CHAPTER VII

REFORM AND REJUVENATION—2005 to 2013

Portland Mayor Tom Potter (2005-2008) dramatically reversed the decline of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system and instituted the most significant expansion of the system since the 1970s. The two mayors who followed Potter—Sam Adams (2009-2012) and Charlie Hales (who began his first term as mayor in 2013)—continued to support much of the increased funding and most of the programs begun under Potter. The system changes instituted during this period represent a major advance toward a more inclusive and vibrant participatory democracy culture in Portland and a more effective and lasting governance partnership between city leaders and staff and community members. This chapter examines the system reviews and key program changes during the time period from 2005 through 2013.

Mayor Potter came into office with a deep belief that governance should be a partnership between City government and the community. Potter brought to his administration his unusually high level of support for public involvement and his long-standing-standing and deep commitment to ensuring a voice for historically under-represented groups—especially communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and youth. Potter used his position as mayor and the significant additional discretionary revenues available to city government during the good economic times of his administration to implement a wide range of processes and programs that put his values into action and implemented many recommendations of earlier system reviews.

This chapter begins with a review of a system assessment prepared by neighborhood coalition leaders just prior to Potter taking office. The chapter also reviews early leadership and programmatic changes made by Potter at ONI and four of Potter's twenty bureau innovation projects (BIPs): BIP 1/visionPDX, an extensive and very inclusive community visioning process; BIP 9, which created a public involvement assessment tool for city staff; BIP 20/Charter Review Commission, which proposed amendments to Portland's City Charter, including one to change the form of city government (which voters rejected) and another that required the City Council to establish periodic community charter review commissions (which voters adopted); and BIP 8/Community Connect, the most comprehensive review of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system since it was founded in the 1970s.

Community Connect established three primary goals and developed a "Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement" that charted a new and expanded course for Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. Community Connect recommended that Portland community and neighborhood involvement system be expanded and formally recognize and support organizations representing non-geographic communities—e.g., communities of people drawn together by shared identity or life condition—in addition to the traditional neighborhood association system. Potter initiated a number of new programs in ONI and elsewhere that implemented Community Connect's broader and more inclusive vision for community involvement in Portland. This chapter describes these new programs.

Neighborhood activists also continued to seek ways to develop city-wide bodies to allow them to work together on citywide policy issues. This chapter examines two of these bodies, one focused on land use issues and the other on park issues.

Mayor Sam Adams took office in January 2009. Adams assigned responsibility over ONI to long-time neighborhood activist and newly-elected City Commissioner Amanda Fritz. Adams and Fritz continued to support many of the new community and neighborhood involvement programs initiated by Potter and worked together to insulate ONI from many of the severe city budget cuts necessitated by the national and local economic recession.

Adams also initiated or supported the continued operation of number of important processes. This chapter examines: the re-establishment of required budget advisory committees (BACs) for city bureaus; the Portland Plan—Portland's broad strategic planning process that followed visionPDX—and its introduction of the concept of "equity" for city government; the work of the new Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC); the 2011 Charter Review Commission; the creation of Portland's Office of Equity and Human Rights, and the East Portland Action Plan.

Mayor Charlie Hales took office in January 2013. Hales had been a Portland city commissioner in the past and had been the city commissioner in charge of ONA during the 1995-96 TFNI. Hales choose to keep ONI and the new Office of Equity and Human Rights in his portfolio and, at least during his first city budget process, protected ONI from severe budget cuts that affected other parts of city government. This chapter provides some insights into Hales' priorities and his early discussions with ONI and

neighborhood coalition leaders about the future of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system.

The chapter also looks to the future and summarizes further system changes summarized by ONI staff and leaders of ONI's neighborhood and community partner organizations, to continue to expand and strengthen Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system. The chapter also includes summaries of the mayor's budget messages from Potter, Adams, and Hales and lessons learned from the 2005-2013 period relevant to this study's three primary research questions.

Neighborhood Coalition Leaders' Strategic Assessment—December 2004

Tom Potter's election as Portland's new mayor in November 2004 unleashed great expectations among neighborhood and community activists. The leaders of all seven of Portland's neighborhood district coalitions hoped that Potter would move quickly to reinvigorate and expand Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. They wanted to jump start the process and help shape Potter's reform agenda. They worked quickly to prepare a document which identified what they saw as the system's strengths and challenges and their priorities and recommendations for reform. The neighborhood coalition leaders shared their document with Potter and his staff shortly after he took office in January 2005.

The neighborhood coalition leaders titled their document, "Portland's Neighborhood System: Government By and For the People." Their report clearly reflects their years of frustration with the decline of the system, frequent criticisms of the system and of neighborhood volunteers by city leaders and staff, and unilateral, top-down

attempts by individual city council members to redirect the system away from community empowerment and toward city service delivery.

In their report, the coalition leaders identified Potter's election as a "unique opportunity to incorporate new challenges and develop new assets related to public participation through Portland's 'neighborhood system.'" They clarified that by "neighborhood system" they meant the City's broader community involvement structure, including "neighborhood associations, affiliated grass-roots programs, coalition offices, and City Bureaus including [ONI] administration as it impacts resident participation" (1).

The neighborhood coalition leaders stated their hope that their document would "lead to a complete review of 'the neighborhood system' and the creation of a strategic plan led by and develop by the community." They advocated for immediate implementation of "reforms dealing with the mechanics of the system." They suggested that reforms of the "intent and framework of the City of Portland's commitment to public participation" would "require a more detailed strategic planning process with the widest possible outreach" (1). This section describes the neighborhood coalition leader's assessment of the current system and their recommendations for short-term and long-term reform.

The "Current State of the 'Neighborhood System:'" The neighborhood coalition leaders began their document with a review of the system's origin and evolutions. They noted that, "Prior to the creation of Portland's neighborhood system in 1974, public participation was a rare animal in Portland." Many barriers prevented community members from being involved in municipal government except for "local

elites." "Structured communications between the people and their government was often reserved solely for elections" (2).

They reported that "For the first twenty years of its existence, the City of Portland's unique and innovative neighborhood system focused public participation through Neighborhood Associations." ONA had a small staff that worked with the staff of the neighborhood coalitions to support community involvement through: neighborhood associations; community input into city decision making through the BAC Program and the Neighborhood Needs process; and through community policing. They wrote that, "Neighborhood activism was focused on social services (model cities), housing (CDCs), land use (neighborhood planning program), public policy engagement and self-directed community development activity." They asserted that that "the system seemed most effective when citizens received the support to participate and when elected officials and staff were genuinely interested in authentic collaboration" (2).

The neighborhood coalition leaders reported that, over the previous ten years, "concerns with the effectiveness of the program and budget constraints" had led to changes in the neighborhood system. The focus shifted to "who wasn't at the table rather than who was." Elected city officials and staff and some in the broader community complained that that the neighborhood system "was not representative." "Concern began to grow not over access to the table, but who was sitting at the table." The demand that neighborhood associations be "representative" rather than "participatory" grew at the same time that policy, program, and budget changes "negatively impacted 'the neighborhood system'" (2-3).

The neighborhood coalition leaders identified a number of changes that they believed had weakened the neighborhood system and community involvement in Portland. In 1983, the City of Portland and Multnomah County agreed to divide up their duties as a way to increase efficiency and reduce costs. The county took the lead in providing human services. The City took the lead responsibility for physical aspects of the community, such as land use planning and development, streets, sewer, water, police, fire, and parks. Neighborhood associations, which structurally were aligned with city government, became less involved in important human services issues. In the 1990s, the City discontinued its neighborhood planning program—a major focus of the early neighborhood system. The City ended the program in response to budget cuts and intense conflict between community activists and city planners over the Southwest Community Plan in the late 1990s. The City's Police Bureau, which had instituted a far-reaching community policing program in the early 1990s, by the mid 2000s had shifted away from "a partnership between police and community" and toward a more traditional model of policing. Portland's model BAC Program—which used to engage community members in the development of bureau budgets and the overall city budget (a program praised by the Tufts University researchers in the late 1980s)—had faded away. "Residents, once engaged at the beginning of the budget process, now found themselves reacting to a budget developed by the City administration" (3).

The neighborhood coalition leaders also noted that—in sharp contrast to Portland city government's strong support for community involvement in the 1970s and 1980s— by the early 2000s, city government had turned into "a bureaucracy that had learned how

to manage public relations" in which public participation had "become more possible, yet often more frustratingly dysfunctional." ONI's focus and mission also changed over time. ONA had started out "nearly solely focused with supporting contracts to coalition offices." ONI, over time, grew into a "multifaceted agency" whose purpose and function shifted frequently—change often being driven more by political goals than careful strategic planning (3).

Portland's neighborhood system faced other challenges including: the relocation of crime prevention staff from of the coalition offices to the downtown ONI office; "Dramatic increases in insurance, mailing, printing, and other operational costs"—while city funding for the coalitions remained flat; and disparities between the salaries of non-profit coalition staff and staff at ONI and the two city-run neighborhood district offices (3). ONI programs that supported elders and provided mediation services were spun off as independent, non-profit organizations. The Human Rights Commission and Metropolitan Human Relations Center were dissolved. ONI began to provide more direct services—including the City/County Information and Referral Program and neighborhood inspections and noise control. The number of ONI "employees engaged in public service rather than public participation activity increased dramatically" (4).

Philosophy and Function: Neighborhood coalition leaders described their perspectives on the philosophy and functions of the neighborhood system and city government, as follows:

Neighborhood System: Portland's neighborhood system "is a participatory system. It informs, invites, and encourages neighbor participation in directing community

decisions" and "provides linkages to improve [neighborhood] livability." Neighborhood

coalition leaders asserted that "All of this participation and involvement means a lot more

time and work" but "more cooperation and involvement can, in the end, lead to a better

result, much happier 'customers,' and bureaus and their employees that are appreciated

and respected." They concluded that the "'neighborhood system' is ideal for community

building/organizing, developing community leaders, problem solving, recommending and

prioritizing policy, visioning future neighborhood livability plans, generating self

support, partnering with government, and providing constructive criticism" (4).

City Council and City Bureaus: The neighborhood coalition leaders argued that

the "'neighborhood system' works best" when each city bureau includes in its core

mission "a commitment to authentic cooperative, transparent public participation." They

suggested that segregation of all city public participation functions into one agency (as

was recommended by the ASR (200)) is less effective. They found that community

members can provide a valuable resource that cannot be "duplicated or bought" for

"budgeting, planning, and community development" when City leaders and staff

"authentically" invite community members to participate" and do not consider

community members "an enemy force." "Elected officials" also can help "make the

neighborhood system work" by committing themselves to and supporting "authentic

cooperative, transparent public participation" (4).

Neighborhood Associations: The neighborhood coalition leaders noted that

neighborhood associations are "self-defined and self-directed." Neighborhood volunteers

get involved because they want to "improve their community." They noted that capacity

varies across neighborhood associations because they are "participant based and open to" everyone. A neighborhood association reflects the "personality, consistency, skills, and knowledge" of the volunteers involved. The neighborhood coalition leaders argued that neighborhood associations are effective, partly because of the "City of Portland's long-time commitment to recognize and support 'the neighborhood system'" and because the City works with neighborhood associations and provides them with financial support.

Neighborhood coalition leaders maintained that neighborhood associations provide valuable "institutional memory" about their geographic community and "the systems that serve them" and "special knowledge" about and "pride" in their community (5).They also asserted that, to be effective, neighborhood associations need support, including "organizational development advice" in "leadership, facilitation, creativity community development activity, maintenance of the social fabric, and issues education." The need for support varies across neighborhood associations. Neighborhood coalition leaders suggested that City staff and others who work with neighborhood associations need to recognize and adjust to the reality that neighborhood association participants are volunteers and "have constraints on their time and capacity to be involved." Neighborhood leaders also asserted that neighborhood associations provide an ongoing structure that community members can use to "advocate, build on local assets, or respond to a crisis," and that neighborhood associations function best "when they have the organizational capacity to balance local interests, encourage a sense of fairness, and otherwise facilitate neighborhood advocacy" (5).

What's Working: Coalition leaders identified a number of things that they believed were "working:"

- "The neighborhood system is an important foundation of government by and for the people."

- The City of Portland's strong commitment to the neighborhood system, compared to most other cities, and Portland's neighborhood is one of the strongest in the country.

- ONI's support to the neighborhood system.

- The role of the neighborhood system as an going structure community members can use to development their neighborhoods and respond to crises.

- Valuable institutional memory held by neighborhood volunteers.

- The neighborhood system, by assisting community members, helps reduce the burden on city council and staff and offers city council and staff a place to send communities members who come to them for help.

- Occasional shortages of neighborhood volunteers are not a "problem," but common experience of many volunteer organizations.

- Local community building efforts that have local buy-in are more effective.

- The effectiveness of the neighborhood system in networking with other community groups is increasing.

- Neighborhood system volunteers represent a "unique pool of educated facilitators" who help community members and city leaders and staff.

- Some neighborhood associations produce "great newsletters and websites."

- Portland's mayor can change bureau attitudes toward "public participation and community policing" (5-6).

What's "Broke:" Coalition leaders also identified aspects of the system that they believed were "broken:"

- City bureaus and City Council are "less interested in listening and more interested in managing, directing or ignoring participation by neighborhood associations."

- City staff often are "defensive around neighborhood associations."

- Council often chooses to view neighborhood associations as "adversaries or allies" based on political considerations.

- City bureaus often engage in "'punch list" community involvement and try to engineer certain outcomes rather than engaging in "authentic collaboration"— "public relations" to manage the community instead of collaborative "public involvement."

- The quality of community involvement "varies from bureau to bureau."

- City leaders and staff often "blame the neighborhood system for not being inclusive but do not commit themselves or their resources to help solve a problem that is widespread in our society and city. (They added that blaming community volunteers "is as unlikely to improve inclusivity as ignoring it is.")

- The fragmentation and "silo mentality" of Portland's city government "impedes effective public participation."

- The city budget development process "is missing a resource by not engaging" the community "through authentic, education, collaboration, and action through the Neighborhood Needs process and Bureau Advisory Committees."

