formally supported

Francesoni's effort. (Leonard would take over responsibility for ONI in December 2002.)

All three commissioners had clashed with community members over different projects

and all three served as the commissioner-in-charge of ONI at different times during the

early 2000s. All three commissioners had generated political ill will among neighborhood

and community activists, especially Saltzman and Leonard, with their top-down and un-

collaborative leadership styles.

In April 2003, the three commissioners issued a joint memo to city bureau

directors, city bureau public involvement staff and community members launching the

new Public Involvement Task Force. Their memo reiterated the reasons to create the task

force stated in Francesconi's October 2002 memo and said the task force's charge was to:

- Review "best practices and current city and bureau policies around public

  involvement."

- Establish "recommendations for clear, consistent standards to meet the

  public expectation for public involvement practices across the City," and

- Develop "policy recommendations and public involvement standards for

  Council adoption" (Portland. Memo from Commissioners Francesconi,

  Leonard, and Saltzman to City Bureau Directors et al. *Citywide Public

  Involvement Standards Taskforce*, April 2, 2003).

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[69] The City of Portland's motto is: The City that Works.

The three city commissioners affirmed their "hope that the taskforce will provide a set of clear consistent recommendations for Council adoption that will guide City bureaus' public involvement policies for years to come."

ONI staff worked hard to ensure that the PITF participants represented many different perspectives. The PITF members included neighborhood association and coalition activists, city bureau public involvement staff, representatives of communities of color and low income communities, people with disabilities, youth, representatives of business districts associations, public involvement practitioners, academics from Portland State University, and representatives of citizen involvement committees from other local jurisdictions (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Public Involvement Task Force. *Who is on the Task Force?* 2004. Web. <www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/122082> . [Downloaded October 17, 2013]). Individuals and ONI staff involved with the Interwoven Tapestry Project (still going at that time) advocated that individuals and groups involved in that process be represented on the PITF and that the PITF pay special attention to the need to the public involvement needs of immigrant and refugee communities.

The three PITF co-chairs represented important points of view on the PITF. Laurel Butman worked in the City of Portland Office of Management and Finance (OMF) and coordinated the mayor's annual community involvement for the city budget process. Butman had helped crate create the 1996 public involvement principles and the city's Community Outreach Handbook. Joanne Bowman was a well known leader in the African American community, a strong community organizer, and an advocate for greater

police accountability. Julie Odell was a southwest neighborhood activist who had worked

on the SW Community Plan and was a doctoral student at PSU with a focus on public

involvement.

The PITF began meeting in April 2003 and met monthly through March 2004. In

the fall of 2003, PITF members divided up into workgroups. The workgroup subjects

give interesting insight into how the PITF members framed their task. The workgroups

and their charges included:

- **Principles**: "Review and update public involvement principles as
  appropriate. Suggest policy options and opportunities regarding
  implementation."

- **Process Design and Implementation**: Ensure "flexibility in designing
  and implementing [public involvement] efforts to respond to unique
  characteristics of specific project requirements, geographical and
  constituent needs, state and federal mandates, etc."

- **Diversity and Accessibility**: "Develop diverse and accessible public
  involvement efforts that engage Portland's increasingly diverse
  demographics, including… culturally appropriate models for engaging low
  income renters, immigrants/refugees, seniors, youth, and communities of
  color, etc."

- **Accountability and Transparency**: "Develop public involvement efforts
  that are more transparent and ensure accountability measures, expectations
  for public, bureaus, and staff, access to quality project information, how

decisions are getting made, who is making them, how the public

participates."

- **Education and Skills Training**: "Provide skill building and leadership

  training for staff on best practices and for [the] public [on] how the City

  works and how to be informed advocates for themselves."

- **Communication and Access to Information**: "Expand coordination

  efforts for efficiencies and cost reductions. Utilize e-government for each

  public while acknowledging digital divide issues" (Portland. Office of

  Neighborhood Involvement. Public Involvement Task Force. *Workgroup*

  Descriptions and Documents for Public Involvement Task Force. Web.

  <222.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=31198> . Downloaded October

  27, 2013).

PITF members also reached out broadly to the community for additional input.

They held two community forums, distributed a questionnaire, and held fourteen focus

group meetings. The focus groups sought input from particular communities, including:

different geographic areas of the city, city public involvement staff, communities of color

and immigrants and refugees, business associations, youth, public involvement

practitioners, people with disabilities and people with low incomes.

In the winter of 2004, the PITF members adopted the new set of principles

developed by the "principles" workgroup. They then regrouped themselves into four

workgroups—"culture," "community," "process," and "accountability and evaluation"—

to review the over eighty recommendations produced by the workgroups and to

synthesize the tremendous amount of work these groups had produced into a more

focused and effective final report. The PITF members struggled with this task and lost

momentum during the spring of 2004 and then stopped meeting without producing a final

report (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Public Involvement Task Force.

Public Involvement Task Force—2003-04. Web.

www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=29118 . [Downloaded October 17, 2013]).

The PITF experienced some internal tension from the outset, in part because the

PITF was created during a time of major conflicts between community members and city

leaders and staff over a number of controversial projects. In a number of cases,

community activists who had been fighting the city over certain projects served on the

PITF along with city staff who had played major roles in the public involvement for those

projects. As mentioned earlier, many community activists were very critical of the city's

public involvement efforts, in contrast to many of the city staff people who felt they had

been doing a pretty good job. Some city staff felt attacked and became somewhat

defensive and resistant to pressure from community critics. Community members pushed

hard for strong requirements and standards, often based in their years of frustration with

what they saw as poor public involvement by the city. City staff cautioned against

"cookie cutter," "one-size-fits-all" approaches that would impose requirements that did

not recognize that different bureaus did very different work and had different needs to

engage the public. They also argued that not every city project needed high 4levels of

community involvement. Given the limited resources for public involvement in many city

bureaus, city staff feared that inappropriately extensive standards would impose

additional burdens on staff and burn up scare public involvement resources without really improving public involvement.

Some of the key leaders of the PITF effort later explained why they thought the group did not produce a final report. Brian Hoop with ONI, who provided the primary staff support for the PITF, said that the 2004 mayoral election was in full swing, and a number of people wanted to wait to see which of the two main candidates would win—City Commissioner Jim Francesconi or former Portland police chief Tom Potter (Potter was running on a platform of reengaging the city and community in a "community governance" partnership). By waiting to see who won, PITF members could shape the report to fit the political opportunities and priorities of the next mayor. Hoop also reported that he needed to shift the focus of his time to supporting the GREAT Committee, which was completing its nearly five-year process of updating the ONI Standards. Different PITF members said that tensions among the three co-chairs also made it difficult to come to agreement on a final product.

Odell remembers that city staff on some of the workgroups "seemed pretty entrenched in their views" and were "afraid to give new ideas a chance because they weren't sure where it might lead down the road." She also said it was difficult in some cases to build collaborative relationships with city staff because they seemed to expect neighborhood activists to "fight" for "neighborhood issues" rather than seeing that they all were working on a common challenge together. She wondered whether some of the lack of cooperative spirit may have been in part a factor of the personalities and

perspectives of individual city staff people who participated in the PITF (Odell. Email to Leistner, June 11, 2013).

Butman remembers feeling frustrated that some PITF members did not have a good understanding of the realities of Portland's public involvement system. She also noted that, "on a personal level, having been quite involved with the process that created the original Principles of Public Involvement, I felt that the process and its outcomes were neither understood nor respected by members of the PITF that had not experienced that process." Butman also said that toward the end of the process, Mayor Potter had started up his Bureau Innovation Project #9 (BIP#9)—which was to look at ways to improve city government community involvement, and Bureau Innovation Project #8 (BIP#8) (later called "Community Connect")—which was a major review of Portland neighborhood and community involvement system). These efforts drew some peoples' energy away from PITF and "caused member burn out" (Butman. Email to Leistner, June 10, 2013). (Both BIP#9 and BIP#8 are described in more detail in the next chapter.)

Butman said she believes that sufficient consensus existed in the PITF around the "principles of the recommendation that they could stand as a good start for the next group to take up." She said that in her recollection, PITF members "stumbled when it came down to the fine print." Her assessment was that "this wasn't the group to make some of the timing and refinement decisions. Also, staffing to implement the recommendations was sorely needed and unavailable at the time. I think we always envisioned a new group and added staffing to move things forward." Her sense was that the PITF "had moved as far forward as it could" (Butman 2013).

The PITF members, even though they collectively were not able to produce a final product, did a tremendous amount of valuable work and laid out a strategic vision and plan for what it would take to significantly improve the quality and consistency of Portland city government public involvement.

In the summer of 2006, it became clear that Mayor Potter's BIP#9 was going to narrow its focus and produce a public involvement assessment tool for city staff rather than continue the broader work of the PITF. It also appeared that Mayor Potter was open to implementing one of the PITF recommendations, which was to create a standing public involvement advisory commission. PITF co-chair Julie Odell, ONI staff person Brian Hoop, and PITF member Paul Leistner,[70] not wanting to see the good PITF work forgotten and seeing an opportunity for PITF ideas to influence the new public involvement advisory commission, reached out to former PITF member Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, who then was serving as Mayor Potter's staff lead on community engagement issues. Kennedy-Wong supported the idea of pulling together a final report on the PITF principles, recommendations and action steps. Odell, Hoop, and Leistner met during the summer and fall, reviewed the PITF recommendations and organized and edited them into a form that could be passed on and would make the PITF work more accessible to future groups. They sent their proposed final report out to PITF members, but made it clear that the report was not a formal product of the full PITF group

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[70] The author of this study.

(Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Public Involvement Task Force 2003-2004*).[71]

The PITF principles, recommendations and suggested action steps from the 2006 PITF Report are described below.

PITF–Principles: Similar to other reviews of community involvement in the past, the PITF developed a set of principles to describe the basic values and characteristics of good community involvement. The PITF workgroup members who developed the principles saw them as being similar to the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights—the principles would "define what citizens should expect from city elected officials and city government staff" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Public Involvement Task Force Report* 2006, v).

The principles began by establishing "governance as partnership" as the overall conceptual framework for the principles. The principles stated that city officials and staff must "joint with citizens to create a partnership in which the public has a real voice in setting the course of the community." The document continued by listing and describing four sets of principles that would help achieve this partnership. These principles focused on basic values and characteristics of good community involvement, building the capacity for involvement in city government and the community, good process design, and government transparency and accountability, and evaluation.

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[71] In 2008, Mayor Potter and the City Council implemented on of the PITF recommendations by created the ongoing Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) to continue the work of the PITF and develop consistent community involvement guidelines and standards for city government. PIAC members would refer to the PITF report referenced above as one of the source documents they consider in developing the PIAC initial priorities and workplan.

The first set of principles identified the foundation of a governance partnership as requiring: a "culture of listening, hearing, and acting on public input;"the use of collaborative, consensus-seeking, and community-based approaches to identify priorities and create, develop, or implement "public policies" and city government projects, services, and actions; early involvement of the community in the shaping of policies and projects; and outreach to and inclusion of full diversity of community groups and interests in Portland.

The second set of principles focused on ensuring that both the government and community sides of the "governance partnership" had the willingness and ability to work together. One principle states that city leaders and staff "must have the skills and will to support and achieve effective public involvement as set out in these principles." Another focused on building capacity in the community, and identified Portland's "neighborhood and business association system" as a "cornerstone of public involvement and a primary channel for citizen input and involvement" and a central source of skill building opportunities and networking between neighborhood and business district leaders and "other community-based organizations."

The third set of principles focused on good design of community involvement processes. These principles stated that community involvement processes should "fit the scope, character, and impact of the policy or project, and be able to adapt to changing needs and issues as a process moves forward." Other principles recommended that city leaders and staff engage in ongoing "communication and dialogue" with the community, and use "culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques' to "reach out to

and involve constituencies traditionally under-represented in the community." Examples offered of these types of groups included, "people of color, immigrants and refugees, youth, people with low incomes, seniors, and people with disabilities."

The fourth set of principles focused on government accountability and transparency and the need for evaluation of community involvement processes.

The full text of the PITF Principles of Good Public Involvement is presented below.

PITF Principles of Good Public Involvement

Core Concept—Governance as Partnership: City elected officials and staff must join with citizens to create a partnership in which the public has a real voice in setting the course of the community. Effective involvement of the public is essential to achieve and sustain this partnership.

The following principles will help achieve this partnership:

FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

1. **Culture of listening, hearing, and acting on public input:** Public input must be integral to the development and implementation of public policies, public works projects, public services, and other city government actions.

2. **Collaborative, consensus-seeking, community-based approach:** City government/community partnerships consistently should pursue collaborative, consensusseeking, community-based approaches between all stakeholders when identifying policy priorities, and when creating, developing or implementing public policies, public works projects, public services, and other city government actions.

3. **Early Involvement:** The public should be involved early when a policy and project is being shaped—not after many important decisions have already been made and little realistic flexibility remains.

4. **Inclusiveness:** "Community" in Portland is made up of a rich diversity of groups and interests. City elected officials and city bureaus staff should identify, reach out to, and involve the full range of community groups and interests in public dialogue and decisionmaking processes.

BUILDING CAPACITY

5. **Capacity within City Government:** City elected officials, decision-makers, and staff must have the skills and will to support and achieve effective public involvement as set out in these principles.

6. **Capacity within the Community:** Portland's nationally-recognized formal neighborhood and business association system is a cornerstone of public involvement and a primary channel for citizen input and involvement in our City. It should play a pivotal role in creating opportunities for skill building and networking among both neighborhood/business association leaders and leaders of other community-based organizations.

7. **Coordination and Consistency:** City bureaus should coordinate their public outreach and involvement resources and activities to make the best use of city resources and public time and efforts.

PROCESS DESIGN

8. **Effective and Flexible Process Design and Implementation:** Public involvement processes and techniques should be well-designed, appropriately fit the scope, character, and impact of the policy or project, and be able to adapt to changing needs and issues as a process moves forward.

9. **Ongoing Communication and Dialogue:** City decision-makers and staff should establish clear, understandable, and ongoing communication and dialogue with the public and with formal groups in the community.

10. **Diversity and Accessibility:** Culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques should be used to reach out to and involve constituencies traditionally underrepresented in the community—for example, people of color, immigrants and refugees, youth, people with low incomes, seniors, and people with disabilities.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

11. **Accountability:** City elected officials, decision-makers and staff must be accountable for following these governance and public involvement principles.

12. **Transparency of Governance and Processes:** The public policy decision-making process should be accessible, open, honest, and understandable. Public participants should receive the information they need to participate effectively.

13. **Evaluation:** Mechanisms must be in place to allow ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of how well city elected officials, decision-makers, and staff follow these principles when developing and implementing public policies, projects, and services, and the effectiveness of individual public involvement processes.

(Portland. Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Public Involvement Task Force Report* 2006).

Public Involvement Task Force—Recommendations/Action Items: PITF

workgroups formed around topic areas that tied very closely to the PITF principles and

developed recommendations that provide what the PITF members intended to be a

strategic plan to achieve the "governance partnership" set out in the principles. Many of

the recommendations echo similar recommendations made in the ASR, TFNI Report, and

other previous reviews of Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system.

The recommendations and action items are summarized below.

*Foundations of Governance***:** PITF members recognized the importance of

embedding the PITF values and principles in the formal policies and structures of city

government to ensure that their enforcement carried more weight and would be more

difficult for future city elected officials and city staff to overturn or ignore.

- Adopt the PITF principles: The PITF recommended that the City Council

  adopt the principles by ordinance to give them force of law. They noted

  that the city's 1996 Public Involvement Principles had been adopted by

  non-binding resolution and appeared to have had little effective on the

  culture and practices of city government (4).

- Rewrite Comp Plan chapter on public involvement: Portland's

  Comprehensive Plan—required by Oregon's land use planning law—sets

  formal policy for the City in large of number areas. The Comp Plan

  governs City land use planning and development activities as well as

  capital facilities and transportation planning. PITF members recommended

  that the chapter that sets out requirements for "Citizen Involvement" in the

Comp Plan should be rewritten to incorporate the PITF principles and process requirements. Including language in the Comp Plan is strategically valuable because h City staff are required to write formal findings to show how their projects meet the Comp Plan goals and policies (4).

- Amend City Charter: PITF members also recommended including in the City Charter language describing and supporting the "governance partnership" model and the principles. The City Charter serves as the "constitution" for City government and carries the force of law. In the early 2000s, the Portland City Charter did not include any language describing the role of community members in city government decision making (4-5).

- Review City's system of boards and commissions: For many decades, Portland's city boards and commissions have acted as a major source of policy guidance for city leaders and agencies. The PITF members recommended a review of the effectiveness of the system at providing community input into and oversight of City decision making and in representing the full diversity of people and perspectives in Portland (5).

- Establish stable funding for community Involvement: PITF members recommended the establishment of a mechanism to ensure stable funding for public involvement processes and to support a citywide public involvement advisory committee that would help implement the PITF recommendations, develop best practices and training materials, and many

other city government capacity building activities. PITF members

suggested funding these activities through an over-head model that would

draw funding from each city agency, or by dedicating a certain percentage

of a projects budget to support public involvement planning and activities

(5). (The ASR also had suggested funding city government community

involvement support through an overhead model.)

   Building Capacity in City Government*:* The PITF Report asserted that city

officials and staff needed to have the "skills and will to support and achieve effective

public involvement" as described in the PITF principles. Recommendations in this area

included:

- Review ONI's role and location in city government: PITF members noted

   the shift in recent years away from ONI's original role of community

   empowerment and toward supporting city bureau outreach to the

   community. They called for a better balance of these roles. They also

   called for a review of the placement of ONI in the structure of city

   government. PITF members noted that "The current practice of placing a

   single commissioner over ONI severely limits the agency's ability to

   advocate for good public involvement in city bureaus that are not under

   the control of the ONI commissioner." They suggested putting ONI under

   the Mayor (who has the power to assign city bureaus to individual city

   commissioners) or under the City Auditor, which they wrote "would

provide more independence from the City Council, but may decrease [ONI's] ability to influence city bureaus (7).

- Develop education and training programs for City staff: PITF members recognized the need of city staff for ongoing training in and sharing of community involvement best practices and ideas. Suggested training topics included: culturally specific skills for reaching out to and involving diverse communities; electronic media strategies; database development and management; process design; customer service; public information; dealing with difficult people; and conflict resolution. PITF members suggested partnering with institutional training programs (e.g. IAP2, PSU Hatfield School of Government, ODOT, Metro, Tri-Met and county governments) for general skills training and with "diverse community–based organizations to provide "culturally appropriate skills training" to support outreach to different communities in Portland (7-10).

- Establish a formal networking group for City public involvement staff: PITF members noted that "An informal network of staff has met on and off over the years; however, without a formal structure and dedicated staff support, the group comes and goes." The ASR also recommended the creation of a peer network of City public involvement staff that could help staff share best practices, updates on current public involvement efforts, opportunities to collaborate and share resources, develop web-based tools, and to provide "peer review of bureau public involvement policies" (10).

Building Capacity in the Community*:* PITF members recognized that their

charge had been to focus on city government, but they also recognized that community

members need the capacity to participate, especially to engage in "government priority

setting and decision making." They recognized the value of the existing neighborhood

and business association system, and noted that "Communities of color and interest-based

groups have not always been integrated into the formal system." The PITF members

maintained that a high priority for building community capacity "is to create meaningful

and collaborative networks between the neighborhood/business association system and

other community-based groups." They also reported that "skills-building training" had

been "identified as another high priority by neighborhood and business association

leaders as well as community leaders of color." PITF members stated that additional

resources would be need to support creating linkages between community organizations

and strengthening "the capacity of communities of color to advocate on their own behalf

and develop culture-specific training" (10-11). PITF recommendations in this area

included:

- "Adequately fund and expand citizen education and training in City
  processes and advocacy skills:" PITF members recognized that
  neighborhood leaders and "Leaders from other community-based
  organizations, particularly those with diverse of minority constituencies"
  often "find themselves engaged with complex City issues" and may be
  "unfamiliar or ill equipped to respond in a timely and effect was or to
  organize others to participate." PITF members recommended the

development of a "leadership training program, open to the public" that would "cover basic City processes and advocacy skills" to help individuals be informed and effective advocates for their communities. They recommended the development and delivery this training should be adequately funded and expand on existing trainings in the neighborhood system, and partnerships with diverse community-based organizations and existing local institutions (11-13).

- Support the creation of networks between the neighborhood association system and other community-based groups: PITF members argued that "Increased relationships, communication and cooperation between the neighborhood and business association systems" and other groups and interest in the community "will build a stronger and more credible political voice" and will identify broader priorities in the community. PITF members recommended provided additional resources to the neighborhood and business association system to strengthen outreach capacity and providing "leadership training, strategic planning, and networking and relationship building between groups in the community (13-14).

- "Develop a mechanism for identifying and funding community-identified needs: PITF members recognized that, since the discontinuation of the Neighborhood Needs process, "no formal process or funding support is available by which communities can identify their own local spending

priorities and have these priorities formally considered in the city budget planning process." They recommended that such formal process should be developed. PITF members suggested that a grant program that provided "one-time funding for community-determined projects" or "build organizational capacity for groups to be more effective partners" with the City" might meet the same goals and the Neighborhood Needs process. PITF members noted that "Several Commissioners have expressed strong interest in replicating the Seattle [Neighborhood Matching Fund] model" (14).

Coordination across City Government: PITF members recommended that City bureaus "should coordinate their public outreach and involvement resources and activities to make the best use of city resources and public time and efforts." They offered the following recommendations:

- "Create an internal citywide web-based management system for public involvement contacts:" A central database of stakeholder contacts would help reduce "duplicate, outdated, and deceased persons mailings," "reduce inefficiencies in printing and distribution costs," and reduce duplication of staff effort across different bureaus. Allowing interested stakeholders to filter email notices and messages from the City by "City bureau, project, and geographical region" would prevent "email overload" for individuals in the community (14-15).

- Coordinate diverse stakeholder contacts and relationship building efforts:
  PITF members asserted that the City was not "adequately reaching people
  of color and other underrepresented groups through institutions [they]
  trust" and "to which they relate." "People do not see City notices in a
  diverse range of media. Mainstream newspapers do not reach people of
  color, youth, etc. The Daily Journal of Commerce is not sufficient for
  official notice." PITF members recommended that City staff "develop
  ongoing relationships with diverse community organizations, media, and
  leadership" and that the City "diversify its base of community contacts"
  and make them "readily accessible" to City bureaus. PITF suggested a
  number of specific relationship-building and outreach strategies to
  accomplish this.

- Coordinate with the City's Office of Affirmative Action on accessibility
  issues: PITF members suggested that City public involvement staff use the
  City's Office of Affirmative Action workplan for accessibility and
  adaptability as a template to evaluate their own public involvement efforts
  and look to the agency's workplan and 2002 Diversity Development
  Strategic Initiative for additional ideas. A couple of these ideas included:
  assessing City bureau public involvement policies to ensure they support
  accessibility for "diverse constituencies," such as ensuring that "meeting
  spaces are accessible to people with disabilities," that resources are
  allocated for "translation or interpretation" and building lists of "diverse

stakeholders;" and developing strategies to recruit "diverse representation on City Boards, Commissions and Committees." PITF members also recommended the creation of a "Public Involvement Advisory Committee" to "advise City bureaus on developing and implementing citywide and bureau diversity workplans related to public involvement" (16-17).

Process Design: PITF members emphasized the importance of "well-designed" public involvement processes that "appropriately fit the scope, character, and impact" of a policy or project" and that are "able to adapt to changing needs and issues as a process moves forward." They noted that "City bureau public involvement processes can be inconsistent" and called for a "basic framework for developing, implementing, and evaluating public involvement processes." PITF recommendations in this area include:

- Require city bureaus to develop formal written public involvement policies: PITF members recommended that the City Council require, by ordinance, that "every city bureau develop written public involvement policies and strategies that define their vision and goals for how their bureau will be consistent with and implement the public involvement principles." The PITF members recognized that the policies would vary "according to the type of work and needs of individual bureaus" but recommended that the policies describe bureau activities that would require public involvement, list a range of public involvement strategies appropriate to the work of the bureau, provide general guidelines to guide

bureau staff in developing "project-specific public involvement plans,"
and "Implementation and evaluation strategies." PITF members stated that
the bureau public involvement policies "must be available to the public,"
and recommended the development of a "model public involvement
policy" to guide bureaus in developing their own policies (18-19).

- Refine the city budget outreach process: PITF members argued that
  community members need "early information" and "involvement" to
  "provide informed input on decisions about project prioritization, funding,
  and levels of public involvement in implementation." They identified the
  city budget process as the "first step for project implementation" and
  asserted that involvement of community members in the city budget
  process should go beyond "simply voting on the prioritization of pre-
  selected projects." In addition to recommending the refinement of the
  Your City, Your Choice process, the PITF suggested that a task force of
  city staff and community members be set up to "research and make
  recommendations for improving public participation in the City bi-annual
  budget process." (The Budget Outreach Study Group (BOSG) was created
  in response to this recommendation. The BOSG's findings and
  recommendations are described below.) PITF members also suggested that
  the use of Bureau Advisory Committees (BACS) be re-evaluated and that
  city bureaus should maintain a calendar, updated annually, that would

inform community members about "projects that are being funded and the level of public involvement for each project" (19)

- Require written public involvement plans for certain projects: PITF recommended that the City Council require bureaus, by ordinance, to prepare "written formal public involvement plans for certain types of city projects and policies, such as large capital improvement projects, and policies and projects that either involve high levels of public spending or have significant impacts in the community."