- The City appears to be systematically trying to "avoid considering comment from neighborhood groups" in "land-use matters."

- Parts of the neighborhood system find reaching all their community members challenging, "not because of a lack of desire or knowledge, but because of time constraints, funding, and skill levels" (6).

- More resources are needed in the neighborhood system to support involvement on "high stakes issues." Resource distribution needs to respond to changing levels of need—i.e., more resources made available to neighborhoods in which a "community crisis" arises.

- Neighborhood district coalition capacity has been reduced because, while City funding support has "remained the same in dollars over the past decade," "operations costs have risen (e.g., "postage, printing, insurance, supplies, etc.)," crime prevention staff were moved out of the district offices and into the downtown ONI office; key partnerships with the City had ended, including "neighborhood planning, [Bureau of Environmental Services] neighborhood outreach [through the BES "Downspout Disconnect" community outreach program and other programs that had been housed at ONI], and community policing.

- The salaries of staff at the five non-profit neighborhood district coalitions have stagnated at that same time that the salaries of staff in the two city-run neighborhood offices increased "implying that [non-profit neighborhood coalition] staff are less significant."

Ideas for Immediate Reforms: Neighborhood coalition leaders recommended a number of immediate reforms intended to: increase inclusion of underrepresented groups, reduce operating costs for neighborhood coalitions, refocus the downtown ONI office, increase support for neighborhood communications, and improve and expand community involvement in the City budget process.

"*Inclusion of Underrepresented Groups*:" Neighborhood coalition leaders recommended that the City "Provide adequate support to promote meaningful involvement and leadership development for underrepresented groups in the neighborhood system." They suggested that ONI staff be assigned to work "directly with neighborhood associations and other community groups," and that "public participation" and "inclusivity" become priorities for all City bureaus. They also recommended "directing resources toward groups traditionally not participating in the neighborhood system" (7).

Operating Costs: Neighborhood coalitions traditionally had provided insurance coverage for neighborhood association boards, events, and projects. Given the increasing cost of insurance coverage, the neighborhood coalition leaders recommended that the City directly insure neighborhood associations for general liability and "maintain a legal defense fund" to assist neighborhood associations defend themselves against "spurious

lawsuits." They recommended that the Portland Bureau of Transportation take over covering liability insurance for street closures for block parties and events, hanging street banners, and "approved neighborhood-based projects in the public right of way." Neighborhood coalition leaders also recommended that the City pay a consultant to help the neighborhood coalitions create a "centralized pool" for other non-liability insurance services, including "employee health insurance, workers compensation, etc.," and to help them create a "centralized cooperative purchasing authority in an effort to reduce costs through efficiency" (7-8).[81]

Downtown ONI Office: Neighborhood coalition leaders advocated for a shift of direct service functions—e.g., neighborhood housing and nuisance inspectors and noise control staff—out of ONI, "so that ONI can use its resources to become a stronger advocate for public participation." They suggested that ONI Crime Prevention staff and staff in ONI's Information and Referral Program be moved out of the downtown ONI office and into the neighborhood coalition offices to strengthen the capacity of these offices. They recommended that ONI staff be assigned to support "neighborhood associations and underrepresented groups to increase inclusivity in public participation." They asked that the monthly meetings of the Neighborhood Coalition Chairs and Directors with ONI staff encourage discussions of "big picture" issues instead of just focusing on "administrative detail" and reacting to issues that arise. They recommended

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[81] These recommendations specifically applied to the five non-profit neighborhood coalitions. The City of Portland and ONI provide many administrative support services, free of charge, to the two city-run neighborhood offices—including insurance coverage, IT support, financial services, personnel, etc. ONI's provision of these services has allowed these offices to direct time and resources they would have spent on these services to other priorities. This has been another aspect of the perceived inequities between the city-run and the non-profit coalitions

that, instead of directing these meetings, ONI staff should "support" the coalition directors and chairs in their discussions and work. ONI also should stop "blindsiding" neighborhoods and coalitions with "actions and decisions" and, instead, should involve "neighborhood associations and their neighborhood offices" in "decisions that affect the neighborhood system…" (8).

Communication—Money/Resources: Neighborhood coalition leaders recommended that the City increase "monetary, technical, and staff" support for strong communications in the neighborhood system. They advocated for adequate additional funding to "allow each residence in a Portland neighborhood to receive" a minimum of "two newsletters from their neighborhood association each year." They also asked the City to support neighborhood associations in "developing, hosting and support of a website on the City of Portland's server" and to expand "the evolvement program" citywide (8-9).

City Budget: Neighborhood coalition leaders repeated the often-heard recommendation that the City reinstitute some form of Neighborhood Needs process that would allow neighborhood associations to proposed capital projects for their neighborhoods. They suggested that the City designate a certain amount of funding to each neighborhood coalition and let each coalition determine the community-identified capital projects that would be funded (similar to the St. Paul model). They also reiterated recommendations to create a small grants program "to stimulate self-directed grass roots involvement (e.g., Savannah, Georgia model)" and to reinstitute the Bureau Advisory Committee (BAC) program. Neighborhood coalition leaders advocated for equalization

of pay across the city-run and non-profit neighborhood coalition. They also recommended that the City convert as many as possible City bureau "public relations" staff positions to "public participation" positions. They encouraged City bureaus to consider affiliating their work with the neighborhood offices—as was done by BES when it funded the Downspout Disconnect Program at ONI—to support "public participation in the neighborhood system." They praised the Bureau of Planning's new district liaison planner program and encouraged the City to continue it.

Long-term Strategic Planning: Neighborhood association leaders also called for a strategic planning process to stop the "drift" of the neighborhood system and to establish a "specific philosophy and framework" for the system. They hoped that this would help maintain a consistent direction and mission for the system and insulate the system" against future attempts to redirect it." They advocated for regular, well-thought-out reviews of the system—versus the "abrupt," top-down changes proposed and imposed during the early 2000s. They also called for stronger connections between neighborhood and schools, a review of the effects of the split of services between the City and County, and the identification of innovative community input strategies as alternatives to traditional public hearings. They argued that community members needed help to "understand the big picture implications of possible paths" and their benefits, costs, and tradeoffs.

The neighborhood coalition leaders raised familiar concerns about lack of adequate support for neighborhood and community involvement and lack of authentic interest on the part of City leaders and staff involving community members in City

decision making. They recommended both immediate reforms—many of which had been recommended by early system reviews—and also called for a more in-depth strategic planning process that would define a "consistent direction and mission for the system" and insulate the system against "future attempts to redirect it." Many of the neighborhood coalition leaders' concerns and recommendations would be taken up by a number of new processes initiated by Mayor Potter, starting in the spring and summer of 2005, and implemented through funding decisions Potter made during his time in office.

Bureau Innovation Project—2005

In January 2005, shortly after he took office, Potter took control of all the city bureaus. He retained control of all of city government for his first six months in office.[82] Potter used this opportunity to reach out to all 8,000 city staff people through a city-government-wide survey to seek their help in identifying opportunities to "change how our City works—and make it work better." The survey was part of what Potter called the Bureau Innovation Project (BIP). The project goals included:

- "create a workforce that reflects the rich diversity and cultural awareness of our city;"

- "break down barriers between our bureaus and build a collaborative workforce with shared goals;"

- "make every customer our most important customer;" and

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[82] Portland mayors have the authority to assign responsibility of bureaus to the other city council members. Portland mayors often take all the bureaus under their control for a short period of time during the budget development process.

- "implement *Managing for Results*[83] so we can make citywide decisions based on a shared set of goals" (Portland. Office of Mayor Tom Potter. *Report on the Bureau Innovation Project.* May 2005, cover letter).

About 2,000 city staff responded to the survey. Staff in the mayor's office also interviewed "bureau directors, senior management and key stakeholders in the community" and asked them about "best practices, new ideas directors would like to develop, and ideas once considered but never implemented. Mayor's staff also reviewed "past audits and efficiency reports" (Portland. Office of Mayor Potter. *Report on the Bureau Innovation Project*. i).

In May 2005, after consulting with the other city commissioners, Potter identified twenty major recommendations for further action. Mayor Potter established committees to work on each of the twenty recommendations. Sixteen of the recommendations focused internally on city government operations. Four recommendations focused externally on the City's relationship with the community. The four community-focused recommendations included:

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[83] *Managing for Results* was a proposal developed by City Auditor Gary Blackmer in 2002 to "keep the City focused on its mission and goals, and to integrate performance information into decision-making, management, and reporting." *Managing for Results* required the City Council to set "clear long- and short-term goals," keep "goals in mind when allocating resources," manage "government to achieve desired goals," and measure performance and report results to the public. Blackmer and Mayor Katz advocated for City Council adoption and implementation of the *Managing for Results* model to bring greater longer-term discipline and focus to City Council priority setting and subsequent policy and budget decision making (Portland. Office of the City Auditor. *Managing for Results*. December 2002 i). The "silo" structure of Portland's commission form of government does not encourage citywide strategic planning and action. City Council members usually gain political visibility from the actions of the bureaus under their control. Little incentive exists for City Council members to aggressively investigate or try to influence actions by bureaus in another City Council member's portfolio. It is not uncommon for a city commissioner who criticizes another city commissioner's bureaus, to find that the other commissioner retaliates by scrutinizing the initial commissioner's bureaus. Potter often expressed his impatience and frustration with Portland's commission form of government. The BIP project was part of Potter's broader effort to bring more strategic planning and central leadership and management to Portland's city government.

- BIP 1: "Develop a Citywide Strategic Plan in Collaboration with a Community Visioning Process by March 2006." The BIP Report stated that his project was intended to "identify the shared values of all Portland citizens," and use the results of the process "as a platform to develop a citywide strategic plan." This "strategic plan" would include "a vision, mission, statement and goals for bureaus to link to and develop performance measures" and would provide a framework to "focus the work of the City," "provide a basis for measuring progress," and lead to "further organizational changes" within the City's "bureau structure" (2) .The resulting broad community visioning process became known as "visionPDX."

- BIP 8: "Redefine and Revitalize the Office of Neighborhood Involvement." The BIP Report stated that this project would "Conduct a complete assessment of ONI's mission, goals and organizational structure to reinvigorate citizen participation and involvement and supporting the City's goals of diversity and inclusiveness to build community capacity." (This was the "strategic review" of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system requested by the neighborhood coalition leaders and others.)

- BIP 9: "Develop Improved Public Engagement Procedures." The BIP Report stated that his project would "Reconvene the [PITF] and move forward many of its recommended actions to develop improved citywide public outreach goals and strategies." The project also would ensure "coordinated public

outreach" by city bureaus "for both project-specific and citywide work efforts." The project also was intended to "expand citizen involvement opportunities for appointment to City Boards and Commissions."

- BIP 20: Appoint a City Charter Review Commission by October 1, 2005. The Charter Review Commission would "Assess the City's charter to consider alternative governing structures and changes" that would "improve customer service, streamline government operations, offer more flexible hiring practices for bureaus, encourage better collaboration with PDC and update, simplify and clarify rules" that "no longer apply, are unclear, or could be accomplished more efficiently." (This project responded, in part, to Potter's often-stated desire to replace Portland's commission form of government with some sort of strong mayor system.)

BIP 1, later known as "visionPDX," would become the most open and inclusive public process ever undertaken by Portland city government. It would model many of the best practices for involving diverse and historically underrepresented communities. BIP 9 significantly narrowed its original focus, and, instead of reconvening the PITF, developed a public involvement assessment toolkit to help city staff determine when to involve the public and at what level. BIP 8, later known as "Community Connect," would develop a comprehensive five-year strategy to increase community involvement in Portland that would significantly shape the direction of ONI and the scope and activities of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. The BIP 20 Charter Commission proposed four ballot measures—one proposed regular review of the City Charter and

another proposed to change Portland's form of government to a strong mayor form. Portland voters approved the first by 3 to 1, and rejected the latter by 3 to 1. All four of the BIP processes are described in more detail below.

visionPDX – Community Engagement Report

BIP 1 was renamed "visionPDX" and became one of the signature achievements of Tom Potter's one term as mayor Portland. visionPDX was a community-led and city government supported process that asked Portlanders to share their "hopes, dreams and aspirations for the city." visionPDX modeled many best practices of inclusive community involvement and especially those that reach out to and involve individuals and communities that traditionally had not been involved in City processes before. The City of Portland "visionPDX" *Community Engagement Report* (October 2007) documented, in great detail, the visionPDX outreach strategies and methods, and the important lessons learned.

Mayor Potter early on asserted that visionPDX only would be successful "if a broad and diverse group of voices helped to shape it." When Potter launched visionPDX, he not only charged the Vision Committee with "creating a vision document," but "equally important" to Potter was "the process of engagement," which be believed was a "necessary component of effective community governance" (6).The Vision Committee Engagement Subcommittee was formed and charged with "ensuring that the multitude of people and cultures that make up Portland today were included from the beginning" because only through a gathering of diverse perspectives could Portlanders "begin to understand the complex opportunities and challenges before us as a community" (4). The

Community Engagement Report documented primarily the work of and lessons learned by two of the Vision Committee subcommittees: the Engagement Subcommittee and the Grants subcommittee.

Mayor Potter intended that visionPDX would be followed by the Portland Plan—a strategic planning process that would move forward to implement the community's vision for Portland through the update of Portland's Comprehensive Plan, the Central City Plan, and other important city policy documents. The Community Engagement Report stated that "Community governance recognizes that ownership of community problems, solutions and opportunities (e.g., homelessness, drug crimes, development, schools, etc.) rests with the entire community—and that effective progress on these issues requires the cooperation of many stakeholders." The report notes that Potter "stressed that the future of Portland will depend on how well we cultivate and develop a community-government partnership model that supports the goal of an intentional city" (6).

visionPDX "Five Elements": The final visionPDX report group the community's vision for the city into five elements:" Built Portland" addressed the "physical and structure" aspects of the city and "how we our communities to look and feel…;" Economic Portland" covered "issues of opportunity, prosperity and livability" related to the economy and "the availability of meaningful work;" Environmental Portland" focused on "natural areas within and around Portland" and the City's commitment to "sustainability and environmental preservation;" "Learning Portland" focused on schools and on "practicing an ethic of life-long education;" "Social Portland" considered "individual and community health and well-being" and how community members "relate

to one another; this element also covered "the civic life of Portland from processes for engaging community in public decision making to partnerships in public safety" (Portland. visionPDX website. *The Five Elements*. downloaded October 8, 2013).

   "Social Portland" values and directions: The Social Portland element of visionPDX included community involvement values such as: community members caring about and committing to "individual and collective well-being;" viewing "diversity as a vital community asset;" facilitating "inclusion of all Portlanders in our democratic processes and in community decision-making;" and "Because we are actively engaged in the governance of our city, we have confidence that our leaders' decisions advance the common good" (Portland. *Portland 2030: a vision for the Future*. February 2008 25).

   The "Social Portland" element also identified "directions" that describe what Portland would be like if the vision for "Social Portland" were realized. Some of the "directions" included: accessible community gathering spaces; encouragement of public deliberation and consideration of multiple viewpoints by the City; city government "civic engagement mechanisms that allow for broad participation;" strong voices for both neighborhood associations and for "identity-based groups;" reduced structural barriers to public involvement; and "accessibility and equity in all public programs." The "directions" also included meeting basic needs of community members, community and environmental health, available health care, a diverse and collaborative police force, "healthy, clean and crime free" communities, and "artistic and cultural activities" that showcase "our city's commitment to creativity and innovation." The full list of "Social Portland" "directions" is presented in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: visionPDX Visualizing Social Portland

Visualizing Social Portland:

1. The City of Portland has invested in accessible gathering spaces where its diverse community members can interact and communicate.

2. As in generations past, Portlanders find unique ways to solve problems collectively because the City of Portland encourages public deliberation and considers public decisions from multiple viewpoints.

3. Responding to the increasing diversity of its residents, the City of Portland has developed civic engagement mechanisms that allow for broad participation.

4. Neighborhood associations have a strong voice, as do identity-based groups whose members cross neighborhood boundaries.

5. Structural barriers to public involvement have been addressed and all Portlanders actively participate in civic life.

6. Government has ensured accessibility and equity in all public programs.

7. Basic needs of community members are met, allowing Portlanders the opportunity to succeed and to express their full ingenuity.

8. Individual, community and environmental health are among the highest in the nation because they are considered a public priority.

9. Heath care is available to all and Portland is committed to sustaining the adequacy, viability and excellence of local health care systems.

10. The police force is reflective of Portland's diversity and officers work collaboratively with the entire community to resolve conflicts and keep the city safe.

11. Both the urban core and our neighborhoods are healthy, clean and crime-free spaces to live, work and play.

12. The variety and breadth of artistic and cultural activities showcases our city's commitment to creativity and innovation.

(*Portland 2030: a vision for the Future,* February 2008 27.)

Community Involvement in visionPDX: The visionPDX Community

Engagement Report described visionPDX as a "city-initiated, community led project

developed to create a new vision" for Portland's city government and the community at

large. The report states that visionPDX was lead by a "volunteer 40+ members Vision

Committee" that included representation of "scores of community groups and

individuals…" (6). The over forty people who served on the "Vision Committee" for the

project divided into six subcommittees, each of which had some influence on the

community outreach for the project. The outreach and involvement was designed and

supported primarily by a very diverse group of community members and City staff,

known as the Engagement Subcommittee. The Community Engagement Report primarily

documented the work of the Engagement Subcommittee and the Grants Subcommittee

and offered very interesting insights into which strategies and methods work best to reach

diverse individuals and groups in the community, especially group's that historically have

been underrepresented in Portland civic life and decision making (5).

visionPDX reached out to many groups that the City never had reached out to

before. The report stated that visionPDX "sought input from key stakeholders such as

neighborhood associations and business leaders while also ensuring that historically

underrepresented groups" were consulted and had a voice as well (6). The report quotes

the co-founder of the African Women's Coalition saying: "'I have lived in Portland for

over 30 years, and this was the first time anyone asked my community how we envision

the future'" (5)

The Community Engagement Report shared a number of lessons learned about

"community visioning" and about community involvement. Community visioning

lessons included: be clear about the purpose of visioning and recognize that the process

is just as important as the product; "Engage communities early and often;" "Look for

ways to collaborate" and "continue to expand the number of people and organizations"

involved; "Remember that visioning is continuous" and incorporate the vision values

every time the "community responds to change."

Community involvement lessons included:

- "*Develop new leaders*" by "actively engaging individuals and groups in the

    visioning goals" and making the development of new leaders a goal from the

    outset (8-9).

- "*Provide skilled facilitators*" who are "culturally competent, skilled at

    listening well and moving people respectfully through discussion;" "Rely on

    the expertise and existing relationships community partners have with their

    constituents."

- "*Involve the community in developing tools*" because outreach tools ("i.e.,

    surveys, questionnaires, interview questions, etc.) that have been tested in the

    community for relevance often lead to create community ownership and

    support for the outreach content and methods.

- "*Meet the basic needs of community members*" by providing "food, child care,

    translation and other amenities" at outreach events to reduce what otherwise

    would be barriers to involvement for many community members.

- "*Follow through on action items and specific feedback, and include the public

    in implementation*" to break the common pattern of "public distrust and

    skepticism" because of past "promises not kept;" implementation and

"concrete opportunities for change" will increase trust between community members and government.

- "*Build ample cushion into your timeline*" to allow the process to adjust to "unforeseen circumstances" and to ensure flexibility "while simultaneously moving toward a set of goals"—the Report emphasized that this is "extremely important."

- "*Clearly delineate staff and volunteer roles*" to ensure "efficient use of time and an easier path to your goal."

- "*Create ways to evaluate your engagement*" "in coordination with the community" to "measure the short-and long-term community impact of your project."

- "*Take stock of your efforts periodically, looking for any possible mid-course corrections*," such as sharing preliminary data and findings to identify "gaps and areas for improvement" in the process (9).

Key Outreach Strategies and Tools: The Community Engagement Report identified three key principles that guided the visionPDX community involvement efforts: "DEPTH—Create community ownership through meaningful process and outcomes;" "BREATH—Involve as much of the public as possible;" and "SUSTAINABILITY—Maintain engagement over time" (12).

The Vision Committee's primary outreach tool was a community survey. The survey asked people what people they valued about Portland and why, what changes they would most like to see, what Portland would look like in 20 years if their hopes had been

realized, and which actions would be most likely needed to achieve their vision for Portland (13). The Vision Committee received "13,000 completed surveys" and input from "an additional 2,000 people at small group discussions" (10).

Relationship building was important to many groups in the community. Members of the Engagement Subcommittee recognized that "many communities would not want to take a survey or hold a discussion group on these topics right away, without a former relationship having been established." To meet the needs of these communities and learn "how to better dialogue with diverse groups," subcommittee members focused on "having honest conversations"—which they called "Engagement Interviews"—with individuals and small groups. These interviews focused first on "what engagement these communities were already doing, what worked and what didn't work well, and how to best reach out to their communities…" (13).

While each community faced some challenges specific to their group, recurring themes included the fact that "Many populations are focused on addressing basic needs (housing, health care, food) and aren't in a space to offer their perspective." Some community groups reported "their primary concerns" needed to be met before they could "engage on other issues." Some interviewees noted the importance to them that they see that their input was used by visionPDX "through continued engagement and tangible outcomes." "Many groups commented on the need to build relationships over time" (14).

In addition to the survey and "engagement interviews," Vision Committee members also interviewed over 20 "key strategic partners and stakeholders" and asked them about their organization's vision, mission, and current goals, and how best to

improve outreach to their communities. The Community Engagement Report noted that several of the groups interviewed recommended "'going where their constituents are'…to dialogue with them." They explained that this meant "both going to physical spaces community members frequent and coming prepared with the right outreach methods." Stakeholders also suggested: training community members "how to participate in local government, and the value of that participation;" developing "community-wide dialogues on diversity;" creating "real opportunities for decision-making on the local level (e.g., neighborhoods determining [City] capital investments);" and developing "relationships" with community groups and connecting "community groups to one another" (15). Vision Committee volunteers also attended and shared information at large community events around the city, e.g., Portland's annual Rose Festival and Cinco de Mayo celebration.

A major outreach innovation by visionPDX was the Community Grants Program. This grants program "comprised a large portion" of the overall visionPDX engagement effort and modeled strategies for reaching many groups in the community that the City had never reached effectively. The grant program pushed significant resources out into the community. It also "funded non-profit and community outreach organizations" to design and host community conversations and gather information from members of their communities. Led by Vision Committee volunteers, the Grants Subcommittee allocated $250,000 in grants and chose 29 organizations from 143 applications."

The Community Engagement Report said the Community Grant Program "supported organizations' ability to talk to people they knew best: clients, community partners and people in their neighborhoods, to name a few." The Vision Committee

trusted community-based organizations to implement strategies appropriate for the target populations they identified" (18-19). Grantees used a wide variety of creative outreach strategies including focus groups and small group discussion, one-on-one interviews at existing events and through door-to-door canvassing, house parties and celebratory events, community theater performances, an interactive, multi-media kiosk that was moved to locations around the city in which people could watch a video and then record their ideas for Portland, the City Repair mobile tea house, and a variety of video productions (16-27).

Barriers to Community Involvement: The Community Engagement Report identified "barriers" to effective community involvement that community members shared during visionPDX outreach activities. People who were struggling with unmet basic needs, such as housing, food security, transportation, and health care, did "not have the time or energy to participate in civic activities…." Some Portlanders live in isolation from their communities and from government and services, especially populations "experiencing high mobility and economic displacement. Lack of a social connection to "neighbors and other community members" was another barrier. Several organizations identified the "importance of relationship-building for the long-term, citing the lack of time as a major barrier to building trust and connection" (30).

"Cultural and language differences" kept several "populations from non-dominant cultures" from participating. Some communities brought a strong "Distrust of government and skepticism" with them from their countries of origin and would not stay involved because "they felt that promises made by politicians are often not kept." The

disability community reported often experiencing "stigma and stereotypes that result in stress and a sense of being overwhelmed" making it difficult to voice their issues and participate effectively. Latino community representatives cited the "public's negative perception of Latinos" as a main barrier to their participation. Girls, Inc. reported that "many girls encounter barriers to participation because their families might be culturally patriarchal. Elders in Action reported that older adults often feel not recognized or valued, which impedes their effective participation. Similarly young people also felt that their age impeded their involvement. Young people often are not included in "adults venues, and when they are invited, can often feel intimidated to speak up" (31).

Other barriers included: "lack of adequate representation in existing civic participation systems" "Outreach volunteers and staff" who often do not "represent the diversity of the community they are working with;" adequate resources often are not provided to support "good involvement" (e.g., "materials, translation/interpretation, food, space, etc."); "Poor internal and external dynamics" often can "hinder engagement efforts;" and "'[I]nvolvement fatigue'" from too many community involvement processes can lead Portlanders "to feel tired when asked to participate." Finally, a "Lack of strong leadership" that encourages people to become and stay involved also decreases participation (31-32).

Solutions to Improve Community Involvement: The Community Engagement Report identified a number of "solutions" to help improve community involvement.

- "*Understand the community's needs*" by thinking "through the specific needs and stories of the audience being reached."

- "*Provide skilled facilitators*" who can help "produce safe and inviting public events," and who are "culturally competent and skilled at listening well and moving people respectfully through discussion."

- "*Be proactive about building relationships*" by allotting "time to build relationships" and not waiting "for a crisis," by bringing "people together with long-term collaboration in mind," and by encouraging collaborative practices to minimize "divisiveness and 'internal squabbling'."

- "*Involve community members in outreach to their constituents*" because "it's best to work through the organizations and individual that already have connections with the communities that you want to get involved."

- "*Follow through on action items and specific feedback, and include the public in implementation*" to help overcome the "distrust and skepticism" that often is rooted in "promises not kept with the public."

- "*Provide culturally relevant and informative education to the general public and leaders*" to help the "larger community," "schools, community organizations, and institutions" learn how to be sensitive to and work with different communities.

- "*Involve the community in developing outreach tools*" because testing community involvement tools in the community can help outreach materials and approach be more relevant to different community groups and can give community members a greater sense of ownership over the content.

- "*Find and use community-specific media*" and ensure that outreach messages "build on the issues" different community groups care about.

- "*Make engagement convenient*" because, for many people, "civic engagement is a luxury;" providing for "basic needs" by providing "food, child care, translation and other amenities as public outreach events facilitates involvement" (32-33).

"Lasting Impacts" of visionPDX community involvement: The visionPDX Community Engagement Report noted that, as "Portland grows more populated and more diverse, we will face new challenges that require cooperation among communities to solve." The report argued that "Our success in meeting these challenges will depend largely upon the effort invested in bringing people together, sharing experiences and building long-term relationships." The report asserted that "Community engagement efforts like visionPDX improve connections between individuals, community organizations, businesses and government, which has lasting impacts."

The Community Engagement Report stated that the extensive visionPDX community involvement efforts had a number of additional impacts. The report observed that "Throughout the visionPDX process, we saw an upsurge of civic engagement from individuals and organizations across Portland who were included and involved for the first time." Leaders of some historically under-represented groups reported that "more of their members and newly naturalized citizens are registering to vote. Organizations with very different missions have formed partnerships and new projects. Groups with very

different constituencies are collaborating on [a] joint leadership development program"[84] (35).

The report quoted Kayse Jama, executive director of the Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO), who noted that "Before visionPDX, people of color weren't working together as much. Through visioning , we found out that immigrants, refugees, and long-time communities of color have a lot in common. That shared experience was very powerful" (35).

The report closed with the statement: "A clear message received during the vision project was 'involve us'" (35)

visionPDX Follow up—Vision into Action: After visionPDX finished its work in 2007, the City Council "created the Vision into Action [VIA] Coalition to act as keepers of the vision. The City Council charged the new group with "oversight and communication regarding the status of vision implementation" and the supervision of the "Vision into Action community grants program" that the City Council had pledged to fund. The VIA Coalition initially was staffed by the Bureau of Planning. The group later created their own independent non-profit organization (Portland. City Council Resolution 36570, Jan. 16, 2008).