- Develop guidelines for bureau public involvement processes: PITF members recommended the development of guidelines for "public involvement plans" for projects that address: conceptual design, technical process design, implementation, feedback to the community, and follow-up evaluation. PITF members stressed the importance of integrating public involvement up front as part of the overall project design—not after the rest of the project design has been developed. They suggested the development of a "checklist to guide bureaus in evaluating the appropriate level and nature of public involvement processes." (In response to this recommendation, Mayor Tom Potter's, Bureau Innovation Project #9 would develop such an assessment tool for city bureaus.) PITF members also recommended the development of a "Best Public Involvement Practices Handbook" and a review of the existing "minimum notice requirements" that determine the minimum period of time for public

notice before a bureau or the City Council acts on a "major policy or capital improvement projects as well as other types of projects." PITF members additionally recommended that "important public involvement documents" be posted on the City's website, that guidelines be developed on how bureaus "should provide feedback to the public after project completion," and that a template be developed to guide bureaus through an evaluation of the public involvement plans, process and outcome" (20-24).

Ongoing Communication and Dialogue: PITF members recommended that "City decision makers and staff should establish clear, understandable and ongoing communication and dialogue with the public and with formal groups in the community. To help accomplish this, PITF members recommended: the creation of a central "Public Information Office" "to coordinate bureau development of citywide communication and media relations (similar to the ASR recommendation); the development of "policies and a system for improving the quality, accessibility and transparency of public information, including addressing the digital divide;" and better utilization of "existing community resources for project outreach." PITF members accompanied each of these recommendations with additional detailed suggestions (24-28).

*Diversity and Accessibility***:** PITF members asserted that "Culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques should be used to reach out to and involve constituencies traditionally under-represented in the community—for example, people of color, immigrants and refugees, youth, people with low incomes, seniors and people with disabilities." PITF recommendations in this area include:

- Improve accessibility of public involvement events to people with disabilities, seniors, and others: PITF members recommended the bureaus commit the resources necessary to ensure broad accessibility of City public involvement events, especially by ensuring that all locations are ADA accessible and to reduce barriers to involvement by providing transportation assistance, language translation and interpretation, and child care support.

- Reduce barriers to participation by "minority, Women and Emergency Small Businesses (MWESB)" to City professional services contracts for public involvement services.

- "Improve accessibility of childcare services at key public involvement events to expand participation of families with children in City public involvement processes."

- "Expand language translation and interpretation accessibility of City information."

- "Engage youth and young adults in civic activities through community-based service learning."

*Government Accountability***:** PITF members asserted that "City elected officials, decision makers and staff must be accountable for following the [PITF] governance and public involvement principles." They noted that city government, at that time, did not provide bureau directors, managers and staff the "direction or structure needed to encourage" them to "implement the level and character of public involvement" described

by the PITF principles or to hold "city commissioners and city bureau staff accountable

for following public involvement principles and standards." PITF members presented

recommendations in the following areas: Accountability, Transparency, and Evaluation.

The "Accountability" recommendations included:

- Incorporation of public involvement responsibilities into formal bureau

  employee job descriptions: The formal job descriptions for "bureau

  directors, a designated bureau manager and at least one bureau staff

  person" should clearly describe responsibilities for "the development and

  implementation of public involvement plans" and "public process

  management." PITF members recommended that language requiring

  "general support of effective public involvement, should be included for

  bureau employees at every level to establish a culture of collaboration and

  partnership between government and the community" (35).

- Include evaluation of "compliance with public involvement principles" in

  formal personnel reviews for "bureau directors, managers, and staff" (36).

- "Require bureau directors to provide to the City Council annual progress

  reports on their bureau's efforts to improve public involvement

  performance and efforts to implement these proposals" (36).

- "Utilize the [City] Ombudsman Office to respond to specific public

  concerns about public involvement implementation by city bureaus: In

  Portland city government, the Ombudsman can investigate complaints by

  community members that a City bureau did not follow established process

requirements. PITF members noted that if the City Council were to place public involvement standards and requirements in City code, "the Ombudsman could formally investigate complaints that city bureaus did not follow established public involvement requirements. In such a case, the Ombudsman could begin to play a role in helping enforce establish public involvement standards rather than just leaving compliance up to the discretion of each city bureau (36).

- "Require documentation of public involvement actions and outcomes" to accompany all proposed ordinances that go before the City Council: City staff already had to submit certain types of information along with any ordinances they presented to City Council for approval. PITF members recommended requiring city staff to complete a form, as part of this packet of information, that would describe any public involvement done related to the preparation of the subject of the ordinance and any effect public involvement had on shaping the subject of the ordinance. PITF members clarified that the "purpose would be to encourage city staff to think about…public involvement needs" and to "provide the public and elected officials with evidence of the extent to which the public was involved" (36)

- "Establish a standing Public Involvement Advisory Commission to advise bureaus and hold the City accountable to [the] adopted public involvement principles and guidelines," and create a new position to support the

Commission: PITF members recognized that many of their recommendations were unlikely to be implemented without some sort of ongoing body that would "review and advocate for implementation of the public involvement principles" and the PITF recommendations. They noted that "Many other City policy areas have formal boards or commissions that focus both public and government attention on issues and provide a vehicle to review and comment on related city government activities" (38). (PITF members also noted that Metro and Multnomah County both already had had ongoing "citizen involvement committees" with "similar roles" to that of the proposed commission.)

PITF members recommended that the commission "include both community members and city staff to best facilitate problem-solving efforts" and that a staff person be funded to support the commission's work. PITF members recommended that the commission be charged to: track implementation of the PITF principles; review bureau public involvement policies and plans; establish a baseline measurement and measure annually the "involvement by traditionally underrepresented groups;" institutionalize the role of under-represented groups to ensure they have a voice in holding the City accountable for effectively reaching out to their communities; prepare an annual report on the City's public involvement efforts; and "Work closely with [the City] Auditor's Office

and Ombudsman Office" to develop "procedures for responding to

complaints and recommendations for corrective action" (37-38).

PITF members suggested that the commission also could advise the City

on "Culturally appropriate public involvement techniques," "Education

and training" needed to "build the capacity of" leaders of neighborhood

associations and other community-based organizations; and the use of

different public information and communication strategies (37-38).

PITF members stressed that the work of the commission could not be

"effective without adequate staff." They argued that, at a minimum, staff

support would be needed to prepare "its annual report, scheduling,

member recruitment, agendas and minutes." PITF members also supported

the inclusion of some "public involvement questions" in the City

Auditor's annual survey of community satisfaction—something PITF

members noted that the City Auditor and ONI already had been discussing

(38).

PITF members asserted that "the workings of government must be transparent, to

ensure that community members can be involved meaningfully in the democratic process

and the civic life of our community." PITF members identified two types of transparency:

"governance/global transparency" related to "how the city operates, coordinates internal

activities and provides expectations;" and "project-specific transparency" related to "how the city communicates to the public" and the process design of a particular project (39).

PITF members identified basic principles of transparency that included:

- "[T]imely, accessible and understandable information" that is available to the public.

- Easy access for community members to information about current and upcoming city programs and projects including: "The key decision-making process; Key decision points, who makes final decisions[s] and when; Factual and legal/policy bases for decisions;" information about which staff are responsible for the project and the organizational structure in which they operate; "Expected budgets, timelines, workplans, schedules; What type and level of public involvement will occur and when, and avenues for appeal/review and deadlines."

- Honest and timely sharing of information, "including presentations of pros and cons and likely costs and impacts of proposed actions."

- Checks and balances that monitor government openness.

- "Policy impact assessments" that provide "a clear r4ational for the project, state why" it is being proposed, and an analysis of the pros and cons of alternatives.

- Identification of the range of public values affected by "each project or process" (39).

PITF "transparency" recommendations included:

- "Establish consistent policies and processes for responding to formal public records requests" (40).

- "Develop clear criteria for putting items on the City Council's consent agenda—both routine and 'emergency' ordinances" and prepare and make available to the public "a summary statement and backup information" about the item: PITF members were responding to the common practice, at the time, in which City Commissioners and City bureaus sometimes would bring controversial items to the City Council for action on the council's "consent agenda," which allowed council members to vote on them without any public testimony (40).

- "Develop a more user-friendly system for providing public access to complex policy, planning and capital project-related documentation" (40-41).

PITF members asserted that ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and reporting would be needed to determine how well "city elected officials, decision makers and staff" followed the PITF principles in their development and implementation of city policies, projects, and services and to determine the effectiveness of "individual public involvement processes." PITF members noted that Portland city government did not have any such evaluation programs or mechanisms at the time of the PITF study (41). PITF "evaluation" recommendations included:

- "Implement regular evaluation of public involvement process by bureaus" (41).

- "Review bureau compliance with PI principles and requirements through formal performance and management audits" (41)."

- "Establish peer review of bureau PI Plans by PI staff:" This recommendation referred to review of city bureau proposed public involvement plans by other city public involvement staff people through the city-government-wide peer networking group recommended earlier" (41).

PITF Next Steps: The 2006 PITF Report closed by identifying six "core recommendations" as the highest priority for implementation by then Mayor Tom Potter. These included:

- Adopt, by ordinance, the public involvement principles.

- Direct all city bureaus to develop overall "formal written public involvement policies" for their agencies and develop a "model policy" to serve as a "framework" for this effort.

- Require written PI plans for "certain types of major capital, policy and planning efforts."

- Ensure that city bureaus use "culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques" to "reach out to [and] involve" under-represented communities in Portland.

- "Establish a stable funding mechanism for public involvement processes."

- "Establish a standing Public Involvement Advisory Commission to advise bureaus and hold the City accountable" for following the adopted public involvement principles, standards and guidelines.

- Create a staff position to support the commission and "issue an annual report, among other duties" (ix).

The PITF, for the first time in Portland, provided a detailed and comprehensive strategy for improving city government public involvement. Other earlier processes had identified the need for principles of public involvement and some of the same recommendations. The PITF was the first process to map out detailed follow up steps to ensure that good community involvement values and practices would become embedded in the City's policy structure and the organization culture of city bureaus and lead to a significant improvement in the quality and consistency of community involvement efforts across city government. The value of the PITF effort would be borne out by the high number of its recommendations that were implemented in the coming years or are still high on the agenda for implementation in 2013.

While the PITF work was winding down in 2004, a small study group formed to review community involvement in the city budget process, implementing one of the many PITF recommendations.

Budget Outreach Study Group—2004-05

The city budget is where some of the most important decisions that affect the community are made. The PITF had not been able to focus much attention on community participation in the city budget process. Laurel Butman (PITF co-chair and lead staff

person on community outreach for the city budget process) and a small group of community members formed the 2004-05 Budget Outreach Study Group (BOSG) to examine the challenges and opportunities for improving community involvement in the city budget process.[72]

BOSG members recognized that Portland's new mayor (Tom Potter, who was elected in November 2004) would take office in January 2005 and that he was likely to want to institute "a new or modified budget outreach process" for the FY 2005-06 budget—an off year for YCYC (Portland. Office of Management and Finance. *Budget Outreach Option & Analysis*. September 2005 5). Butman and the other BOSG members saw an opportunity to influence Potter's decision about how to involve the community in the development of the city budget in the future.

The study began by recognizing a "paradox." Community involvement in the City budget process was very important because the city budget served as a primary articulation of the City's values and priorities. At the same time, to participate effectively in the budget process, community members needed to understand the programs being funded and why. Group members noted that the city budget is very complex, as are the city's "financing and accounting processes," and these "are not processes that are accessible or evening interesting to most people" Any process to involve the public in the development of the City budget needs to acknowledge the complexity of the budget process and the uneven civic capacity and limitations of government participation

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[72] One of the BOSG members was southwest neighborhood activist Amanda Fritz. Fritz also had served on the 1995-96 TFNI. She later would serve on Portland's Planning Commission for many years and then would run for a city council seat under Portland's short-lived publically funded campaigns program. Fritz starting serving on Portland's City Council in 2009 and served as the ONI Commissioner from 2009 through 2012.

processes to involve people in meaningful ways (Portland. Office of Management and Finance. *Budget Outreach Option & Analysis*. 2005 3).