The VIA Coalition included a number of activists from community organization who had worked on and helped shape visionPDX's extensive and very successful community outreach and involvement. The coalition members described their purpose as being "a catalyst for concrete actions that will move us closer to realizing the future we

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[84] The "leadership development program" referred to here was ONI's new Diversity and Civic Leadership Program, which is described in more detail below.

want for ourselves and for future generations." They reported that they sought to accomplish this by "advocating for equity with the Portland Metro Area, supporting community projects that promote livability and realiz[e] community priorities" and by providing data and documentation to the community about the impact of community engagement processes and projects on realizing the [visionPDX] vision in the Portland Metro Area" (Portland. Vision into Action Coalition. *Current Projects*. [no date]).

The VIA Coalition also administered the VIA community grants program. The City Council provided the group with just over $100,000 to give out in 2008 and another just over $100,000 to give out in 2009. The VIA coalition funded a wide diversity of community groups that carried out many different types of community projects—twelve projects in 2008 and eight projects in 2009 (Portland .City Council Resolution 182152. September 3, 2008; Portland City Council Resolution 182819. May 27, 2009). The VIA Coalition also distributed $10,000 through the VIA Youth Grants Program to eleven youth-initiated, youth-led projects that implemented aspects of the Children's Bill of Rights and visionPDX (Portland. visionPDX. Vision into Action. *2008 Community Action Grants Program*. [no date]).

VIA Coalition members also advocated for the implementation of the visionPDX values and goals during a number of different City processes. In 2007, a number of VIA Steering Committee members served on the 2005-07 City Charter Commission created by Mayor Potter (BIP 20). In 2008, the Bureau of Planning shifted its focus from the completed visionPDX project and began to work on the Portland Plan. During the administration of Mayor Sam Adams, VIA Coalition members served on the Portland

Plan Equity Technical Advisory Group (Equity TAG), and participated in the discussions

that led to Mayor Adams' creation of the City's new Equity Office in 2011 (Portland.

Vision into Action Coalition. *Current Projects*. [no date])..[85]

visionPDX represented a significant advance in community involvement practice

for the City of Portland. A major change was that the process was much more genuinely

community-led rather than lead or controlled by city staff. A great diversity of

community members were involved as members of visionPDX committees and

significantly affected the design and implementation of the community outreach and

involvement. The process used a great variety of innovative involvement methods that

were very attuned to the needs, cultures, and capacity of the groups they were trying to

reach. The process showed many community members and city staff what really great

community outreach could look like. As one of Mayor Potter's top priorities, the project

also benefited from being well funded at over $1 million. Unfortunately, while some city

agencies adopted some of the model outreach strategies and practices in their subsequent

processes, others did not, and continued to use more traditional approaches.

Two important lessons that would be taken up by other processes were the

strategy of funding community groups to reach out to their own communities as part of a

project's involvement strategy, and the concept of using community grants to involve

community members, catalyze community creativity and leverage community resources

to help meet a public purpose. The Vision into Action grant model would be replicated in

by ONI's new Neighborhood Small Grants Program and soon thereafter the East Portland

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[85] The VIA Coalition appears to have been active for a few years after the completion of visionPDX in 2007. In October 2013, the most recent post on the VIA Coalition website appeared to be from 2011 (http://www.visionpdx.com/).

Action Plan community grants program, both funded during Mayor Potter's administration.

A number of the leaders from communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities who participated in visionPDX and Vision into Action also had participated in Interwoven Tapestry and/or the Southeast Uplift DRC and DCLC. Many had, through their participation in these other processes, developed relationships with each other and with ONI staff and with neighborhood leaders and leaders of other community organizations. Some of the organizations involved in these processes later became formal ONI community organization partners through their participation in ONI's Diversity and Civic Leadership Program. A few individuals also were active in Mayor Potter's concurrent major review of ONI and the neighborhood system, known as BIP 8, or "Community Connect."

Bureau Innovation Project 9—"Develop Improved Public Engagement Procedures"

The BIP Report (May 2005) identified the continuing need to develop "consistent standards and expectations" to guide city government's involvement of the community in City "decision-making processes." The BIP Report stated goal for BIP 9 project as:

> "To actively engage citizens at all levels of civic governance and provide greater opportunity and accessibility for all citizens to participate in city decision-making. To achieve greater transparency and consistency for citizens interested in becoming involved in city efforts."

The report noted that this effort would complement the BIP 8 review of Portland's neighborhood system. The BIP Report suggested that the BIP 9 project "Reconvene the Public Involvement Task Force" and bring the PITF's report "developed by more than 40

community groups, city staff, and public involvement professionals forward to the City

Council for discussion and implementation."

In June 2005, the Mayor's office created a committee of city staff and community

members to work on BIP 9. Eileen Argentina, a manager with the City of Portland

Bureau of Transportation (BPOT) and Joanne Bowman (one of the three PITF co-chairs)

co-chaired the BIP 9 Committee. Argentina and Bowman soon decided that the broad

charge and scope originally envisioned for BIP 9 was beyond the capacity of the BIP 9

Committee. They decided instead to pursue a more narrow goal and implement one of the

many PITF recommendations—the development of a toolkit to guide city staff in how to

assess the level of public involvement appropriate for a particular project.

The BIP 9 committee worked from June 2005 to November 2006 and developed a

simple and useful assessment tool, known for years afterwards as "the BIP 9 Toolkit."

The committee members emphasized that the toolkit was intended to be "easy to apply to

all city bureaus and create consistent expectations for the public, yet not limit the

creativity or flexibility of public involvement staff" (Portland. Office of Mayor Tom

Potter. *Public Involvement Toolkit.* November 2006 1).The tone and content of the toolkit

attempted to be sensitive to concerns expressed by city staff during the PITF process

about wanting avoid rigid "cookie cutter" process requirements. The Public Involvement

Toolkit instead focused on providing strategic guidance that city staff could adapt to the

varied work and wide range of projects carried out by different bureaus.

The committee members recognized that many city staff people who interact with

the public may not have had formal community involvement training. The Public

Involvement Toolkit presented information in simple and accessible formats to make it as "user friendly" as possible. The toolkit also provided a process flowchart and referred city staff to the City of Portland Outreach and Involvement Handbook for more guidance on general steps and public involvement techniques.

The Public Involvement Toolkit suggested that city staff, at a minimum, perform "an assessment of the project or initiative" being considered, that included the following:

- **Environmental Scan**: "An environmental scan for related mandates, plans, and other directives that may have bearing on the project.

- **Initial Stakeholder Assessment**: "An initial stakeholder assessment, including considering whether this project may disproportionately affect a particular community or traditionally underrepresented community."

- **Goals and Purposes Review**: "A review of the goals and purposes of public involvement for the project," and

- **Evaluation of Available Resources:** "An evaluation of resources available for the public engagement component of the project" (1).

After this preliminary review, the toolkit encouraged city staff to use the toolkit to "further define the public involvement approach most suited to the particular project" and to use the toolkit "multiple times throughout the span of a project to assess options in a project's phase or to reassess in the event that circumstances change or modifications are needed" (1).

The Public Involvement Toolkit suggested that city staff work with a "representative stakeholder group, to assess the optimal approaches and methods for

engaging the public in a project or initiative" and to design the formal public involvement process. It emphasized that, not only can representatives of the proposed target stakeholders groups help improve the process design, involving them also "can help develop early public commitment to project success…" (2). The toolkit recommended that city staff work with the stakeholder group to: answer some basic scoping questions about the level of impact of the project; determine the level of public involvement that is appropriate to the project; and then identify tools and techniques that best fit that level of involvement. This approach embodied the early involvement called for by the PITF and implemented so effectively by the visionPDX process.

The toolkit also guided City staff in ranking the answers to the following "Level of Impact" questions from "very low" to "very high."

1. "What is the anticipated level of conflict, opportunity, controversy, or concern on this or related issues?"

2. "How significant are the potential impacts to the public?"

3. "How much do the major stakeholders care about this issues, project, or program?"

4. "What degree of involvement does the public appear to desire or expect?"

5. "What is the potential for public impact on the proposed decision or project?"

6. "How significant are the possible benefits of involving the public?"

7. "How serious are the potential ramifications of NOT involving the public?"

8. "What level of public participation does Council and/or bureau directors desire or expect?"

9. "What is the possibility of broad public interest?"

10. "What is the probably level of difficulty in solving the problem or advancing the

project" (Appendix B)?

The Public Involvement Toolkit provided a table that listed levels of public

involvement—"inform," "consult," "involve," "collaborative," "and "decide" (based on

the IAP2 Spectrum). The table described the "public participation goal" for each level

and the simple description of what the City would commit to at that level of involvement

(e.g. "Decide" – "Implement what the public decides." The table also suggested some

basic categories of tools that are appropriate for each level (e.g.

"Information/Notification," "Events/Meetings," "Community Education," "Committees,"

etc) (Appendix C). The toolkit also included a table that provided numerous tool options

under each category (Appendix D).

While, the BIP 9 committee did not reconvene the PITF and move forward to

implement all the PITF recommendations, the Public Involvement Toolkit did offer a

valuable resource to help city staff think through some of the basic design issues for

public involvement for their projects. It is not clear how many city staff use the Public

Involvement Toolkit. In 2013, a few city bureaus strongly encourage or require their staff

people to use the toolkit. Many city staff appear either to be unaware of the toolkit or not

to use it regularly.[86]

Once it became clear that BIP 9 was not going to take up the broader work of the

PITF (as initially proposed in the BIP 9 charge), some community members who felt

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[86] In 2013, PIAC members, including Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong who was Mayor Potter staff person who
oversaw the BIP 9 Committee's work, are reviewing and updating the BIP 9 Toolkit.

strongly that the PITF work needed to continue complained to the mayor's staff about what they saw as the dramatically-reduced scope of the BIP 9 project. The mayor's staff consulted with the Mayor Potter and reported back that he was committed to creating a standing public involvement advisory commission to carry on the PITF work. (The PITF had recommended the creation of such a standing commission as one of the PITF major recommendations.)

Mayor Potter followed through on this commitment and in 2007 funded a position at ONI to helping create and coordinate the work of the commission and to reestablish and support the city public involvement staff peer networking group (CPIN). In 2008, the City Council formally established the ongoing Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) to carry on the work of the PITF to establish guidelines and standards for city government community involvement. (See the description of PIAC below.)

BIP 20—City Charter Commission

The BIP Report (May 2005) recommended the appointment of a "City Charter Review Commission" to "consider alternative governing structures and changes." The BIP Report, stated the rationale for creating the commission, as follows:

> "Portland's City Charter establishes the Commission form of government in which individually-elected Commissioners oversee a group of city bureaus, serving as both the chief administrator and 'Commissioner-in-charge' for a portfolio of bureaus as well as serving in a legislative capacity as a member of the City Council. This creates a dynamic of competing interest, one to legislate for the benefit of the entire city, the other to administer for the benefit of one's particular portfolio." The report further states that "Many attribute the difficulty in collaborating across bureaus and working together as 'one city' to the Commission form of government." (Portland. *Report on the Bureau Innovation Project* 2005 28).

The BIP Report suggested that the commission "Establish principles on which to base Charter Commission reform;" analyze alternative government structures; explore changes to the City Charter that would encourage better collaboration between the semi-autonomous Portland Development Commission and other city bureaus; and to assess current civil service and human resources provisions in the City Charter.

The BIP Report suggested that the goal of the project would be to "improve customer service, streamline government operations, offer more flexible hiring practices for bureaus, encourage better collaboration with PDC and update, simplify and clarify rules which no longer apply, are unclear, or could be accomplished more efficiently."

The City Council created the Charter Review Commission and appointed its members in November 2005 (Portland .City Council Resolution Substitute 36346, November 9, 2005). The commission members heard testimony from current and former elected officials, city employees, "community organizations, neighborhood associations and other stakeholder groups and individuals." They also sought guidance from government and public administration experts, reviewed "academic and professional literature," and studied model charters and charter of "comparably-sized cities."

In January 2007, the commission members presented their report to City Council, titled "A City Government for Portland's Future." Commissioner members proposed that the City Council refer four measures to Portland voters. One measure updated and clarified civil service provisions in the City Charter. Another gave the City Council greater oversight over the Portland Development Commission and clarified the roles and responsibilities of the PDC and the City Council. The other two, described below,

changed Portland's form of government and established periodic community charter review commissions.

Change the Form of Portland's City Government: The most controversial measure proposed by the Charter Review Commission replaced Portland's commissioner form of government with a form in which the City's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) would responsible for overseeing and coordinating the "day-to-day management of the City's bureaus, operations and finances." The Mayor would appoint the CAO, subject to City Council confirmation. The CAO would be directly accountable to the Mayor. The Mayor would act as the "chief elected executive official of the City with ultimate authority and political accountability for City operations." The City Council members would focus on "legislative oversight of City operations and management, policy development, long-term strategic planning and constituent representation." The City Council would continue to "play a quasi-judicial role in certain areas, primarily land use" (Portland. Charter Review Commission. January 2007 8).

Charter Review: The fourth measure was directly related to community involvement in city government decision making. The measure required the City Council to convene, "at least every six years," a citizens' Charter Commission (representative of the City as a whole) to review aspects of the City Charter and recommend Charter amendments to Council and the voters of the City." In 2007, the City Charter had no provision requiring regular review of the City Charter. The Charter Commission members identified some of the advantages of periodic charter review:

- "Provides citizens an opportunity to periodically review the City Charter and gives all residents of the City an opportunity to consider fundamental issues of City structure and governance;"

- "Adheres to Portland's tradition of civic engagement by permitting citizens to independently examine the City's governing document from an impartial perspective;"

- "Composition of each Charter Commission promotes representation and inclusiveness;" and

- "Permits the Charter to evolve to reflect the changing face and needs of the City and its residents" (16).