Mayor Goldschmidt had required city agencies to create budget advisory committees with community members to help them develop their budget proposals. By the late 1980s, nearly all of city bureaus had budget advisory committees. In the early 1990s, Mayor Katz had discontinued the program and soon very few bureaus had budget advisory committees. Instead, Katz had instituted the "Your City, Your Choice" program in 1994. The YCYC was conducted every other year and usually included a series of community budget forums prior to Mayor Katz's release of her proposed budget and one or more community surveys. The object of the forums and survey was to "gather information about community priorities for the budget among major service area categories." Sometimes the forums would be coordinated with the City Auditor's release of the "Service Efforts and Accomplishments" report, which reported on the performance of city bureaus and often included comparisons to service provision in other cities (4). The City's Office of Management and Finance (OMF), which was in charge of the city budget process, also had created a website which provided information for community members about the city budget and budget process.

BOSG members found that the YCYC process was good at providing Mayor Katz with some input on general community priorities for services and at providing community members with general information about the budget process. The process was not very effective at providing opportunities for more active stakeholders to become educated and involved in the budget process." Because the forums also took place late in

the bureau budget development process (which actually starts in the late summer and fall), the YCYC did "not meet some involved stakeholders' desires to be a part of the actual decision making" (6).

BOSG members identified some key factors to improve community involvement in the budget process in the future. These included:

- **Integration**: BOSG members believed that "people would like to see visioning and planning work tied to the budget in a transparent way. City Council and community priorities in the budget should be clear. The process itself should make people feel invested in the whole system, contributing to the decision making, and feel their priorities are included in the outcome."

- **Match Activities to the Audience**: A major finding of the BOSG was that different audiences existed in the community and that "these audiences require different levels of information and education to engage them effectively."

- **Focus on Outcomes**: Good public involvement design requires a "clear focus on the types of outputs and outcomes that are anticipated and desired from any participation process" (6-7).

The BOSG identified four different audiences:

- **Expert or Broad Stakeholders**: "These are long-term advocates who regularly participate in various City planning and policy-making initiatives, often acting as leaders and advisors in the community…."

These individuals often are interested and want to be involved in "systemic change" and/or "citywide issues and impacts" (7).

- **Focused Stakeholders**: "These are community members who focus on a single issue area or geographic area…" They usually want to influence decisions about a particular project or service type or decisions that affect a particular part of the city. They often stay involved with their chosen issue over time (8).

- **Casually-involved Stakeholders**: "These are community members who may attend City sponsored events that interest them or because a political or livability issue has sparked their interest." If they attend a community budget forum, it "may well be their first meeting on City business." They often are seeking action on a specific project or basic information on how they can get more involved (8).

- **The Uninvolved**: "These community members rarely, if ever, interact with the City as a local government. They may read about the City and vote, but take a passive rather than active interest in city government projects, initiatives, and policy." Their need is more for basic information about City services in general and opportunities to share their opinions on basic city services (8).

The BOSG's recognition that different audiences have very different levels of interest and capacity to participate in city budget decision-making was a crucial insight for any future effort to improve community involvement in the City's budget process.

The BOSG found the existing YCYC process was good at providing basic information for individuals in the "casually-involved" and "uninvolved" audiences. The lack of opportunity for more in-depth discussion and analysis and the limited opportunity to have much of an effect on actual decisions about the city budget made YCYC often very frustrating for "focused" or "expert" stakeholders and left them feeling "disenfranchised." A single process, like the YCYC, could not meet the needs of all of these audiences.

BOSG members examined a broad array of strategies and tools by which to improve future community involvement in the budget process and meet the needs of different audiences. They divided these strategies and tools into four broad categories: use of Internet technologies, public input, ongoing education, and community capacity building.

Internet Technologies: The BOSG members recognized that web-based tools offered the opportunity to offer community members a number of opportunities to access information, receive formal notifications, participate in surveys and budget exercises and "games," and pose questions and receive answers, and submit suggestions, comments, and formal testimony. The BOSG members also recognized that not everyone has access to the Internet and that additional strategies need to be developed to reach out to and involve these individuals (11-12).

Public Input: Community surveys and the YCYC community budget forums were good at soliciting general the opinions and priorities of community members related to city services. They did not provide much opportunity for community members to

identify new needs or to get more deeply involved in understanding and influencing priority setting and decision making by individual bureaus or the city budget as a whole. The BOSG members suggested additional approaches.

One was some sort of a renewed and improved "Neighborhood Needs" process to "link a neighborhood needs process with a finite amount of dedicated funding" rather than just generating a wish list of projects and leaving it to city staff to decide which to pursue (similar to the discontinued Neighborhood Needs process from the 1970s and 1980s). BOSG members suggested the creation of a grant program, similar to Seattle's Neighborhood Matching Program.

BOSG members suggested additional efforts to involve community members in bureau development of their capital project budgets. They recognized that the citywide capital project outreach pilot project in 2001 had not been particularly successful. Some bureaus had created processes to inform the public about their capital projects, such as the PBOT's CIP workshops to "identify critical neighborhood projects" and the Water Bureau's capital project workshops. While these processes did not require the same level of inter-bureau coordination at the 2001 citywide process, these processes still faced the challenge of how to ensure that community members had enough information and understanding to participate in a meaningful way.

One option for responding to the "community capacity" challenge, was to reinstitute some form of bureau "budget advisory committees" and some form of citywide committees with community members participation. The BOSG members recognized that the BAC program in the 1970s and 1980s had been discontinued for a

number of reasons, including: "committees became too insular (either in support of a bureau or insulated from members' own constituencies); roles and responsibilities [of BAC members and the level of community participation on the BACs] varied across bureaus, resulting in disparate results; the capacity and/or commitment of committee members to interface back to their own publics lagged." While the BOSG members found that BACs could be useful, they cautioned that BAC members needed to reach out to and engage the broader community rather than the BAC becoming an exclusive vehicle for the community members who served on it.

More elaborate "participatory budgeting" processes, similar to those used in some other cities, were another option. BOSG members recognized that these processes provide a much more structured and far-reaching opportunity to involve the community in priority setting and the development of the City budget. These processes also require higher levels of resources and a much longer time commitment (14-18).

Ongoing Education: General, ongoing education of community members in particular policy areas can help community members develop the civic capacity to participate in complex processes and in complex projects and enable them to provide more meaningful input. BOSG members noted that these types of processes—not being tied to a specific project—often are "difficult activities to justify funding." BOSG members identify one good model as the "PSU Traffic & Transportation Class" which educated community members on how to advocate for transportation projects in their community. This class had been offered regularly for a number of years at PSU. Similar classes could be developed for other policy areas. Another option was the development of

a one-time or annual citywide budget forum in the summer or early fall that would help community members understand how to get involved early in the budget development process when they have much more chance to affect the outcome. BOSG also suggested a "brown bag" series of talks that would introduce community members to different aspects of the budget process. The talks could be video-taped and made available on the City's website.

BOSG suggested that, rather than relying only on processes driven by city staff, community groups, such as the neighborhood coalitions, could receive training and then take the lead in training their own board members and neighborhood members on the city budget process. Coalition staff would become important resources for community members and could support community members in identifying and advocating for the budget priorities (18-20).

Community Capacity Building: BOSG members recognized the advantage of "the community taking a lead in its own education" and said these efforts could include "building institutional knowledge from the ground up, to achieving consensus on agendas for influencing government decisions, to ensuring newcomers become rapidly competent at civic engagement activities." The also recognized that the existing power structure in Portland might be threatened by this approach." An "informed and effectively engaged public can pose some threat to the balance of decision making power in government"-- "Community capacity is sometimes a challenge to political system." BOSG members identified options including a grassroots, "citizen-run citywide forum" or a process of "community-based development of priorities and proposals" (21).

In closing, the BOSG members drew attention to the need for city external communications about the budget process to clearly identify the "issues at stake" to encourage greater involvement and to be two-way—both providing education and easily accessible information, and providing closure by letting community members know what affect community input had on the final budget decisions. They also emphasized the "value of relationship building" and the need to invest the "time, resources and education" to "create and maintain long term relationships with people" (22-23).

BOSG members also identified potential "challenges" with existing public involvement in the city budget process that would need to be overcome, including:

- Building partnerships with community-based organizations, churches, and other community groups to build networks and identify potential "spokespeople/leaders."

- Clearly defining the community audience to be reach, goals for involving them, and identification of what would make their involvement feel successful to them.

- Matching technical information to particular audiences.

- "Acknowledging the important of building relationships and the time that takes" and differentiating between community involvement that is meant to meet a formal requirement and "true 'participation.'"

- Following up with community members and "closing the feedback loop" to "let citizens know their comments were heard and that their

participation was appreciated," and to let them know about "other

opportunities for involvement" (22).

While the BOSG members already were looking to the opportunities for improved

community involvement symbolized by the election of Tom Potter, it is helpful to step

back a moment to understand the context of intensive conflict between city leaders and

community members shaped the PITF and BOSG work and that set the stage for Potter's

election victory and the strong community expectations for rapid and meaningful

improvements in community involvement that came with it.

ONI Commissioner Randy Leonard

In the early 2000s, Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system

had no strong political champion on the city council. Mayor Katz assigned responsibility

for ONI to three different commissioners between 2000 and 2004 (i.e. Saltzman,

Francesconi, and Leonard). This period was characterized by increasing conflict between

neighborhood and community activists and City Hall and the worst relations between

City Hall and the community in many years.

Randy Leonard, former Portland fire fighter, president of Firefighters Union, and

state legislator from East Portland, was elected to the Portland City Council in 2002.

Leonard came into office with strong union support and was seen by many as providing,

for the first time, a voice for working class people and others in east Portland, who had

felt disenfranchised and ignored by the city council since the City of Portland had

annexed their area in the late 1980s and 1990s.

Leonard long had been known for "aggressiveness toward adversaries" and his willingness to engage in "flare-ups" as a state representative. Shortly after his election as a city commissioner, the *Oregonian* reported that Leonard "declared that he would tackle 'rude, condescending or hostile behavior' in the city's work force. After a month in office, it's Leonard whose knack for feuds has made some fear him as a rude and hostile inquisitor"—referring to complaints by city staff and bureau directors who already had been targeted by Leonard (Stern. *Oregonian*, December 24, 2002).

When Mayor Katz assigned the city bureaus to the different city commissioners in December 2002, she assigned ONI to Leonard. Leonard went on to preside over one of the periods of greatest conflict between ONI and the neighborhood system in the history of Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system. *Oregonian* articles from the time capture some of the intensity and drama of the conflict between Leonard and his critics during his, just over, two years in charge of ONI.

Leonard had big ideas for how to reshape and redirect ONI. In July 2003, he unilaterally announced that he wanted to change ONI's name to the "Neighborhood Services Bureau" and that he was moving twenty-two neighborhood and housing inspectors and noise control staff from the Bureau Development Services (BDS) to ONI. Leonard believed that the move would "give residents one place to turn for problems from abandoned vehicles to loud noise," make these services much more accessible to a broad spectrum of community members, and speed up the city's response to complaints. Leonard also said he planned to "start a year-long pilot project [in] October that would put a senior neighborhood officer, crime prevention specialist and neighborhood

inspector into the city-staff run north Portland neighborhood office (one of the two neighborhood district offices run by ONI not an independent community board of directors) (Stern. *Oregonian,* July 22, 2003).

Neighborhood coalition leaders were alarmed. Southeast Uplift leaders told the *Oregonian* that they feared "the change would dilute [ONI's] commitment to citizen involvement and wrongly shift its focus to services." They also were "unhappy about what they consider to be the lack of citizen involvement in the process." Southeast Uplift representatives said they planned to speak out against the name change and "against the added functions and the way they were presented." The *Oregonian* quoted Cynthia Peek, the Southeast Uplift board president, as saying "I feel they're trying to cut citizens out of decision-making" (Stern. *Oregonian,* July 22, 2003).

In September 2003, Leonard clashed with neighborhood activists again over the City Council's decision to allow houses to be built on substandard "skinny" lots in older parts of Portland. Neighborhood activists organized and mounted an aggressive citywide advocacy effort against the policy. They believed creating this exception in the city code would generate a wave of infill development that would damage the character of these older neighborhoods. Portland Planning Commission members agreed, and the City Council voted to reverse the policy. *Oregonian* columnist Rene Mitchell credited the reversal to "a bit of good luck. An unapologetically bullheaded approach [by neighborhood activists]. And a hesitant link in the ego chain of four stubborn men who all believed they stood on the right side of the truth" (Mitchell. *Oregonian*, September 12, 2003).

At the city council hearing at which the council reversed its decision. Commissioner Erik Sten said "I underestimated the damage to the neighborhoods and how strongly people felt about it." Mayor Katz thanked neighborhood activists and acknowledged that "the neighborhoods were right from the beginning." Commissioner Randy Leonard, "though, maintained his righteously indignant opposition to changing his mind" and was the sole vote on the council not to reverse the city council's earlier decision (Mitchell. *Oregonian*, September 12, 2003).

In September 2003, ONI Director David Lane announced that he would leave his position to take advantage of an opportunity to move with his partner and their six-month-old twins to Hawaii. Lane said his decision to step down had nothing to do with Commissioner Leonard and that he enjoyed working with him. Lane said the move has been in the works for several months (Stern. *Oregonian*, September 22, 2003). Leonard quickly announced his intention to replace Lane with Jimmy Brown, the manager for the Multnomah County Department of Justice and a childhood friend of Leonard. Leonard did not reach out to the community for any input on Lane's replacement (Stern. *Oregonian*, September 26, 2003).

Leonard clashed again with neighborhood activists in October 2003 at a community meeting and "pledged to stay as long as needed to explain [to the neighborhood activists] the revolutionary changes he wants for the 30-year old system of city-financed citizen participation" from "its role as all neighborhoods' voice to City Hall, into City Hall's service centers to neighborhoods." Leonard claimed that his plan to change the focus of ONI was responding to concerns he heard while he was campaigning

from "residents who don't have the time to attend neighborhood meetings or feel

excluded from them." Leonard said his vision was that "residents will use their

neighborhood associations as one-stop service centers"…"mini-City Halls"…"to pay

traffic tickets, get abandoned cars hauled off or pay utility bills." Leonard told the

neighborhood activists at the meeting "You're going to see a level of service people in

the neighborhoods have never seen before" (Nkrumah and Stern. *Oregonian*, October 2,

2003).

The *Oregonian* reported that "the first-year commissioner's answers [at the

community meeting] didn't satisfy many of the questioners, bitter about a growing power

struggle between the City Council and longtime supporters of a system that once won

national recognition for engaging ordinary citizens in the workings of government."

Charles Ford, chairman of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, said "We are no

longer participants….That's not the way we're accustomed to doing business in Portland,

Oregon." Leonard also had stirred controversy by deciding, without any community

input, to force "longtime neighborhood crime prevention specialists [to] reapply for

[their] jobs with expanded duties that include cracking down on problem liquor

establishments" (*Oregonian*, October 2, 2003).[73]

Neighborhood activists critical of Leonard's plan and some of Leonard's fellow

city council members were becoming increasingly concerned. Leonard's critics worried

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[73] It's interesting to note that Leonard attempts to unilaterally implement his proposed changes to
Portland's neighborhood system, stood in stark contrast to the values and direction of the work of the
Southeast Uplift DRC and DCLC—which was looking at really would involve and give a greater voice in
decision making to people from under-represented communities in Portland, and the PITF—which was
developing very sophisticated and detailed recommendations to improve city government community
involvement. Leonard did not consult with any of these groups as he developed his system reform
proposals.

that the "trade-off" would be "top-down dictation from the City Council with dissent squashed and neighborhood voice ignored." Mayor Katz (no strong supporter of community involvement herself) said she could not "remember a time in her three terms [as mayor] when relations have been so strained." Katz went on to say "Neighborhoods are feeling a majority of council may not be as sensitive to issues raised before the council….Neighborhoods might feel like they're getting bullied and not being listened to. Are we there now? We're close to being there. I think we're closer now than ever before." The *Oregonian* reported that "the council's seeming new tack in dealing with neighborhood leaders and their issues has been a rude awakening for activists. This is especially so in a city that long has proudly touted its public involvement process as a model" (Nkrumah and Stern. *Oregonian*, October 2, 2003).

A number of neighborhood leaders from different districts in the city began speaking out against what they saw as attacks by the city council on the neighborhood system. They asserted that City council members had gone from frequent allies of neighborhood activists to adversaries. One activist stated that the "traditional Portland sense of [shared] governance just doesn't have a lot of meaning for them." Leonard countered by saying "he draws a 'distinction between people active in neighborhood associations and neighborhoods." He complained that "some people…feel they need to sign off on everything we do…Procedural measures are important obviously, but there a point at which I grow impatient by talking. I want to implement." Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who stubbornly had been insisting on covering Portland's historic open reservoirs in the face of intense community opposition, said "politics can't get bogged

down over process in every instance." He said "I think maybe part of the rub is we have a City Council now that seems to want to be particularly decisive." "There are a lot of people who are not accustomed to that" (Nkrumah and Stern. *Oregonian*, October 2, 2003).

Clashes between city council members and neighborhood leaders over many different projects and recent decreases in funding and ONI staff support for the neighborhood system threatened the health of Portland's long-standing culture of grass root activism and cooperation between city government and community members. One neighborhood activist said the city had lost "a 'shared vision' under which the council and neighborhoods would work together to solve issues…there was a value that was recognized in conducting the process that way, that you got a better decision if the citizens were involved" (Nkrumah and Stern. *Oregonian*, October 2, 2003).

Mayor Katz became particularly alarmed, in October 2003, when, Leonard, Saltzman, and Franesconi, joined forces to unilaterally change a proposed district plan for NW Portland, which had been negotiated with broad community involvement and input over a number of years. They chose to allow a prominent developer to build a number of parking garages over strong opposition of neighborhood activists. Mayor Katz, who had opposed allowing the garages, said that "'special interests have won'" at the expense of the community. "I hope that we realized that the message that this sends to other neighborhoods is that they all are in peril" from this city council (Nkrumah. *Oregonian*, November 5, 2003).[74]

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[74] NW neighborhood leaders refused to agree to the changes in the NW District Plan. They showed their strong displeasure by organizing a parade of community members who marched down the street with a

Leonard continued to argue said he'd had "hundreds of conversations" with Portlanders "who want better and more accessible city services in their neighborhoods"—Portlanders who "may be too busy with family and work to attend neighborhood meetings but also deserve a voice." Leonard said "There are people who don't have time for process….They want results" (Stern. *Oregonian*, October 7, 2003).

New ONI Director Jimmy Brown, a former manager in the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice, began work in November 2003. Some neighborhood leaders soon began to complain that ONI leadership had stopped listening to the community and criticized Brown's effectiveness. Some community members reported that the ONA BAC, under Brown's leadership, no longer modeled inclusive and collaborative approaches to decision making and had become a "rubber stamp" for decisions by Leonard. Some community members praised Leonard for his leadership in championing changes to city code that strengthening the City's mechanisms to regulate liquor license establishments in Portland's neighborhoods.[75]

Seltzer Sharpe Strachan Proposal–November 11, 2003

Many supporters of community and neighborhood involvement were becoming increasingly alarmed at the changes to the system under Commissioner Leonard and the increasing conflict between city leaders and agencies and neighborhood and community activists. In November 2003, three prominent community leaders called for a return to

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copy of the NW District Plan and then ceremonially burned the document in front of a house designated for demolition to build one of the parking garages (Sieber. Conversation with Mark Sieber, October 17, 2013).

[75] Leonard lead the effort to have the City Council adopt Ordinance 178201 (substitute, as amended) on February 18, 2004, which adopted "time, place, manner" restrictions on liquor establishments and directed ONI Liquor License Notification Program (started in 2000) and the Portland Police to support the implementation of the new regulations.

ONA/ONI's original focus on supporting community organizing and empowerment. The three included: former city commission Margaret Strachan, former city commissioner and author of the 1992 report on ONA; her husband Sumner Sharpe, a well known local planning consultant and founder of the urban planning program at Portland State University (PSU); and Ethan Seltzer, director of the PSU Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning (and former land use staff person at Southeast Uplift in the 1970s!) (Seltzer, Ethan and Sumner Sharpe and Margaret Strachan. *Imagine a City of Engaged, Articulate Citizens and Neighborhoods*. November 11, 2003).

Strachan, Sharpe, and Seltzer charged that Portland's neighborhood program "once broadly recognized as a catalyst for civic innovation" had become "a shadow of its former self." They argued that ONI, "rather than promoting and sustaining neighborhood organizing as a means for ensuring a steady flow of new participants into neighborhood association activities, and articulate and empowered neighborhoods" had become "a top-heavy bureaucracy intent on defining performance in institutional rather than grassroots terms." The three called for "a new commitment to neighborhood organizing, a willingness to define performance goals in terms of community needs and processes, and a refocusing of effort on neighbor-to-neighbor interaction."

Strachan et al argued that, in the 1970s the City Council had created ONA as a commitment " to supporting and sustaining neighborhood organizing in the belief that organized, articulate neighborhoods would be a key to Portland's future success even if, from time to time," neighborhood associations opposed the City Council. ONA's role was to efficiently pass "funds through to coalitions" whose role was to support

organizing and provide "technical assistance at the grassroots level" and to help City

agencies "listen more effectively to what citizens were talking about."

The three charged that the commitment to organizing and to a "limited role for

ONA" had been "abandoned almost completely" and that ONI had become bloated and

acted as an "adjunct of the city bureaucracy." "What was once a commitment to

grassroots empowerment through organizing has been transformed into an ineffective

central bureaucracy attempting to herd citizens through top-down devised processes."

The authors presented several principles that they believed were "essential for a

healthy neighborhood system in Portland." The main themes of these principles included:

- **Inclusive redefinition of neighborhoods** to include "residents, business

  owners, tenants, land owners and anyone else engaged in the territory" of

  the neighborhood. They urged an end to "the parallel development of

  neighborhood and business associations" and suggested that neighborhood

  boundaries be redrawn 'along more functional lines."

- **Neighborhood associations as "vehicles for participation, not

  representation**" to recognize the value of the results of participation,

  while also recognizing "it is not fair, just, or reasonable to expect

  neighborhood associations to carry the burden of representation" which is

  the role of elected officials and for which they should be held accountable.

- **Recommitment of ONI to neighborhood organizing** and to "grassroots

  empowerment through organizing "to ensure that "neighborhoods provide

  a vital forum for residents, and the vest avenue for the city to understand

where local priorities lie;" they stressed that, done properly, this organizing would "incorporate new voices and new residents in an ongoing civic discussion" and would support the development of the leadership needed to neighborhoods develop and advocate for "an inclusive agenda of neighborhood concerns."

- **Encouragement of and support for neighborhoods to solve their own problems**, either through interaction with city agencies or through neighborhoods developing their own resources to meet their needs, and to "ensure that all neighborhoods have access to the tools they need to move their priorities forward."

- **Refocusing of the role of district coalitions** as "nonprofit organizations that receive base funding from the city to sustain organizing efforts in each of their member organizations," and to support "neighbor to neighbor communication," "technical assistance and training," and to "convene neighborhood associations to identify and act on common concerns or interassociation [sic] conflicts."

- **Significant reduction in number of ONI staff** that would limit ONI to "fewer staff positions that are found within any single district office….." and focus the agency on "helping city agencies understand the dialogue taking place at District meeting tables," and "training and technical

assistance" to facilitate "more effective interaction between city staff and neighborhood associations…."[76]

- **Crime prevention efforts that are part of a strategic community policing program** and paid for with public safety funds and co-located with neighborhood district offices when both the districts and community policing leaders agree.

- **City investment in a neighborhood system that yields "organized associations in every neighborhood**," each with an "agenda or set of priorities," a "strategy for acting on those priorities," and a "commitment to involving all citizens in helping to frame those goals" success would be measured by "how well citizens interact with each other in neighborhoods…." (Strachan et al stress the point that "Making neighborhood associations or district offices into 'little city halls,' rhetorically or otherwise, only serves to define them from the top-down as adjuncts of the City, rather than as avenues for building community and empowering citizens."

Strachan et al recommended radically restructuring Portland's neighborhood association and neighborhood district system for Portland by dividing the city into eight to ten districts, each of which would provide "services to about 12 neighborhood

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[76] At this time, Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system received primary support from only one staff person in the downtown ONI office. Of the 58 ONI employee positions listed in the City of Portland FY 03-04 Approved Budget (425), ten worked in the Crime Prevention Program and about twelve supported housing and noise inspections. The 58 employees also included ONI staff at the north and east Portland neighborhood offices, and staff supporting other ONI programs, including liquor licensing, graffiti abatement, information and referral services, the Disability Program, and administration and support staff.

associations." They recommended that each district receive adequate funding to support four positions: "a coordinator, an organizer charged with supporting communications efforts (publications, websites, etc.), one organizer to support planning efforts, and an office manager/information and referral position." The coordinator and two organizers each would be expected to directly support four neighborhood associations.