Charter Commission members also emphasized that future charter commissions would "reflect Portland's residents, and will be cognizant of community issues. Members of the Charter Commission will listen to suggestions from all Portland residents, including elected officials [who were not allowed to be charter commission members], as to what should be investigated in the Charter and then select its highest priorities." The measure also proposed to allow the charter commission recommendations to go directly to the ballot. The measure required the first charter review commission to be established within two years.

Charter Commission members identified issues they believed deserved "urgent attention" during the first charter review process in two years. These issues included:

- Election and voting format for city council elections "(e.g. districts, at-large, hybrid formats)"

- Number of positions on the city council

- "Alignment with visionPDX and Community Connect results"

- "Consider a Charter preamble to emphasize Portland's community values"

- "Streamlining the Charter to a 'model charter' format" and removing language that more properly belonged in City Code or elsewhere.

Regular community charter review measure would have made it much easier to implement the PITF recommendation to place language in the City Charter that established governance values for "community governance" and formally established the role of community member in government decision making. The Charter Commission members also recognized the possible need to insert language to implement aspects of with visionPDX and Community Connect values and/or recommendations.

The City Council voted to forward all four measures, with some changes, to the May 15, 2007 election ballot. Voters approved the PDC measure by 53 percent, and the civil service reforms measure by 54 percent. Voters strongly approved the periodic charter review measure with a 76 percent "Yes" vote. The measure to change Portland's form of government, which Mayor Potter strongly supported, failed to passed—76 percent of Portland voters voted "No" (Multnomah County Elections. "Election Results and History," "May 15, 2007 –Election Results," http://web.multco.us/elections/may-15-2007-election-results , downloaded October 8, 2013).

The version of the charter review measure passed by Portland voters (Measure No. 26-89) included the following provisions:

- Required the City Council to convene a Charter Review Commission at least every 10 years;

- Required the City Council to establish the first charter commission in two years;

- Required the commission to "reflect the diversity of the City and be made up of 20 residents"

- Required each city council member to "nominate four Charter Commission members, subject to confirmation by the Council"

- Allowed the Mayor and City Council to request that the commission members review "specific Charter sections," but allowed the commissioner members to choose to review other parts of the Charter if they chose to;

- Required the commission to provide written reports to the city council;

- Required the city council to forward to the ballot any City Charter amendment supported by at least 15 of the commission members;

- Allowed the city council to choose whether or not to refer charter amendments to the voters that were supported by a majority, but fewer than 15, of the commission members.

This new formal requirement for periodic community review of the City Charter embedded a valuable recurring opportunity for community members to have direct access to changing the City's most fundamental governing document. Also, the measure's language ("at least" every ten years) allowed the City Council to establish a charter review commission at any time.

Mayor Sam Adams would create the first charter review commission, as required by the measure, in 2011.[87] (See below for a description of the 2011 Charter Review Commission.)

BIP 8/Community Connect

The BIP 8 project—later knows as "Community Connect"—significantly would expand and shift the focus of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system.

Many people, for many years, had raised concerns about the representativeness and inclusiveness of Portland's neighborhood association system and the lack of an adequate voice in City decision making for many groups in the community. Tom Potter, during his campaign, had expressed his concern that many groups, including people of color and immigrants and refugees, did not feel that the neighborhood system welcomed their participation or worked on the issues they cared about. Community groups had asked for many years that Portland's community involvement system be expanded to include other types of community groups. City officials and others frequently criticized neighborhood associations for having low rates of involvement. Neighborhood association and neighborhood coalition leaders had been calling for many years for more resources and support for the system and for a longer-term definition of the purpose of the system and a strategic plan for broadening and improving community involvement in Portland.

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[87] The Portland City Charter Section 13-301.Charter Commission states that even though the new charter section that includes the language passed by voters is dated May 15, 2007, the "effective date" is listed as "January 1, 2009.

The BIP 8 project—later known as "Community Connect"—would establish a broad and detailed strategic plan for reinvigorating and expanding Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. This strategic plan significantly would influence reforms initiated under Mayor Potter and the continued evolution of the system through the time of this study in 2013.

BIP Report on BIP 8: The BIP Report (2005) titled BIP 8: "Redefine and Revitalize the Office of Neighborhood Involvement." The BIP Report stated that ONI's "mission and organizational structure" never had been analyzed or extensively evaluated.[88] The BIP Report stated that ONI's mission and structure was "due for a comprehensive reassessment in order to fully harness the level of participation of Portland's citizen-activists." The report asserted that a "reorganization will reinvigorate citizen participation, allow for meaningful citizen contribution, and better organize the neighborhood system of 95 neighborhood associations and 7 district coalitions to ensure better citizen involvement." The report stated that "citizen participation in neighborhood associations has declined dramatically," partially because of "changing demographics, decreased support and resources, more time constraints on working families..." (Portland. *Report on the Bureau Innovation Project.* May 2005 14).

The BIP Report suggested that the BIP 8 project should "Bring together diverse community interests to determine what civic participation should look like in Portland, evaluating and modifying ONI's mission and structure to achieve those goals." The report directed ONI to "model the behaviors identified in the [PITF] guidelines for public

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[88] It's not clear whether the mayor's staff who prepared this document were unaware of the 1995-96 Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement or did not think that review was "significant."

engagement—openness, inclusion, and listening" in conducting "this redefinition and restructuring, and to "Work in partnership with the City's Visioning process to enhance and engage public involvement" (14).

The Community Connect Process: The BIP 8 process got off to a rocky start and would be plagued by process missteps for much of its existence. The mayor's office invited a large number of representatives from a wide array of neighborhood and community-based organizations to a kick-off meeting with Mayor Potter in June 2005. Many attendees were confused about whether or not the mayor was inviting them to serve on the committee itself. Mayor's staff had to let people know after the meeting that the Mayor's Office would select a smaller, but very diverse, group of individuals to serve on the committee.

The actual BIP 8 committee members met for the first time in early August 2005. They included a broad range of representatives from the neighborhood system, under-represented communities and community organizations and different city bureaus. Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, with Mayor Potter's office, and ONI Director Jimmy Brown introduced themselves as the co-leaders of the group. BIP 8 Committee members discussed the purpose of the group and chose five of their members to serve with Kennedy-Wong and Brown as a steering committee for the group. A staff person from the City's Office of Management and Finance had been assigned to take notes at the meeting. No other staff people or resources were provided specifically to support the BIP 8 project (Portland. Bureau Innovation Project 8.*Meeting Notes* August 3, 2005).

During fall 2005, committee members met monthly and discussed strategies for how to reach out to and gather input from a broad range of community groups and perspectives. Kennedy-Wong withdrew from the process for a couple months while she was on maternity leave (Portland. Bureau Innovation Project 8.*Meeting Notes* October 21, 2005).

Kris Smock's advice to BIP 8: The BIP 8 steering committee invited local community organizing consultant Kris Smock to share her thoughts and advice with the group. Smock described the pros and cons of what she referred to as the "civic model" of community organizing, which includes traditional volunteer neighborhood associations.[89] She suggested that the BIP 8 Committee members consider the drawbacks of the "civic model" as they designed their process. Smock identified four primary drawbacks:

- "*Who gets involved*." Smock noted that most of the people who get involved in neighborhood associations are "the people with the capacity and resources to enable them to respond to the opportunity." "Without more explicit methods for" reaching out to "other residents and building their leadership skills," "traditionally disenfranchised" residents will find it hard to get involved.

- "*No real policy influence*." Smock maintained that neighborhood association meetings tend to "serve as forums for airing problems and discussing ideas," and give residents an opportunity to interact face-to-face with "government employees." The meetings "don't really provide a way for residents to

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[89] Smock describes the "civic model" and four other models of community organizing in her book, *Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change,* 2004.

influence policies or decisions"—except through "the initiative of volunteers who have the pre-existing skills to engage at that level."

- "*Lack of structure" leads to "no voice for most*." Smock discussed how "The lack of a more structured process for discussion and decision-making means that traditionally disenfranchised residents who do end up at the meetings often don't feel like they have a voice."

- "*Self-reinforcing cycle*." Smock added that neighborhood associations often are "seen as the legitimate voice for the whole community, so when government or private entities need the community's approval for something, they go to these groups." She cautioned that "without a more explicit effort to engage traditionally disenfranchised residents, the groups do not genuinely represent the community." She maintained that the "problem becomes self-reinforcing as disenfranchised residents start to see these groups as only representing the interests of a narrow segment of the community" (Smock. *Comments to Bureau Innovation Team 8* October 19, 2005 1).

Smock suggested to the BIP 8 Steering Committee members that other community organizing models provide "a range of different methods and tools" that more effectively engage "historically disenfranchised residents in public life" and give "all residents a more genuine voice in decision-making" (1). Smock shared the following community organizing lessons she had identified through her research.

- *Outreach Strategies*: Smock said that neighborhood associations often put a notice in the paper and distribute flyers to invite community members to a

meeting to comment on "planning or development projects in their neighborhood." Often, few community members show up, leading neighborhood association leaders to assume they "don't care" and do not want to be involved in the decision. Smock argued that, while this is a "typical response," it "ignores the basic tenets of outreach, which she identified as:

o *"Flyers as reminders:"* Flyers and written materials work best as reminders about something resident already are involved in, not to engage them initially.

o *"Relationships:"* "To engage residents, you need to build one-on-one relationships with them."

o *"One-on-ones:"* To build these relationships, you need to go out and talk "to people about their issues and concerns," really listen to them, and then create a "meaningful process for those concerns to be incorporated into the group's work."

o *"Trust and confidence in the process:"* Once you have built a "genuine relationship of mutual trust and respect" and people are confident their concerns and interests will be incorporated into the process, "then you have a basis for inviting them to get involved."

o *"Landlords and developers:"* Land lords and developers often come to meetings with a clear agenda and self interest, with existing relationships with the neighborhood leaders who organized the meeting, and they often have "paid staff with the time, skills, and experience to participate."

o *"Labor intensive:"* This outreach process is very labor intensive and needs
to be done "in a consistent way. Most organizing groups rely on paid staff
to do the outreach." Smock suggested that neighborhood volunteers could
be trained "to do door-to-door outreach or house meetings" but she
cautioned that "it would need to be well-coordinated and organized"[90]
(Smock2005 2).

- *Leadership Development*: Smock stated that the "assumption that people learn
the skills of citizenship through experience (e.g. Putnam) only really holds
true for people who start off with an existing base of education and
skills…they can build on through experience." Smock argued that "leadership
development needs to be intentional." People who "don't already have the
skills and experience" need to be provided with "training and capacity
building up front" to be able to participate on an equal footing with other
players. They also need "ongoing coaching and staff support throughout the
process." Smock noted that BIP 8 could draw from many models of leadership
development, but she emphasized that these models require "staff support and
significant time and resources." She also stated that these models "require
one-on-one work with each resident," and that "Just setting up some group
trainings is not enough" (2).

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[90] BIP 8 Steering Committee members asked Smock how many paid staff would be needed to support this
type of effort by all ninety-five neighborhood associations in Portland. Smock stated that she thought that
one paid community organizer for each neighborhood association would be required to do it well. ONI
funding at the time supported around thirty staff people across the seven neighborhood coalition offices—
not all of these staff people were available to provide direct organizing support to neighborhood
associations.

- *Structure and Process*: Smock noted that "a big difference" exists between "seeking resident input and involving residents in decision-making in a genuine way." She said that neighborhood associations "typically provide a forum for individual residents to solve their problems by bringing them to the attention of city bureaucrats" and providing "input on specific decisions" that affect their neighborhood. They do not "usually create a way for residents to engage in broader city wide decisions over resource allocation and public priority setting." Smock argued that meaningful involvement of community members in those types of decisions would require the City to "give up control and to be open to what residents decide." She cautioned that that does not mean "the process should be unstructured" or completely controlled by the community. She maintained that "Government needs to create a very highly structured, controlled framework within which residents can have meaningful influence over the content of the decisions." Smock asserted that, contrary to some people's assumption that "the more unstructured and open-ended a process is, the more democratic it is," her research had suggested that the "opposite is actually true." "[H]ighly structured and aggressively facilitated" processes are most effective at "engaging diverse groups of residents in a meaningful way and giving a voice to the most disenfranchised residents…." Smock went on to caution that "The less structured the process is, the more likely it is that pre-existing power dynamics will be replicated in a community engagement process" and that the process will "end up providing an

opportunity for the 'usual suspects' to have input in this decision."[91]

Smock closed her comments on this topic by stated that BIP 8 needed to acknowledge "up front that different groups will come to the table with potentially conflicting interests." She noted the "tendency in Portland's political culture to emphasize consensus and partnership…and to gloss over the real differences in power and interests that groups come to the table with." Smock suggested one strategy to address this would be to "give each 'interest group,' particularly among the traditionally disenfranchised populations, a chance to meet on their own and work through the issues and develop their positions ahead of time" so they can "approach the process from a position of greater strength" (2-3).

Smock suggested that the BIP 8 Committee members reach out to the community to find out what is working and not working about the current system by starting with focus groups or one-on-one interviews with representatives of "groups that try to influence government decisions" including "citizen activists and experts." She suggested the group could use surveys to test out different possibilities. She cautioned the group to wait to engage people until they had something concrete in which people could "see the possibility of having input on things that affect their daily lives" rather than sharing "something abstract where the focus is on creating a process." If BIP 8 had greater "capacity and resources," Smock suggested that the group organize community forums around the city to share information from the surveys. She also suggested "grassroots

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[91] Smock's contention would be supported by the turmoil and frustration that arose during the course of the BIP 8 process from the lack of clear direction from the Mayor's office regarding the mission, scope and purpose of BIP 8 and lack of skilled and effective facilitation and strategic support for much of the process.

outreach prior to the meeting to introduce the ideas to people, get their general feedback, create a buzz, and start building relationships," possibly by training "neighborhood association leaders to do door-to-door canvassing" or partnering with "existing organizations to do house meetings." Smock suggested that the community meetings provide information "on the options and case studies/models from other communities," small groups discussions and responses, an opportunity for participants to "vote/prioritize/comment on the options," and "opportunities for people to sign up to get more involved." Smock closed by warning that "If you can't do meaningful outreach, you will replicate the existing problems" (3-4).[92]

BIP 8 Struggles On: BIP 8 committee members continued to meet monthly and discuss outreach strategies. They also continued to wrestle with the lack of clarity about the group's charge. One community organization leader said the letter he received that invited him to serve on BIP 8 had said that the group was being asked to create the ideal system from scratch, then the group was told the process was to be about restructuring ONI—but it was not clear whether this meant the bureau or the entire community and neighborhood involvement system. Amalia Alarcón de Morris with ONI said the purpose was to identify the best mechanism to get people involved. ONI Director Jimmy Brown said BIP 8 committee members were supposed to build a process to gather information from citizens about what kind of system they wanted—not to development the system themselves. BIP 8 members asked for further clarification on the committee's charge (Portland. Bureau Innovation Project 8. *Meeting Notes* November 2, 2005).