Strachan et al recommended that ONI be staffed by three employees: "a coordinator, an assistant for communications and technical assistance, and an office manager/information and referral position." They also recommended that ONI received $50,000 each year to "provide mini-grants for 'civic microenterprises' aimed at furthering neighborhood organization, capacity, and cohesion." They estimated that this pared down ONI operation could be supported at an annual cost of $270,000. They estimated that City funding required to support this pared down ONI operation and the neighborhood district offices at about "$2.8 million per year." They claimed that this cost would be well within the level of City funding for ONI operations at the time.

Strachan et al asserted that the City needs to "recommit to tapping the wisdom of its citizens to create the next generation of civic innovation in Portland" …re-establish Portland neighborhood system as a leader in the country…."Further, it can begin to build back the sense of community that so many citizens are seeking, but which has become confused in recent years with more bureaucratic efforts and imperatives."

Strachan et al called for neighborhood leaders to review their proposal and and recognized that the proposal would need to be "embraced broadly from the grassroots on up." They stated that "We are not interested in yet another top-down reformulation of

Portland's approach to neighborhoods." They closed by offering their assistance, if after extensive community discussion "there is a desire to move changes like this forward" to support "a broad coalition with reformulating neighborhood associations to move Portland ahead as a model of civic innovation."

The Strachan, Sharpe and Seltzer proposal represented another strong call for ONI to return to ONA's original mission of community empowerment and a rejection of Commissioner Leonard's proposed shift for the of ONI and the district offices to being providers of city government services to the community. Strachan et al's vision for Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system included an increased number of neighborhood districts across Portland that would support neighborhood association communications, provide training and planning and technical assistance, and convene neighborhoods to discuss issues. This system would put most of its resources and activities out into the community and reverse the steady increase in the size and role of ONI—except for the administration of a new annual grant program. Strachan et al proposed measuring the performance and success of the system by the extent to which every neighborhood had an organized neighborhood association that identify the priorities of its neighbors through an inclusive process and then actively and successfully advocated for the achievement of those priorities.

2004 Election and Tom Potter—A Turning Point

The 2004 city council and mayor elections became a turning point for community involvement in Portland. Neighborhood leaders, frustrated with their lack of success using the traditional avenues of Portland public involvement, turned to the political realm

to try to achieve the change they sought. Tom Potter, former Portland police chief and the "father" of Portland's community policing program in the early 1990s, decided to enter the race for mayor, partly because of his alarm at what he saw as the growing disconnect between Portlanders and their city government.

Neighborhood Leaders Run Against Leonard: Neighborhood leaders were disappointed when no experienced local political figure stepped up to run against Randy Leonard, whose first, four-year term on the city council was coming to a close. Leonard was known as a very formidable candidate whose aggressive campaign tactics and strong union support made him difficult to beat. Neighborhood leaders began trying to recruit one of their own to run. Ultimately, a group of initially six, then eight, neighborhood activists from different parts of the city agreed to run as a group. They hoped to use their networks to collectively earn enough votes in the May 2004 primary election to force Leonard into a run-off. They agreed that, if they were successful, they would back whoever from their group earned the most votes. The neighborhood candidates met together often to discuss strategy and share information and advice. They participated as a group in the many candidate debates across the city and used their presence to raise their concerns about Leonard and to advocate for an alternative governance model in which city government and community members worked together as partners in local decision making.

Some neighborhood activists also joined together to form a political action committee, "Neighborhood PAC." They hoped that Neighbor PAC (NPAC) would give neighborhood activists a vehicle to have a greater voice in shaping the type of candidates

that decided to run for the city council and who would win. They also hoped NPAC would give neighborhood activists a greater voice on city wide policy issues (similar to the PAN in the 1970s and APN in the 1980s).[77]

Ultimately the neighborhood candidates were not successful in forcing a run-off election. Leonard won a majority in the primary (52%) and avoided a run off. In all, ten candidates ran against Leonard, nearly all of whom had never run for political office. Leonard's opponents together raise a total of $36,000 in campaign funds, while Leonard raised $239,000. Leonard said his victory vindicated him and showed that "a majority of people in Portland support my position that people in government should be accountable and tell the truth." One of the neighborhood candidates said "We've accomplished a moral victory." He noted Leonard's majority was very low for a sitting city commissioner and said "Commissioner Leonard knows the alarm bells are ringing" (Learn. *Oregonian*, May 19, 2004).

Tom Potter's Background and the 2004 Mayoral Campaign: Tom Potter dramatically changed the dynamics of the mayoral election when he announced his candidacy for in the summer of 2003. Until Potter entered the race, sitting City Commissioner Jim Francesconi appeared to be the most likely next mayor of Portland. Francesconi had been campaigning aggressively and was strongly supported by the downtown business community. Francesoni diligently pursued donations and was well on his way to amassing the largest campaign war chest in Portland's local election history.

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[77] NPAC did not become very active during the campaign, and the neighborhood leaders who created it choose not to keep it going after the 2004 election.

Potter, long known for his deep commitment to community involvement and social justice, quickly drew strong grassroots support from neighborhood and community activists. Many leaders in communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities, who had worked with Potter when he was with the Police Bureau, also supported him. Other long-time champions of strong community involvement, like former Mayor Bud Clark and former City Commissioner Margaret Strachan, declared their support for Potter.

Potter brought a very unusual set of values and ideas about community and government to his run for mayor. Potter's values were rooted deep in his experiences as a young Portland officer in the 1960s. Potter said that when he first became a police officer in 1966[78] a lot of tension existed between the police and the community. Crime was high, as was racial tension. Potter said that within a year of joining the police force, "we started having riots in Portland." "We would go into neighborhoods thinking we were going to protect a neighborhood without even knowing the neighborhood." "There were no gentle lessons here." "Like many police officers," Potter said, "I came in thinking that I was going to help" the community. "And yet, when I would go out, particularly in parts of northeast Portland, the acrimony was mind boggling...people *hated* you, and 'pig' was a very common word, plus a lot of other words...."

Potter said he started "looking and observing" and found that "the police, quite frankly, were the source of a lot of the problems. It really wasn't the community. It was the police and how we dealt with the community....we treated them in a very patronizing

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[78] Carlin Ames, Sarah. *Oregonian*. October 25, 1990.

manner." Potter had an early formative experience that he says had a major impact on him.

> "...as a young police officer, one of the most telling events for me was that I was driving around [the] Sellwood [neighborhood] where I worked as a police officer..." Back then "Sellwood was a very poor neighborhood. It had gangs. There were drug problems." "When I went to the Police Academy, there was nothing that talked about engaging the community, because that just wasn't done. You were a law enforcement officer. You went out and enforced the law. And the community was the 'victim' or the 'suspect.'"

> "One day when I was driving around, this guy flags me down in my police car. I'm in uniform. I'm obviously out patrolling, and so he stops me and he says 'Officer, I know we've got some really serious problems here in Sellwood. Is there anything we can do, as a community, to help you? I was stunned. I didn't know what to tell the guy. I said, 'Well, I don't know.' I said "I'll talk to my sergeant, then I'll get back to you. So, at the end of my shift, I go back, turn my car in, go to the sergeant, and I say 'Sarge, this citizen asked these questions. What do I tell him?'—and this is the classic definition of bureaucracy and 'we're the experts'—He said, 'Tell the guy to go back in his house. We'll take care of it.'" The belief was that there's no role for the public, "there's no value. In fact, there's no point in having them involved, because they'll just get in the way." Potter said that this is one of the classic characteristics of bureaucracy, "We're the experts and you're not." "I thought, "Boy, there's something really wrong here" (Potter. Conversation with Leistner, March 30, 2009).

Potter told the *Oregonian* how he opened up to a more "community-based" problem solving approach to policing, as opposed to the traditional "arrest-based" approach. Potter says that "one of the first things he noticed on patrol were kids streaming into a storefront office of something called the Brooklyn Action Corps. He went in for a look himself." The Brooklyn Action Corp was one of Portland's early neighborhood associations. Local residents created the organization in 1962 and were very involved in revitalizing the neighborhood by working on urban renewal and social

service issues. "They were doing exactly what I was doing, but I was doing it from a law enforcement standpoint. They were trying to make the neighborhood better." Potter told the *Oregonian* that a light went off in his head, and he saw the value of trying to solve community and social problems early on rather than relying on a reactive law enforcement strategy (Rollins. *Oregonian*, Nov. 18, 1990).

Portland Mayor Bud Clark came into office in the mid-1980s with a strong focus on neighborhoods. Clark decided to respond to the growing crime, drug, and gang problems in Portland partly by promoting a community policing strategy in which police worked with residents and that focused on crime prevention. Clark believed that "neighborhoods, schools, police and people throughout government need to work together to enforce community standards and find long-term solutions to the social problems that cause crime." Clark realized that community policing would require major changes within the Police Bureau. Clark assigned Potter, who was then a police captain, to lead the development of a new community policing strategy (Lane and Hallman. *Oregonian*, October 30, 1988).

Potter had led the Police Bureau's North Precinct. As precinct commander in this very diverse part of Portland, Potter had had the opportunity to try out his community-focused approach by working with community member to solve a number of problems, one being community concern about drugs and prostitution centered on a strip of motels along Interstate Avenue (Hallman, Jr. *Oregonian*, January 17, 1989). As the Police Bureau's new point person on community policing Potter began to research and study up on community policing efforts in the U.S. and in other countries.

In 1989, Mayor Clark, Police Bureau leadership, and Potter were ready to lead the bureau's transition to community policing. The basic concept was that police would not "simply react to crime" but would be "encouraged to deal with the symptoms of crime at its most basic level—the neighborhood. At the same time, citizens will be expected to work closely with police to come up with solutions to crime problems." Potter emphasized that "Partnership is the key word. Partnership will underscore everything we try to do." Potter had developed his community policing program in collaboration with "bureau commanders and representatives from the mayor's office and from neighborhood groups." Potter proposed to start by surveying community members and meeting with "neighborhood associations and ethnic groups" to find out what they wanted from the Police Bureau (Hallman, Jr. *Oregonian*, January 17, 1989). Many different neighborhood and community groups strongly supported Clark and Potter's new community policing strategy.

In 1990, Mayor Clark appointed Tom Potter to be Portland's new Chief of Police to replace retiring chief, Richard Walker. The *Oregonian* reported that Clark hoped that "Potter would convert the entire bureau to community policing" and quoted Clark as saying, "Nobody's as rabid about community policing as Captain Potter." The news of Potter's appointment was welcomed by many community members and people in local law enforcement. Potter emphasized his strong focus on problem solving when he told the *Oregonian* that "community policing was a commitment to find solutions with community help. Police officers need more time to work with citizens, but the approach can succeed even without extra time. 'When you take a call...and you're doing it as a

problem solver, not just as a law enforcement officer, you have a better chance of solving that person's or that community's problem'" (Carlin Ames, Sarah. *Oregonian*. October 25, 1990).

At Potter's swearing in as chief, he stressed his strong support for civil rights, inclusion, and social justice to a diverse group of hundreds of supporters. He challenged the Police Bureau to "create the safest neighborhoods in the nation, to have all citizens participate in shaping Portland's future, and to eradicate bigotry, sexism, racism and homophobia." "Rhetoric must be backed up by results....We must act boldly to begin to make our neighborhoods safe again. All people, all colors, must be our sisters and brothers." The *Oregonian* reported that Potter said that "arresting and locking up criminals wouldn't solve society's woes. For every dollar spent on enforcement...the community must spend at least as much to eradicate poverty, improve education, provide better-paying jobs and to rebuild families." Potter said, "We must reduce the gap between the haves and have-nots....We need each other. We need to stop looking for enemies and start looking for allies" (Carlin Ames, Sarah. *Oregonian*, November 20, 1990).

Potter showed his willingness to stand up for his beliefs when he became the first Portland Police Chief to ride, in uniform, in Portland's Gay Pride Parade. He rode in a red convertible with his daughter, Katie, also a Portland Police officer, who recently had come out as the first openly lesbian officer on the police force. Potter publicly supported gay and lesbian rights at the same time a conservative group in Oregon was promoting a statewide ballot measure to condemn and restrict rights for gays and lesbians. Potter soon became widely known for his support for "the rights of all citizens, including women,

ethnic minorities and homosexuals" and for his belief that "It's important that both society and the police are free of sexism, racism and homophobia" (Rubenstein. *Oregonian*, June 10, 1991; Filips. *Oregonian*, June 30, 1991).

Potter retired as chief in 1993, a year after Vera Katz became Portland's mayor. The *Oregonian* reported that while community members continued to appreciate Potter's openness and willingness to work with the community and support for civil and human rights, he was leaving a divided Police Bureau. A number of staff within the Police Bureau resented Potter's push for community policing at what they believed was the detriment of traditional police work. Some resented his support for diversity and gay rights and his efforts to promote woman and people of color within the bureau. Other Police Bureau staff strongly supported Potter's efforts (Rollins and Hallman, Jr. *Oregonian,* March 14, 1993).

After he retired, Potter consulted with police departments around the country on community policing, served for a short period of time as the director of New Avenues for Youth— a nonprofit organization that served homeless youth in Portland, served as the interim director for the state public safety training academy, and delivered meals to the elderly as a volunteer with a local non-profit organization.

In 2001, Potter resurfaced in the public eye when he wrote an op-ed piece for the *Oregonian* calling for the City of Portland to reconnect to community policing. In his op-ed, he stressed a number of democratic governance themes that would make up the foundation of his campaign to be mayor a few years later. These included: "community policing without the partnership and support of the community is not community

policing;" "trust is the glue building community policing;" the City needs to commit to community policy in writing through a "written community policing plan;" and "a community must stay the course, stay involved and stay together" to ensure that the community and the policy achieve the goals of community policing.

Potter argued that the police could not solve the "serious crime and social problems" facing Portland without partnership with the community. He emphasized that a "true partnership requires the full involvement of both groups at every stage of the development and implementation." Potter argued that "trust isn't given; it must be earned" and described how police in the past had worked with citizens to "analyze problems and apply strategies" and had earned community trust by opening up the Police Bureau and working with community members to;v help reshape it." Potter said when the community and police work together to develop a written community policing plan, it gives both police and community members a "shared vision," helps them "stay on track," and "builds consensus between them"(Potter. *Oregonian,* August 8, 2001).

In July 2003, Mayor Katz announced she would not run for a fourth term as mayor. In September 2003, Potter formally announced that he would enter the race to replace her. Many Portland populists and neighborhood and community activists who had been increasingly frustrated with what they saw as a major disconnect between city government and the community quickly rallied to support Potters' candidacy. Some of his early supporters included former Mayor Bud Clark, former City Commissioner Margaret Strachan, community organizer and activist Joanne Bowman, and many Portland community and neighborhood activists.

City Commissioner Jim Francesoni already had declared his run for the mayor's position. Political insiders saw Francesconi as the front runner. When Potter announced his run, Francesconi had a big lead in collecting important endorsements and had raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions. Most politics watchers in Portland thought Potter had little chance against Francesconi (Stern. *Oregonian*, September 4, 2003).

Potter defied the norms for mounting a serious run to be mayor in Portland. He did not attempt to raise $1 million—an amount many political consultants said was needed to win. Instead Potter pursued a grassroots campaign in which he relied on his name recognition and strong community support from his community policing days. In contrast to Francesoni's aggressive pursuit of campaign donations, Potter chose not to do any traditional fund raising and actually imposed an upper limit on contributions to his campaign of $25 per person in the primary.[79]

Francesoni's and Potter's campaign messages were very different. Francesoni stressed his experience on the city council, a "back to basics" approach that would "bring new accountability to city spending and reject misguided spending projects" and the familiar election rhetoric around "good paying jobs, strong schools, and safe neighborhoods." Francesconi claimed that he would be ready to "hit the ground running as mayor with a 100-day plan to get Portland moving again" Some of Potter's main campaign themes included getting citizens and government working together again, ensuring that the voices of community members would be heard at City Hall, and

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[79] Potter also endorsed three of the neighborhood candidates running against Leonard—a risky move against such a strong political player.

working with community members to "develop a vision for our city that reflects the priorities of all Portlanders, not just a few." Potter reminded Portlanders of his leadership role in bringing community policing to Portland and in hiring and promoting "women and minorities in the Police Bureau "so that the face of the Bureau reflected the faces of our community." Potter claimed he had the leadership and management skills to lead city government, "I know what it's like to hold people accountable, demand change and get it" (Multnomah County Online Voter's Guide: Nov. 2004 General Election—City of Portland Mayor. Web. < http://web.multco.us/elections/november-2004-general-election-city-portland-mayor>).

Francesconi criticized Potter for talking about creating a vision for Portland with the community rather than providing specifics about what he would do if he were elected. Francesconi also noted that—unlike Francesconi, who had served on the City Council since 1997—Potter had not been involved in major issues in Portland for many years. Potter strongly criticized Francesconi for his aggressive pursuit of political contributions and questioned whether Francesconi would be focused on serving the interests of the community or his big money contributors. Potter also tied Francesconi to the city council's recent disconnect from, and conflicts with, community activists.

The primary election in May 2004 surprised many political insiders in Portland. Despite Francesconi's significant fundraising advantage over Potter, Potter lead the field of 23 mayoral candidate with 42 percent of the vote to Francesconi's much weaker showing of 34 percent. Potter's support and the energy around his candidacy continued to grow during the general election. Potter maintained his upper limit on contributions to his

campaign but raised it to $100 per person. Rather than spending a lot of money on television ads, the Potter campaign worked with community and neighborhood activists who blanketed many parts of the city with Potter campaign yard signs—a powerful visual symbol of Potter's strong community support. A number of misteps by Francesoni also shifted support to Potter. By October 2004, a poll commissioned by the Oregonian and KATU television showed Potter with a 35 percent lead over Francesconi.

In November 2004, Portlanders voted strongly in favor of Potter's outsider message of reconnecting the community with government and establishing a new vision for Portland over the insider candidate with the detailed list of proposed actions. (Potter received 61 percent of the vote to Francesconi's 38 percent.) (Multnomah. Election Archive. May 18, 2004 Primary Election. Web. < http://web.multco.us/elections/may-18-2004-primary-election> ;November 2, 2004 General Election. Web. < http://web.multco.us/elections/november-2004-general-election>). Potter's election would set the stage for a major course change by city government in its relationship with the community.

The next chapter describes the many reforms to Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system instituted during Potter's one term as Portland mayor (2005-2008).

Mayor's Budget Messages – Vera Katz – FY 2000-01 to 2004-05

Portland Mayor Vera Katz's city budget messages of her last years in office stress the difficulties of needing to cut the city budgets due to the national economic recession, the cost of complying with federal environmental mandates, and the aftermath of the

terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. She notes that many of Portland's jurisdictional partners—e.g. Multnomah County, local school districts, and the State of Oregon—also were struggling with budget cuts, which put additional strains on city services.

Katz continues to report budget priorities similar to those in her first two terms in office. She highlights the need to continue to provide city services that respond to critical community needs, maintain Portland's quality of life, and increase investments in "infrastructure and basic services." She continues to focus on increasing government efficiency and reducing the cost of administrative services, public safety, public schools, jobs and economic development" (Portland. "Mayor's Message." *City Budget* FY2002-03 4). She also highlights continuing efforts to "address environmental issues including the cleanup of Portland Harbor, our River Renaissance, protecting endangered species and promoting sustainable business practices"(12).

Community Involvement in the Budget Process: Katz briefly mentioned Your City, Your Choice (YCYC) and YCYC's community budget meetings and public opinion survey in her budget messaged in 2000 and 2002. In her last budget message in 2004, Katz reported that the city budget process that year was "exceptionally open" and attributes this openness to the role of the Portland Business Alliance (an association of downtown Portland businesses) in carrying out an "independent budget analysis with the full cooperation of the City" and Katz's appointment of "a four-member panel of citizens to observe and participate in the budget process this year." She reports that "One or more of the members of this panel attended virtually every budget meeting that I held. Their questions and observations were most helpful in developing this budget, and I thank them

for their commitment to civic involvement" (Portland. "Mayor's Message." *City Budget* FY 2004-05 4).

Community Involvement and ONI: Katz referred to community involvement or to ONI only a few times in her last five budget messages. However, she did announce two policy changes that would significantly shift (at least temporarily) ONI's role and focus away from community empowerment and neighborhood support.

In 2001, Katz announced a policy decision to have ONI staff begin to provide direct community involvement support to city bureau projects and activities. Katz justified this shift by citing recommendations from the ASR to improve city government's involvement with community members through "more effective use of the expertise in the Office of Neighborhood Involvement." She noted that the "ASR recommendations directed City bureaus to expand their use of [ONI] to assist with public outreach and coordination of the multitude of meeting scheduled throughout the city." She added that she had reviewed the budget and believed that "ONI can provide these services within existing staff levels"[emphasis added] (Portland. "Mayor's Message." *City Budget* FY 2001-02 9). It is important to note that adding extensive new duties to ONI without providing additional resources effectively required ONI staff to reduce their existing support for community empowerment and Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system to be able to take on these new duties.

In 2003, Katz reported another major shift in ONI's role and function. She reported that the City budget that year included funding to implement ONI Commissioner-in-Charge Randy Leonard's plan to relocate housing inspection staff and

services from the Bureau of Development Services to ONI. Katz maintained that this change would "improve coordination and customer service in the neighborhoods." She added that "We hope to leverage this with the Planning Bureau effort to move some planners out into the neighborhoods as well" (Portland. "Mayor's Message." *City Budget*, FY 2003-04 7).

Katz also made a couple references to funding support for a few ONI programs. In 2000, Katz reported that the City budget included an additional $99,000 for neighborhood services and mediation services and a modest increase to support ONI's graffiti abatement program. In 2002, Katz reported continued support for ONI crime prevention and neighborhood mediation services.

Katz's last budget message: In 2004, Katz presented her twelfth and final mayor's budget message. She used the opportunity to reflect on her time as mayor and what she saw as her major accomplishments. Katz emphasized that the FY 2004-05 City budget "provides basic services for our citizens, but it also invest in our promising future." She noted that this was the fifth in a row in which cuts were required to balance the City budget.

Katz identified four priority areas for her final budget—public safety, affordable housing, economic development, and infrastructure and capital needs (3-4). She also recognized the City's interest in environmental protection.

Katz chose to open her concluding remarks with a defense of city staff, who she characterized as "a wonderful group of dedicated City workers who strive every day to make this City a good place to live" against what she calls "the enduringly popular

pastime of criticizing government…" (11) .Katz wrote that she was proud that her 12 budgets as mayor had been "fiscally responsible" and "accountable to the needs of our citizens." She stated that she was "privileged to serve as Mayor during one of our City's most prosperous periods, and was challenged by "difficult fiscal challenges" during "the past five years." Katz stated that in both the good times and the challenging times her proposed budgets had "provided for the basic services expected by our citizens, but they have also sought to invest in our future" (11).

Katz closed her final budget message by saying that preparing the city budget "is not the 'sexiest' of tasks for a Mayor" but says that it is one of the "most important duties of an elected official. She goes on to state that "For where we spend our money says a lot about who we are and what we value." (11) This comment makes it particularly interesting to note that Katz does not mention community involvement or ONI anywhere in her final budget message.

Overall, Katz's twelve mayor's budget messages show her consistent focus on improving government efficiency and government service delivery and seeing community members as "customers" rather than "partners" in government decision making. During Katz's three terms as mayor, a number of long-time ONI programs ended (e.g., BACs, Neighborhood Needs, neighborhood planning). Commissions set up to give different communities a voice in decision making also were discontinued (Disability Commission and Metropolitan Human Rights Commission) or shifted to another jurisdiction (Youth Commission). No major advances were made in strengthening ONI's community involvement program during Katz's time as mayor, and, in the early 2000s,

ONI's ability to support community and neighborhood empowerment was significantly weakened when the few ONI staff assigned to these activities were redirected to provide direct community involvement support and services to city bureaus.

Lessons from the early 2000s

In the early 2000s, Portlanders engaged in deep, strategic thinking about two long-standing challenges for Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system—how to involve a greater diversity of the community and how to significantly improve city government community involvement. Many of the policy and program ideas generated during this period would be implemented during Mayor Potter's administration. The intense conflict between city leaders and community members during the early 2000s galvanized significant community support for a return to a more collaborative relationship between city government and community members. The loss or deterioration of many elements of the system in the 1990s and 2000s and the apparent ease by which elected officials had been able to undermine or redirect the system caused many people to seek ways to institutionalize and preserve key elements of Portland's "community governance" partnership.

The early 2000s offered a number of insights relevant to this study's primary research questions regarding important system elements, the reform process, and embedding advances toward greater participatory democracy.

System Elements: Many of the processes of the early 2000s either reinforced what earlier system reviews and processes had identified as important system elements or identified new elements. Key system elements identified during this time focused on:

building capacity in the community, ensuring willingness and ability in city government

to work with the community, and ONI's role.

Community Capacity: Different processes generated a number of

recommendations for how to strengthen capacity in the community to be involved in and

affect city decision making. The need for leadership and skill training for community

members came up frequently, especially in Interwoven Tapestry, Southeast Uplift's DRC

and DCLC, and the PITF. The processes called for an ongoing, citywide training program

that would be available to a wide range of neighborhood and community activists.