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[92] visionPDX, with much more funding and staff capacity that BIP 8, was able much more closely to achieve the model of community outreach Smock described. However, BIP 8 ultimately would succeed in gathering input from a wide variety of groups and stakeholders in the system and the community.

In January 2006, Mayor Potter appointed Alarcón de Morris as the new ONI

Director. Brown left to work for the Water Bureau (Portland. Office of Mayor Tom

Potter. *Mayor Potter Appoints Interim ONI Director* December 29, 2005).

More changes were on the way. In December, Alarcón de Morris emailed that

group that the OMF staff person who had been taking notes was being reassigned to work

on the city budget process. She reported that some representatives of communities of

color and immigrant and refugee organizations were not coming to the BIP 8 meetings

because they were not getting meeting notices or felt that the meetings were not a good

use of their time. Some had told her they wanted to continue receiving meeting minutes

and announcements, but preferred to share their issues and concerns in a single focused

meeting (Alarcón de Morris. Email to Cece Hugley-Noel et al.*RE: BIP 8 Contact

Assignments* December 29, 2005).

Mayor Potter attended the January 2006 BIP 8 meeting and shared his vision for

BIP 8 and his "community governance" philosophy with the group. Potter described

"community governance" as the community and government working together to solve

the community's problems. Potter said his vision for the purpose of BIP 8 was to reach

people who had not been reached by the current system, such as renters, immigrants, and

people of color. Potter said he did not want to be too directive with the BIP 8 committee.

He said "I'm willing to look at any system that will work better." Potter committed to

implementing what the group developed. He told the committee members, "You interpret

your charge." Potter shared with the group that he had told city bureaus that he would not

look at their budget proposals unless they showed him that they had involved the

community in developing them. Alarcón de Morris announced that an experienced facilitator would be brought in to facilitate future BIP 8 meetings (Leistner, Paul. Personal meeting notes. Bureau Innovation Project 8. January 4, 2006).

The February 2006 meeting was facilitated by Judith Mowry, an experienced facilitator with Resolutions NW and a long-time community activist. BIP 8 members also welcomed a university student intern, Alex Johnson, who had been recruited to help support the BIP 8 Committee by one of the BIP 8 members. BIP 8 members continued to discuss the group's charge. They determined that they needed more information on: 'What does ONI do now?;" models from other communities, and the state of the current neighborhood system. This information would allow them to go back out to the community with more refined questions. Group members also recognized a need to re-engage BIP 8 members who had dropped off the committee (Portland. Bureau Innovation Project 8. *Meeting Note*. February 1, 2006).

In early March 2006, the Mayor's office advertized an outreach and engagement coordinator position that would provide support to BIP 8 through June 2006. The job announcement described BIP 8 as answering the questions: If we could create the ideal neighborhood system today, what would it look like? Who would participate? How would they participate? How do we overcome barriers to participation? What would need to be in place to inspire people to participate? How can we make participating in local government relevant to the community."[93] By April 2006, the Mayor's office had hired

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[93] Source; Email from Amanda Rhodes to Tracey Braden at PSU, Subject: Available: Outreach and Engagement Coordinator Position, March 16, 2006.

Johnell Bell to fill the position, with the expectation that he would help with outreach to under-represented communities.

In May 2006, BIP 8 members proposed creating a number of sub-committees. The subcommittee tasks were to: assess the current neighborhood system, develop and implement outreach efforts, research models from other communities, and propose data analysis methods. Bell told the BIP 8 members that Mayor Potter wanted more coordination between BIP 8 and BIP 9 and visionPDX (Portland. Bureau Innovation Project 8. *Meeting Notes* May 3, 2006).

June 2006 Portland Tribune Article: In early June 2006, the *Portland Tribune* ran an article about BIP 8 that angered many neighborhood leaders across the city. The article identified Kennedy-Wong as Mayor Potter's coordinator of the BIP 8 project and characterized her as "someone willing to take on the city's neighborhood associations as the city's dominant citizen participation models." The article reported that Kennedy-Wong was "bothered" that renters, new immigrants, the elderly and other "underrepresented" community members were not participating in neighborhood associations, which were supposed to be the "primary channels through which Portland citizens affect City Hall decisions." The *Tribune* stated that it was Kennedy-Wong's job, through BIP 8, to give these community members a voice.[94] (Korn, Peter. June 2, 2006).

The *Tribune* reported that Kennedy-Wong believed that neighborhood associations did not carry the same weight at City Hall as they once did and had less power because of a shift in the way elected officials interacted with community members.

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[94] Korn's *Portland Tribune* article also called "Bureau Innovation Project No. 8" a "bureaucratic sounding effort if ever there was one." The Mayor's office changed the name of BIP 8 to "Community Connect" a couple months later.

Kennedy-Wong also maintained that the role of neighborhood associations was becoming less clear at the same time that the number other types of activist organizations in Portland had risen. The *Tribune* reported that the purpose of "Kennedy-Wong's project" was to "create formal new ways for people to participate in city government without relying on the neighborhood associations."

The *Tribune* warned that "any new model is going to have to deal with some skepticism from the neighborhood associations." Neighborhood leader and BIP 8 member Linda Nettekoven, according to the article, agreed "that the neighborhood associations could do a much better job of involving more people in their work," but she also said that this would take "more support from the city." Nettekoven stated, "I'm very concerned that people keep saying the neighborhood associations don't do a good enough job representing people. We have no mechanism for getting the word out except to go and put things on everybody's doorstep. You need more resources from some place if you're going to truly involve people." She also noted that volunteer neighborhood associations were facing an increasingly complex city government "with more meetings to attend, and more issues to follow" and that neighborhood associations needed help. The article quoted Nettekoven as saying "I don't think all the conversation about further decentralization of decision making is possible if we don't put more resources into whatever system we come up with."

The *Tribune* reported that Kennedy-Wong believed that, while "people in Portland are still politically active," they increasingly "don't see neighborhood associations as the places they want to invest their energy." Kennedy-Wong noted that at

the same time neighborhood associations were feeling that City Council was not listening to them, City Council members were challenging neighborhood associations by asking "Who are you, and do you really represent the community?"

The *Tribune* article identified, 20-year old North Portland activist and BIP 8 member Charles McGee as the kind of person "Kennedy-Wong hopes to appeal to, and involve." The article reported that McGee believed that "despite good intentions, the project already is losing momentum: 'We started off with a group of fantastic individuals. But our numbers have dropped dramatically.'" McGee agreed with Mayor Potter's desire to "change the citizen input model" in Portland, and noted that "For some people…neighborhood associations make no sense." McGee continued, "'I'm an African-American male, 20 years old, but I don't attend a neighborhood meeting. In my community that's not how we advocate. In our community we typically do it on an individual level or through various agencies or through the Urban League or churches. Not everybody goes down to City Hall and lobbies like people in Southwest Portland do.'" The article reported that "McGee says he's beginning to think that [BIP 8] will never come up with a practical model. The article quoted McGee as saying "The lack of overall direction from the mayor's office has really turned a lot of folks away from wanting to be part of this group….It's starting to look like a waste of taxpayer dollars."[95]

The *Tribune*, at the end of the article, reported that Kennedy-Wong believed that BIP 8's work would not necessarily marginalize neighborhood associations. The article

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[95] McGee had asked for a clear statement of BIP 8's charge at nearly every BIP 8 meeting he had attended to this point.

quoted Kennedy-Wong as saying, "If the neighborhood associations use this process to their advantage, they can use it to increase their power."

After the article came out, many neighborhood leaders in Portland were very angry with Kennedy-Wong and even more worried than before that BIP 8 intended to replace or undermine the neighborhood system. It is somewhat ironic that Kennedy-Wong's description of the weaknesses of neighborhood associations had been raised by many earlier reviews of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. Unfortunately, instead of a collaborative process that sought to make community involvement work better for all groups in the community—with significant levels of new resources—BIP 8 was portrayed as an attack on neighborhood associations and a search for a new community involvement model to replace—instead of build on—Portland's traditional neighborhood association system. Also, Smock's warning against having an "unstructured and open-ended" process was supported by McGee's criticisms and the departure from BIP 8 of many of the representatives of communities of color and immigrants and refugees and other community organizations.

Progress and more turmoil: The summer and fall of 2006 would see some progress for BIP 8 and more turmoil. Shortly after the *Tribune* article ran, the Mayor's Office advertised a staff support position for BIP 8. Mayor Potter also attempted to provide more direction to the group.

Mayor Potter, in a letter to BIP 8 members, dated June 20, 2006, attempted to clarify his charge to BIP 8. Potter wrote that "The relationship between citizens and government needs to be reevaluated. We need you to talk to people about what the model

should be that effectively engages citizens in making decisions about the city. This is your charge as a group." Potter maintained that: "Citizens needs to be engaged to fix all problems;" "Citizen [sic] need to claim ownership of their government;" "Government needs to share power and the role of defining success;" "People need to relearn how to be neighbors and connect with one another;" and "People need to reclaim the greater role of community to care for each other."

On June 21, 2006, BIP 8 members gathered for a retreat at Portland's Forestry Center to take stock of their progress and develop workplans for the BIP 8 subcommittees. In July, BIP 8 members agreed to schedule separate workgroup meetings in addition to the full group's regular monthly meetings. In early July, Johnell Bell asked group members to suggest new, less bureaucratic, names for the group. In August, the Mayor's Office officially renamed the group "Community Connect."

At the August 24, 2006 meeting, Community Connect members discussed a very extensive proposed outreach and data gathering plan, developed by Sanj Balajee who had joined the Community Connect paid staff and who would support this effort. Balajee's plan proposed to reach out to neighborhood coalition boards and neighborhood association leaders, interview neighborhood coalition directors, and get input from city employees, city board and commission members, and the general public through a questionnaire available online and in hard copy. The plan also proposed reaching out to "Current system stakeholders" and "disengaged populations" through "mini grants, focus groups, Neighborhood association conversations, and questionnaires at community events, and online questionnaires." The plan targeted:

- Previously Disengaged Populations (Mini-grants)

- Commissioners & Staff (1-on-1 interviews)

- ONI Coalition Directors (1-on-1 interviews)

- ONI Coalition Boards/NA members (Hard copy surveys)

- Boards & Commissions including BAC (online surveys)

- ONI, Coalition, City employees (online surveys)

- Internal Research (desk research)

- Misc. Research (visionPDX, tech/comm., Interviews & prior surveys

- General Community (online survey)

- Bureau Mgmt (1-on-1 Interviews).

Outreach activities were scheduled to begin in September 2006 (Portland.

Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* and meeting materials, August 24, 2006).

On September 16, 2006, Mayor Potter hosted a gathering for neighborhood

leaders from neighborhood associations across Portland. The event was intended to give

neighborhood leaders the opportunity to review and comment on the work of visionPDX,

Community Connect, and the Charter Review Commission. Former Portland city

commissioner and former ONA Commissioner in Charge Charles Jordan (1977-1984)

welcome the neighborhood leaders. The event included overviews of the three projects

and an explanation of the concept of "community governance." Participants broke up into

small groups to discuss and comment on the projects.

At the end of the event, Mayor Potter spoke to the gathering. He recognized that

neighborhood leaders had not been gathered together like this for a while and suggested

scheduling annual meetings of the neighborhood association chairs from across the city.

Potter stressed that "citizen participation is good government." He encouraged the

participants to help decide what should be looked at, the kind of answers they wanted to

see, and how to prioritize resources. Potter noted that the City Council would make the

final decision on how to move forward and noted that "The city budget is the real policy

maker of the City." Potter emphasized that he wanted to see more early, "front-end"

public involvement. He also stressed that elected officials need to understand their role—

"It's the 'people's power' not their power." Potter reported that he wanted an outcome-

based approach for government and community activities. Potter concluded by stating

that "We need the fire of belief that we can get things done." He recognized that

"neighborhood associations carry the weight of their neighborhood on their shoulders,"

and recognized that "it's hard." Potter urged neighborhood leaders to make Portland the

most friendly place for people, not just jobs (Leistner. Personal notes on Neighborhood

Association Leaders Event, hosted by the Office of Mayor Tom Potter on September 16,

2006).

In September 2006, the Community Connect Models Committee discussed

"guiding values/principles" for and the "functions of an ideal community engagement

system." The Outreach Committee had given out half of the funds available for mini-

grants to organizations to gather input from different communities in Portland. At the end

of September, Community Connect members met the new Community Connect project

coordinator—Mike McCormick—a long-time community organizer with decades of

experience with community groups. Community Connect now was supported by five

staff people.[96] The workgroup developing a report on the current neighborhood system also had finished its work (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes*, September 28, 2006).

In October 2006, Community Connect members examined their progress to date and revised their workplan. They recognized that they needed more volunteers to help with outreach and analysis of the input and needed to give out the rest of the outreach mini-grants. Also, the expanded staff under McCormick's leadership had just begun its comprehensive coordination of the project. McCormick reported that in his initial conversations with the community members they had been skeptical about the City's seriousness about fixing "its neighborhood (or community engagement) system." McCormick reported that "They are tired and cynical of being asked what they think of the system, only to be left waiting for concrete change." Community Connect members agreed to extend their timeline to allow more time for relationship-building and communication, information gathering and analysis, and the design and presentation of their final findings and recommendations. The Models Workgroup argued that it did not make sense to move forward to develop the system proposal before they had finished their assessment of different models (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* October 26, 2006).

In late November 2006, another Community Connect member, who lead a community organizing group in Portland, left the group. He said that, after a year of

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[96] The Community Connect September 28, 2006 Meeting Notes report that the staff included: Michael McCormick, Sanjeev Balajee, Johnell Bell, Dana Gantz (intern), and Judith Mowry from Resolutions NW.

work, he was not able to spend more time on the project.[97] Bell left the staff to accept a

position with Multnomah County Chair Ted Wheeler. Mowry was replaced as the group

facilitator by Stuart Watson from Resolutions NW. Balajee and Bell reported that

extensive input had been collected from eighteen different groups through sixty

individual interviews and 1300 completed questionnaires. They also reported that

common themes were emerging from different groups including the need to build trust

and the desire to have a voice in decision making (Portland. Community Connect.

Meeting Notes November 30, 2006).

The November 26, 2006 Community Connect meeting became very tense when

McCormick criticized group members for not doing a better job of recruiting and

involving people from under-represented communities in Community Connect's work.

Kennedy-Wong also criticized the Model's Workgroup for consisting mostly of long-

time neighborhood association leaders and said the group needed to add more people. A

number of Community Connect members reacted angrily to the criticism. They argued

that they had been doing a tremendous amount of work on the project. One group

member said too much was being expected of them. Another said she was ready to quit.

Another said they repeatedly had asked members of under-represented communities to

get involved in Community Connect. She suggested that maybe McCormick and

Kennedy-Wong needed to take a different approach to their coordination of the project. A

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[97] Charles McGee--whom the Portland Tribune had quoted in its June 2, 2006 article--also resigned from Community Connect in early December for similar reasons.

number of group members left the meeting very upset[98] (Leistner. Personal notes on Community Connect meeting November 30, 2006).

A few days later, Community Connect members received an email letting them know that McCormick had asked the Mayor's Office to let the group take a pause to reassess its work and consider how to move forward. The message reported that the Mayor's Office had granted the request to allow for a review of Community Connect's "scope, timing and process" and "who needs to be involved in order to produce meaningful recommendations." McCormick also called each of the Community Connect members to apologize for the November 30 meeting. He said that he had been following instructions from Kennedy-Wong, and that it was out of character for him to criticize the work of committee volunteers. McCormick then issued an ultimatum to the Mayor's office saying that either Kennedy-Wong needed to be removed from her oversight over Community Connect and any other neighborhood system projects, or he would resign. The Mayor's Office shifted responsibility for Community Connect from Kennedy-Wong to Liesl Wendt, who had overseen the visionPDX project, but continued to have Kennedy-Wong work on other neighborhood system projects. McCormick resigned.

Community Connect forges ahead: The Mayor's Office invited Community Connect members to reconvene in later February 2007 and identified Liesl Wendt, who had oversee the visionPDX process, to be the point person for the Mayor's Office on Community Connect. At the meeting, Wendt reported that Community Connect member Colin McCormack would chair the group. Balajee would be the sole staff person and

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[98] A number of Community Connect members began to refer to the November 26, 2006 meeting as the "meeting where people cried."

would be assisted by a student volunteer from PSU to help with the analysis of all the input from the many different outreach efforts. Watson would continue to facilitate the meetings.

Wendt reported that Mayor Potter supported having the group take more time. "The mayor said he wanted the project to be successful, even if that meant spending more time together to get the project done right." She told the group not worry, they would not be starting over. Colin McCormack told the group that the mayor was more interested in an overall structure for community involvement that specific involvement tools (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes*, February 21, 2007; and Leistner personal notes on the same meeting).

A number of Community Connect members at the February 2007 meeting still were unsure of the group's charge. When one person asked how many people were confused about the group's charge, two-thirds of the group members raised their hands. Wendt said the mayor wanted the group to define its charge. Alarcón de Morris said she was glad the group was not starting over and reported that another group [Southeast Uplift's DCLC] was advocating, through the ONI BAC budget process, for a proposal to involve and support under-represented communities. Some Community Connect members were confused about the extent to which the Community Connect recommendations were supposed to inform the ONI BAC budget development process that year. Southeast Uplift Executive Director and Community Connect steering committee member Cece Hughley-Noel told the group that the task for Community Connect was just to tweak the current system and focus on addressing the immediate

concerns in the system and to make sure that the group's recommendation could and would be implemented—not to create an ideal system (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes*, February 21, 2007; and Leistner personal notes on the same meeting).

Wendt reported that Balajee was working full time on gathering and analyzing the input data. Some group members volunteered to serve on a Data Analysis Work Group (DAWG) and agreed to help recruit other community members to help with the data analysis. Wendt reported that the Mayor's Office was thinking of hiring a consultant to help the group move forward (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* February 21, 2007).

In March 2007, Balajee presented a draft report summarizing common themes from Community Connect's "19 data sources." These sources included:

- *Under-represented Groups*: Mini-grantees, visionPDX interviews.

- *Community Data*: General public survey, BIP 9, and visionPDX.

- *Neighborhood and Community Leaders*: Input from the September 16, 2006 gathering of neighborhood leaders, input from members of neighborhood associations and neighborhood coalition boards, members of city boards and commissions, and neighborhood coalitions directors.

- *City Government Perspective*: Conversations with City Council members, bureau director interviews, city public involvement employees.

- *Other*: Small business community, other jurisdictions (e.g., Metro, Tri-Met, Portland Public Schools, etc.), technology, and informally-generated ideas and comments.

- *Literature Review*: Assessment of the current system, seventeen best practices and model, and a review of recent system reform efforts (Portland. Community Connect. *Summary of Research: Piecing Together Community Engagement in Portland* July 2007 8).

Steering committee members reported that they had met with Mayor Potter, and that Community Connect no longer would focus on the neighborhood system structure but would focus on analyzing the input data to understand the community's needs. They also reported that the Community Connect recommendations would not be expected to influence the ONI Budget for FY 2006-07, but would be considered during the FY 2007-08 budget process. They also again reported that the Mayor's office was considering hiring a consultant to help the group finalize its recommendations and to define an outreach strategy (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* March 22, 2007).

In May 2007, the DAWG members presented their report, which included 948 recommendations grouped into six broad categories: outreach and engagement, connections to government decisions makers, general structure and roles, communication, resources, and "other." Community Connect members also learned that the Mayor's office had hired Kris Smock and Dana Brown, based on their "professional background, proposed approach, familiarity with the community, and affordability," to help the group. Smock would meet one-on-one with Community Connect members to get their feedback on the process. Brown would develop the communication and outreach plan for the release of the draft and final project recommendations (Portland, Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* May 31, 2007).

Smock and Brown moved quickly to help the Community Connect members focus and agree on a well-designed and supported process to produce the group's final goals, strategies, and recommendations. Smock and Brown introduced themselves to the Community Connect members at the group's June 21, 2007 meeting. Smock reported that she had 10 years of experience as an independent consultant on strategic planning in multi-stakeholder processes. She also had a strong background in community building and community organizing, organizational leadership and "voice"—especially for under-represented communities. Brown reported that she had consulted with non-profit organizations and government agencies and had experience working in community engagement and community organizing. Smock and Brown asked each Community Connect member to share what passion has kept them involved. They also proposed ground rules for the committee's meetings (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* June 21, 2007).

Hugley-Noel reported that Smock's and Brown's roles were to guide the workgroup through the process, to provide structure and a framework for the committee's work, to manage the project and to facilitate the group's meetings. The steering committee would keep the group on track. The Community Connect members would be the "work horse." She emphasized that the consultants, the steering committee, and the Community Connect members needed to pull together. The Community Connect recommendations would be based on the data collected and organized by the DAWG.

Smock and Brown suggested that the group schedule two retreats. At the first retreat Community Connect members would: prioritize objectives for each goal, finalize

criteria to evaluate strategies to achieve the goals, evaluate different strategies, and identify a short list of strategies with which to move forward. Smock would synthesize the group's work for the second retreat. At the second retreat, Community Connect members would identify potential structures as well as discuss, refine, and develop draft recommendations. Smock suggested creating an advisory committee of people who had served on Community Connect but who had left the committee to review the recommendations before they went public. Brown proposed a process to take the Community Connect draft recommendations out to the community.

Smock suggested three draft goals to serve as organizing categories for the menu of options based on the input data and the previous Community Connect work:

- "Engage the full diversity of our community (e.g. increase number and types of people involved);"

- "Strengthen community capacity (e.g. education, needs and asset identification, networks in and between communities, community problem-saving);" and

- "Increase community impact on public decisions (e.g. dialogue with decision-makers, opportunities and mechanisms for input)."[99]

Group members discussed and agreed to these three goals. Smock then lead the group in a discussion of criteria to evaluate strategies that then would be turned into specific recommendations. The group members agreed to use the following criteria: viable, sustainable, broad impact responsive, inclusive, effective, asset-based, education,

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[99] Smock's first and third proposed goals mirrored the "breadth" and "depth" elements of participatory democracy identified by Berry Portney and Thomson (1993).

community action, community capacity, energizing/inspire, innovate, representative

(Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* June 21, 2007).

Prior to the first retreat on July 21, 2007, Smock sent Community Connect

members a "Draft Menu of Options," which presented ideas from DAWG, BIP 9, and

other relevant sources, organized under the three goals. Community Connect members

sent her comments, which she incorporated before the retreat. At the retreat, Smock led

the group members through a dot exercise that identified ten priority strategies under

each goal. Community Connect members then broke into small groups to discuss the

three goals. They organized the review criteria into three categories—viable, impactful,

strategic—and used these use these criteria to prioritize three top tactics for each

objective (Portland. Community Connect. *Retreat Summary* July 21, 2007).

On August 4, 2007, Community Connect members met for their second retreat.

They amended the main criteria categories to include: viable, impactful, strategic, and

effective. Wendt recognized that Community Connect members remained unclear about

what Mayor Potter wanted from them. She said he supported the direction they were

headed under Smock and Brown's guidance. She emphasized that Potter particularly was

interested in the engagement of under-represented groups and involving people in the

general public who were not currently involved. Community Connect members then read

and discussed options for the City's overall "community engagement structure." These

included: maintaining the existing neighborhood system structure with reforms to

improve its effectiveness; restructuring the system to support a broader diversity of

organizations, including geographic-based (neighborhood and business associations) and

identity-based (communities of color, immigrants and refugees, youth, elders, homeless, etc.) organizations (Portland. Community Connect. Retreat meeting materials August 4, 2007).

On August 21, 2007, the broader Community Connect "Advisory Committee" (which included people who had served on Community Connect, but who had left the group) met to review the draft goals and recommendations. The participants represented a greater diversity of organizations and committees than usually participated in Community Connect meetings. Smock introduced the draft goals and recommendations. She recognized that it was a lot for people to wrap their heads around in one sitting. Wendt clarified that Community Connect had started out with a focus on ONI and the neighborhood system, but had expanded its focus to "building a healthy community and community capacity" (Leistner. Personal notes on Community Connect Advisory Committee meeting on August 21, 2007).

Smock reviewed the draft recommendations, and participants broke into small groups to discuss them. Smock emphasized that this was meant to be a five-year plan—the expectation was not that all this would be "done tomorrow." She also emphasized that Community Connect would be asking the City to commit new resources to implement the recommendations—not to divert existing resources. She noted that the recommendations envisioned expanding the existing neighborhood system to include non-place-based groups that would have to meet certain recommendations to receive funding.

Smock reported that Community Connect members had heard that a place-based-only system was not working for many people. She shared that Mayor Potter wanted an

inclusive structure—not to have ethnic groups competing against each other or against neighborhood associations. The goal is not to dilute the neighborhood system but to broaden it, to build capacity in groups, to ensure a city wide focus, and to provide leadership training, among other objectives.

Participants discussed the goals, objectives, and recommendations and identified a number of common themes, which included:

- Support for other types of community organizations, not just traditional neighborhood associations; the goal is not primarily to get people to go to neighborhood associations, but rather to help people in different communities get organized; for many, they're more likely to do that with people who share their identity or interests.

- Get funding out into the community—small grants are good for this.

- Door-to-door outreach is needed to help get people involved.

- Formal structures are needed to involve other communities—youth, ethnic communities, etc.—but not in a way that leads to competition vs. cooperation.

- More resources are needed to improve the system.

- Technology can help people get involved, if it's what people need and want and will use—not necessarily centralized.

- A variety of approaches is needed.

- Neighborhood coalitions should focus on community organizing and community building to help the many people who say they want to start groups and programs.

- Every neighborhood coalition needs permanent structures that include ethnic groups, youth, etc. to help more groups connect to the existing system and have real power.

- Organizations need to reach out to each other and ask "what are your issues?" "how can we help?" and not compete with each other.

- Neighborhood coalitions need a critical mass of staff to be able to respond to the needs of different communities and organizations.

- Neighborhood coalitions cannot force neighborhood associations to change—they only can provide support to encourage them to change.

- Citywide community summit agendas should be determined by community members, not by ONI or the City; if an ongoing city-wide "peoples' council" existed, community summits would not be needed.

- The City should reestablish a human rights commission.

- Neighborhood associations should focus on being effective, not representative—on getting people together to work on things together and take action.

- Meetings need to be more inclusive—don't use Roberts Rules of Order.

- Neighborhood associations were created to focus on land use issues; under-represented groups want to focus on gentrification, lack of jobs, etc.—not land use.

- The culture of City government needs to be open to engaging with the community (Leistner. Personal notes on Community Connect Advisory Committee meeting on August 21, 2007).

On August 23, 2007, Smock asked Community Connect members for their final feedback on the revised Community Connect document. Balajee reported that Mayor Potter overall supported the Community Connect draft goals and recommendations. Balajee reported that Potter supported creating and inclusive structure that allowed for a win-win scenario in which groups—place-based and non-place-based—would not complete against each other. This would broaden community power and avoid spreading resources too thinly across groups, which would dilute rather than strengthen community voice. It also would encourage a citywide perspective. This approach also would adapt to fit varying levels of capacity and readiness and not require all groups automatically to have to fit in to the neighborhood coalition model. Balajee reported that Potter was interested in aligning similar efforts, such as the Immigrant and Refugee Taskforce (the recommendations of which were expected in fall 2007), the Community Experience Partnership that was working on recommendation for elders, a citywide community leadership training "Citizen's Academy" proposal being developed for the Mayor's Office and ONI by PSU Professor Steve Johnson, the City's "eVolvement" online community involvement program, the Black Citizens' Coalition (which was asking to receive the same status and funding as a traditional neighborhood coalition), and the Children's Bill of Rights (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes*, August 23, 2007).