Suggested training topics included: City processes, neighborhood demographics (who's

in the community), outreach strategies—especially outreach to historically

underrepresented communities, issue and power analysis, mediation and negotiation

skills, community organizing, diversity and privilege, advocacy, communications and

organizational development.

The PITF, DRC and DCLC all recommended additional support for the creation

of networks between neighborhood associations and other community-based groups. The

PITF members argued that "increased relationships, communication and cooperation"

between community groups would "build a stronger a more credible political voice" and

identify broader, shared priorities in the community (PITF, 2006 13-14).

The ASR, PITF, and BOSG all called for improved community involvement in

city government capital project priority setting, planning and implementation. One

approach suggested was a return to some form of the earlier Neighborhood Needs

process, through which neighborhood and community organizations could identify their

needs and priorities, especially for capital projects, and have then reviewed and considered by city agencies and in the city budget process.

Many reviews of the system called for the creation of neighborhood grants program. A neighborhood grants program was seen as a way to give people a reason to get involved, help them develop fundraising and project management skills, develop partnerships with other community organizations, unleash community creativity, and leverage additional community resources. Interwoven Tapestry gave out small grants in the community as part of its three-year project. Other processes, including the PITF and BOSG also called for a neighborhood grants program. Commissioner Francesconi attempted to create a neighborhood grants program during his brief time as ONI Commissioner, and even received City Council approval to go ahead, but the program was not funded and implemented.

Another frequent recommendation was adequate funding of neighborhood district coalitions and other community groups to support community organizing. Some community activists also called for more equitable distribution of funding among the neighborhood district coalitions that would ensure minimum funding for each coalition to support a basic office and staff augmented by additional funding based on indicators of community need in each district—such as the number of neighborhood associations and different socio-economic factors.

The system reviews during the early 2000s continued to support having a citywide system of neighborhood associations, but also recognized the limitations of what volunteer-run community organizations could accomplish on their own. As Ahmed-Shafi

said, if you want volunteer organizations to do more than they are choosing to do, you probably will need to provide staff support, training, and technical assistance to help them do it.

Nearly all the system reviews recognized the need to expand Portland's original neighborhood association system to include other types of community organizations. The failure of the 1998 ONI Guidelines to attract single request for formal recognition from a single business association or "ethnic-based community organization" showed the need for the City to work with the community groups it hopes to involve to ensure that, whatever relationship the City offers, is one that meets the goals and interests of these organizations and communities. Southeast Uplift's DRC and DCLC modeled the kind of inclusive, respectful, and collaborative process that could identify appropriate strategies for involving these groups. The DCLC went on to develop and advocate for a number of specific proposals to fund and involve under-represented groups in the system, some of which were funded and implemented during subsequent Potter administration.

City Government: The ASR and the PITF reinforced earlier calls for citywide standards, guidelines and policies to improve and better coordinate city government community involvement. The PITF, for the first time, laid out a comprehensive strategy—with detailed recommendations—to begin to change the culture of city government and to institute policy requirements and support for city staff to act on it. The PITF recommended that the City Council adopt the PITF public involvement principles and embed community involvement values and requirements in key government policy

documents and structures. The PITF also recommended the development of best practices materials and training programs for city staff.

Other PITF recommendations focused on improving the quality and coordination of city government communications, events calendars, community contact lists, web access to city documents, public records request policies, information about capital projects. The PITF suggested training topics that included: culturally specific skills for reaching out to and involving diverse communities; electronic media strategies; database development and management; process design; customer service; public information; dealing with difficult people; and conflict resolution. The PITF also recommended a review and significant improvement in the City's formal notification system.

The PITF recommended the development of effective mechanisms by which the neighborhoods could identify and communicate to city goverment their needs and priorities for capital projects (similar to the earlier Neighborhood Needs process). The PITF also recommended improvements in community involvement in the City budget process. The BOSG recognized the need to develop different mechanisms to involve community members with different levels of knowledge and interest in the budget process, rather than just a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

The SWCP "Citizen Involvement" goal and policies called for community involvement in all phases of planning and implementing projects in Southwest Portland (a requirement echoed by Oregon State Planning Goal 1). Interwoven Tapestry, Strachan et al, and Tom Potter all called for a strong community policing program that worked in partnership with community members. (Potter raised significant concerns about the

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deterioration of Portland's community policing program in his 2001 *Oregonian* op-ed piece.)

The ASR and PITF identified the need for some entity in city government that would promote, support, and evaluate city government community involvement. The ASR recommended that ONI play much of this role. The PITF called for the creation of a Public Involvement Advisory Commission with staff support (funded by all city agencies through an overhead model) to lead this work.

ONI: ONI's appropriate role in Portland's system became a major question during the early 2000s. The ASR recommended that ONI become the central agency in city government responsible for coordinating, supporting, and evaluating community involvement by all city bureaus. Under Commissioner Saltzman, ONI staff began to shift their time and attention away from supporting the neighborhood system and began to provide direct community involvement support to specific city bureau projects. Commissioner Leonard took this even further by announcing his desire to rename ONI as the "Office of Neighborhood Services," moving a significant number of neighborhood inspection and noise control staff into ONI, and proposing to turn the district coalition offices into "mini City Halls" that would provide city services in Portland's neighborhoods. In response, many community members called for ONI to return to its original role of supporting community organizing and the ability of neighborhood associations and community organizations to have a voice in city government decision making.

During the early decades of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system, Portland's neighborhood associations were seen by many City government leaders and staff and by many neighborhood activists as the primary formal mechanism for community input to the City. By the early 2000s, this model was being seriously challenged. Many city leaders and staff, as well as some community members, continued the long-standing complaint that neighborhood associations did not adequately represent the perspectives and priorities of the full diversity of people in their communities. Defenders of the system counted that neighborhood associations are "participatory" not "representative."

A number of review processes identified the need for Portland's system to expand to recognize, involve, and support other types of community organizations. The discussion began with Charles Shi's recommendations during the 1995-96 TFNI process that the City formally recognize ethnic- and culture-based organizations as "neighborhoods without borders." Shi recommended that the City give organizations that support a broad segment of a particular non-geographic community the opportunity to apply for formal city recognition as a "coalition," similar to a neighborhood district coalition. Rey España and the Southeast Uplift DRC argued that often individuals need to gather and organize with people in their own community first before they can connect with other types of community organizations (like neighborhood associations). España also recommended an approach that would meet groups where they were in the evolution of their community organizing and organizational capacity building and provide support that was appropriate to the stage of their organizational development. Rather than the

"one-size-fits all" formal recognition opportunity offered to CBNBs in the 1998 ONI Guidelines, España advocated for a capacity-building approach that would help groups learn about their community, build relationships and social capital together, and learn about ways to effect change. Interwoven Tapestry offered a good example of this approach in the way it helped members of both the Slavic and African communities form organizations and begin to build organizational capacity.

This vision for an expanded system still included a strong role for geographic organizations, like neighborhood associations and business associations, but also would recognize and support capacity building in organizations that supported and served non-geographic communities.

Reform Process: The early 2000s, were a time of very creative strategic and policy thinking either in the community or in process in which city staff and community members worked together.

The Southeast Uplift DRC and DCLC became important community organizing and policy development vehicles that built alliances among community groups and developedn and advocated for, program and reform proposals. The story of the DRC and DCLC shows the importance of: leadership (i.e., Kennedy-Wong initiated of the DRC and continued support for the DRC and DCLC processes); processes that prioritized respect, relationship building and trust; effective staff support from people with strong social justice values and community organizing and group process skills; neighborhood and city staff allies who actively supported the goals of under-represented groups; a policy entrepreneur (i.e., España's significant impact on shifting the discussion from

increasing funding to neighborhood associations, so they could reach out to under-represented communities, to directly funding and supporting under-represented community organizations), and strong community organization strategies that allowed the process to evolve from the earlier DRC focus on community outreach to the proposal development and advocacy efforts of the DCLC.

The early 2000s, showed the value of a "political champion" in advancing reforms and preserving progress primarily through the example of how the lack of a strong political champion for community involvement on the City Council led to a significant deterioration of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. Mayor Katz viewed community members primarily as "customers" of government services not partners in governance. Many important community involvement programs, as well a number of community-focused city commissions, were ended during her time as mayor. The early 2000s also saw the negative impacts of attempts by Commissioners Saltzman and Leonard, who, instead of working collaboratively with community members and city staff to understand the system's challenges and develop ideas for moving forward, attempted to impose their own top-down solutions that generated intense controversy and did little to improve community involvement in Portland.

The early 2000s also showed the strategic importance of formal review processes and their reports on raising the visibility of policy issues and promoting policy changes. The ASR and PITF both provided useful analyses of city government community involvement strengths and weaknesses and proposed actions to improve city government community involvement. The proposals—especially those of the PITF—helped

community activists and sympathetic city staff advocate for change and provided blue print for many of the reforms instituted under Mayor Potter.

Embedding: Since the founding of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system in the 1970s, community members had criticized city leaders and staff for not being interested in or skilled at involving the community, or giving "lip service" to community involvement. The partnership between community activists and city leaders and staff deteriorated even further during the early 2000s. Community involvement proponents were alarmed at the dismantling of important community involvement programs and the attempts to redirect ONI away from community empowerment and toward greater support of city bureau community efforts. The PITF report represented the first deeper analysis of how to embed community involvement values and best practices in city government policies, structures and daily work activities.

One of the PITF's most powerful proposed strategies was to insert community involvement values and requirements into formal city policy documents that carried the force of law or into requirements that would be enforced. PITF members created an updated set of public involvement principles to provide a framework for other policies and best practices. They recommended that the city council adopt the principles by ordinance—rather than by resolution as the city council had done with the 1996 public involvement principles. The PITF also recommended adding language to the City Charter—the City's highest level policy document--that would establish a clear role for community members in city governance.

PITF members also recommended significantly strengthening the community involvement goal and policy language in the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). City staff are required by law to write findings that explain how policy proposals and planning projects meet the goals and policies of the Comp Plan. Community members who feel that a City decision does not comply with Comp Plan goals and policies can appeal the decision to the Oregon State Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). This would significantly increase the incentive for city leaders and staff to ensure good community involvement—at least in City activities under the Comp Plan policy umbrella.

Another strategy to raise the priority of and incentives for good public involvement was the PITF's recommendations that the job descriptions of bureau directors and senior staff include public involvement skills and requirements and that effective public involvement become an element of city staff formal performance reviews.[80]

Another PITF recommendation that sought to raise awareness and transparency of city government community involvement was the recommendation that the city council require every ordinance brought to city council for review and approval to be accompanied by a short report form that would describe any public involvement that had been done and the effect it had on the subject of the ordinance. PITF members also recommended that the City Council require city bureau directors to submit annual reports on their agency's community involvement activities.

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[80] City public involvement staff often complained that, while they believed in good public involvement and tried to follow best practices in involving the community in the work of their bureau, senior management in their bureaus did not value or understand the nature of good public involvement or support it as an integral part of the bureau's work and projects.

PITF members also sought to increase the quality and consistency of city bureau public involvement by recommending: the development of citywide community involvement guidelines and standards, the development of agency-wide community involvement policies by each city bureau, and formal written community involvement plans for specific types of city projects.

PITF members saw opportunities to leverage some enforcement of good community involvement through the City Ombudsman and City Auditor. The City Ombudsman could investigate complaints from community members who believed that a city bureau had not followed formal city community involvement requirements and procedures, and the City Auditor could audit the community involvement policies and practices of city bureaus and issue formal findings and recommendations for improvement.

The PITF also saw the value of establishing and staffing an ongoing formal city commission—versus periodic task forces—that would advocate for implementation of the public involvement principles and other PITF recommendations. This formal body would raise the visibility and status of community involvement in city government and would provide ongoing capacity to review city government community involvement activities and advocate for improvements.

PITF members also recognized that one of their ultimate goals was to change the culture and behaviors of city leaders and staff within the city bureaus. To this end they made a number of recommendations intended to provide support and guidance to city staff to help them improve the way they involved the community in their work. These

recommendations included the development of community involvement standards and guidelines, best practices materials, training for city staff, peer sharing and review of proposed public involvement plans. They also recommended regular evaluation of community involvement efforts to ensure that best practices could be identified and spread.

The early 2000s, despite, or maybe partly because of the high level of conflict between city leaders and the community, were a time of very creative and strategic thinking about how to broaden involvement in Portland's community and neighborhood system and to improve the willingness and ability of city government leaders and staff to work with the community. Many of the recommendations developed during this time would be implemented during Mayor Tom Potter's administration. The next chapter reviews the evolution of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system from 2005 through 2013.