During September 2007, Community Connect members hosted a couple "Connection Café" events in the community to share the group's draft goals and recommendations with community members and to get their feedback. Mayor Potter participated in one of these events. Wendt represented Potter at the other event.

In early October 2007, directors of a number of City bureaus sent Balajee a formal letter with their feedback on the draft Community Connect goals and recommendations.[100] They all supported Community Connect's three goals and supported many of the recommendations. They supported creating "formal recognition and a seat at the table for organizations that represent people of color, immigrants, and other under-represented groups." They agreed that the current neighborhood system did not adequately respond to the interests and reflect the voices of "large segments of our community," but requested greater clarity on the criteria that would be used to determine "which groups or organizations should be invited to the table" and what a "seat at the table" meant. They strongly supported recommendations that called on City bureaus to use best community involvement practices, but noted that "full implementation will probably require additional resources." They particularly supported the recommendation to create a "Strategic Community Involvement Think Tank" because "Providing best practices information" "could be particularly valuable to city bureaus." The bureau directors supported the recommendation to create new guidelines for Bureau Advisory Committees, but stated that these advisory committees "should be formed with the

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[100] The directors that signed the October 11, 2007 letter represented; Portland Office of Transportation, Bureau of Planning, Bureau of Environmental Services, Office of Management and Finance, Portland Parks and Recreation, Bureau of Development Services, Portland Water Bureau, and the Bureau of Housing and Community Development.

expectation they will advise bureaus and Council, not be given authority to make program or budget decisions." The bureau directors were open to the recommendation that City Council "delegate 'control over certain policy, planning and budgeting decisions to local communities'" but were concerned that the draft language was "unclear and appears to be a more open-ended grant of authority which could lead to conflicts with other City goals and objectives." They supported "the idea of setting aside a sum of money that can be used to support community priorities as determined by those groups," which could involve both "independent initiatives" and "moving City efforts forward on a faster timeline or at a larger scale than otherwise planned."

The bureau directors expressed some concern about the recommendation to amend the City Charter to "add a 'bill of rights' section dealing with community governance." They argued that some of Community Connect's innovative approaches could be implemented without amending the City Charter. This would allow city leaders and staff and community members to "adapt and be flexible to add to what works and stop doing what doesn't." They stated that amending the City Charter, "seems too prescriptive and restrictive at this early date." The bureau directors ended their letter by stating that "We are ready to help move this ambitious agenda forward, placing Portland in a national leadership position on community involvement" (Portland. Letter to Sanj Balajee from City of Portland Bureau Directors regarding Community Connect Draft Recommendations. October 11, 2007).

On October 25, 2007, Smock and Balajee reviewed, with Community Connect members, 530 responses from the general public , city employees, city commissioners,

and city bureau directors on the draft goals and recommendations. They reported that the recommendations that received the most support from the community and city leaders and staff included:

#2: Engage the full diversity of our community;

#3: Promote effective communication;

#5: Strengthen the community's capacity to take action (top strategies: small grants, targeted staff support, leadership skills, and reform of the district coalition system); and

#7: Make public decision-making more responsive (top strategies: cmty needs process, making info accessible, creating formal liaison for communities, closing the loop).

Smock and Balajee reported that the city commissioners generally were supportive but wanted more details before they confirmed their support. Smock clarified that the final product would include: a Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement (similar to the draft) as well as a plan describing possible first-year implementation actions and additional strategies and actions for the subsequent second to fifth years (Portland. Community Connect. *Meeting Notes* October 25, 2007).

The Mayor's office hired Community Connect chair McCormack to serve as the mayor's new public involvement manager and appointed Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition Executive Director Hughley-Noel as the new chair of Community Connect.

In early November 2007, Community Connect members met and discussed which strategies to use to ensure implementation of the five-year plan even after Potter left

office and what they could achieve with the current city council. Hughley-Noel suggested

asking the city council to bless the three primary goals and then revisiting the details with

them in the future. She suggested that "ONI will be the keeper of the flame." Community

Connect members discussed creating a taskforce to study and flesh out a Bureau of

Community Involvement" that would produce an annual report to keep focus on progress.

Group members also discussed creating action teams to develop implementation plans for

each of the key Community Connect recommendation areas, and to create a citywide

leadership training program, and a "Think Tank/Resource Center" (Portland. Community

Connect. *Meeting Notes* November 1, 2007).

Community Connect members met again a week later and reviewed the five-year

plan, the first year implementation plan, and the final report. Group members agreed that

the ONI BAC should be expanded to include new community organization partners rather

than create a separate ONI advisory group for these communities. They also discussed the

idea of changing ONI's name to the Bureau of Neighborhood and Community

Involvement. Brian Hoop from ONI noted that a new ONI staff person had been hired to

coordinate the creation of the new Diversity and Civic Leadership Program at ONI. He

suggested that another new ONI position be created specifically to support

implementation of new programs and support for the neighborhood association system.[101]

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[101] The FY 2006-07 City Budget already had provided significant new funding to ONI for Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system, including funding for a new neighborhood grants program, additional funding to each of the seven neighborhood coalitions to support increased communications with the community, funds to create a Civic Leadership Academy for communities of color, and funding for Community Engagement Initiatives to support projects that bring together neighborhood associations and under-represented communities (Portland. City Budget. FY 2006-07 412).

Community Connect members formally approved the "Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement" with some suggested edits that Smock agreed to make, and then celebrated their more than two years of hard work and struggle, which had produced what they saw as a significant step forward for Portland's neighborhood and community involvement system.

Final Community Connect Report and Recommendations (2008): Community Connect members identified their final report and "Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement" as a "comprehensive roadmap for strengthening Portland's civic life," and characterized their "three interdependent goal areas" as a "'three-legged stool' of effective community involvement" (Portland. Community Connect. *A City for All of Us—More Voices, Better Solutions: Strengthening Community Involvement in Portland: Community Connect Final Report*. January 2008 5).

Community Connect members asserted that "an effective and inclusive system of community involvement is essential for a healthy city, and a functioning democracy" (6). The report quoted Community-Connect chair Hughley-Noel as saying "Our recommendations build on the strengths of the existing neighborhood system while broadening the system to more fully involve the full diversity of our community" (6).

The report recognized that "significant improvements to our system of community involvement will require a serious commitment from the City," and clarified that the Community Connect recommendations assume that new programs and activities will be

"funded with new resources when needed" and will not "divert resources from existing programs…" (6).[102]

Community Connect members found that Portland had grown and become more ethnically diverse over the previous ten years. They also found that "…many popular public participation programs that were launched during the neighborhood system's heyday in the 1970s and 1980s…have since been dismantled," Some Portlanders said "they don't feel welcome or that the neighborhood association doesn't represent their interests." Neighborhood leaders said they were frustrated by "inadequate funding and limited capacity" and "…not having enough of an impact on public decision making" (8).

Community Connect members found that "…many of the city's diverse populations do not necessarily define their communities in geographic (i.e. neighborhood-based) terms." Instead, "For many Portlanders, the 'community' most important to them is based on their shared identity or shared interest with others." Community Connect members noted that some neighborhood associations had tried to reach out to these groups but with limited success. They reported that the result was that "…a growing number of Portlanders belong to groups which are under-represented in civic affairs." Community Connect members described "under-represented groups" as including, but not limited to: "people of color, immigrants and refugees, persons with disabilities, low-income families, youth, elders, renters, and people experiencing homelessness." They noted that "…like the neighborhood leaders" community members

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[102] This statement responded to the strong fear among neighborhood leaders that the City intended to take funding away from neighborhood associations—who already felt they were underfunded—and give it to other community organizations that had direct relationships with under-represented communities.

from under-represented groups "are concerned that their voices are not being heard within City government" (8).

The report stated that, to realize "A Community Involvement System for the 21st Century," Portland's community involvement system needed to be updated through the development of "strategies to more effectively engage under-represented groups" (9). They asserted that "Full representation is the hallmark of a healthy democracy" and "of a healthy city," and "The inclusion of more voices will result in better decisions that have broader support" (8).

Community Connect members argued that creating a more inclusive city would require "deliberate strategies to make sure all Portlanders have the opportunity to be heard," including: support for "under-represented groups to overcome the barriers that have prevented them from getting involved in the past;" the provision to "neighborhood organizations and City agencies" of the tools and resources they need to more effectively reach out and build bridges with under-represented communities;" and support for "leadership development and organizing within under-represented communities to enable them to enter into civic life with a strong voice so that they can participate on an equal footing" (9).

The Community Connect members identified the principles they had used to guide themselves in their development of the "Five-year Plan," which included: "Strengthen the important work of neighborhood associations;" broadening "Portland's community involvement system beyond neighborhood boundaries to more fully engage our city's diverse communities;" "Reinvigorate how government works with the

community;" and building on existing "innovative models" used by ONI, City bureaus, and local communities (10).

Community Connect members shared their vision of a city where: "People feel connected to one another, and to their communities;" "All Portlanders, regardless of their backgrounds, have the opportunity to be actively engaged in civic affairs;" "Government leaders are response and accountable to community input and priorities;" and "The inclusion of more voices in civic affairs results in a healthier and more vibrant city" (5).

They asserted that, If the Five Year Plan were fully implemented, "Portland will continue to set an example nationally as a city where the government and the community work in genuine partnership, and where everybody has a chance to be heard." Implementation of the plan also would give "Portland an opportunity re renew its commitment to community involvement by investing in strategies that will reinvigorate civic life in our 21st century city" (6).

Three goals/Strategies: The Community Connect members presented three main goals. These included:

Goal 1: "Increase the number and diversity of people involved in their communities." "The first step to an effective community involvement system is to engage the broad diversity of the community in civic life."

Goal 2: "Strengthen community capacity." "Once community members are actively engaged, they need the connections, skills, and tools to be able to work together effectively to solve problems and achieve their community aspirations."

Goal 3: "Increase community impact on public decisions." "A world-class system of community involvement will only be effective to the extent that City leaders are responsive to the community's input. [This] third goal increases the community's ability to have an impact on local government policies and decisions" (5).

Community Connect members stated that, if the Five-year Plan were successfully implemented:

- "Portlanders will feel connected to one another and their communities;"

- "Members of the city's increasingly diverse populations will be more involved in civic affairs;"

- "When issues arise, Portlanders will be aware of the issues and opportunities for involvement, and will feel welcomed and supported in getting involved;"

- "Portlanders from a broad range of communities will have the capacity to solve problems that impact them;"

- "City government will develop more consistent, transparent, accountable, respectful, and informative processes to involve people in making decisions;"

- "Both the community and government will experience satisfaction in the decision-making process;"

- "Greater community input at the front end will result in decisions that have wide public support, saving resources in the long run;" and

- "The inclusion of more voices will result in better outcomes for building a healthy and vibrant city."

Community Connect members emphasized that their plan gave Portland an opportunity to make strategic investments that would "reinvigorate our civic life and build a genuine partnership between government and the community."

Recommendations and Strategies: Community Connect members presented eleven recommendations and numerous strategies that they believed would help achieve the three goals. These are described below.

Goal 1: Increase the number and diversity of people involved in their communities:

- "Increase the power and voice of under-represented groups": Strategies included: "Create and fund leadership training for members of underrepresented groups;" "Provide support to grassroots organizations that represent Portland's diverse communities;" and "Provide formal access to City government" by formally recognizing and providing a "seat at the table" for organizations that represent under-represented groups (14).

- "Engage the full diversity of our community by addressing barriers to participation." Strategies included: "Make opportunities for participation more worthwhile, rewarding, and effective" by having clear agendas and effective facilitation, incorporating time for fun and relationship-building, focusing on issues to the community, and achieving "meaningful outcomes; " "Make meetings and events welcoming and accessible to all" by using "inclusive methods of dialogue and decision-making; enable

under-represented groups to share their own unique ways of community building and decision-making; use culturally sensitive methods;" and "Overcome logistical barriers to participation" by providing child care, food, translation and transportation support for key meetings, holding events and meetings at times and locations easy for people to attend, and ensuring that events are physically accessible and that people with disabilities can fully participate (15).

- "Promote effective communication to keep the community informed about issues, opportunities for involvement, and ways to plug in." Strategies included: "Facilitate communication and information sharing" between neighborhood and community organizations; "Promote dialogue and communication through new technologies;" and "Promote culturally appropriate direct outreach and communications strategies" "including door-to-door and one-on-one relationship building, reaching out to different populations where they naturally gather, building on existing networks, using customized approaches for different communities, and providing translated materials as well as alternative communication methods (theater, popular education, etc.)" (17).

Goal 2: Strengthen community capacity:

- "Foster social ties and a sense of community identity: identify best practices and provide training and support to implement appropriate strategies such as: "Community building" through "block parties, community and multi-cultural

fairs and festivals, and face-to-face relationship building to foster mutual understanding;" "Publicize neighborhood identities and assets" through welcome kits for new residents that tell them about their new community and street sign caps with neighborhood names; and "Create and preserve physical spaces and design features" that provide a focal point for communities and create welcoming and inclusive places where people can gather and interact (18).

- "Support the community's capacity to take action to move forward its priorities." Strategies included: "Build leadership and advocacy skills" through a citywide leadership training program; "Provide small grants to community organizations;" "Provide targeted staff support to communities experiencing a high degree of development pressure or other major changes;" and "Provide evaluation and best practices information by creating a Community Involvement Resource Center" based in the community and facilitated by ONI or [Portland State University]…."

Community Connect members also recommended the promotion of "equity and accountability in ONI contracts" to ensure effective support for neighborhoods and communities throughout the City. They suggested requiring neighborhood district coalitions to provide "a minimum level of core services, the provision of adequate resources to neighborhood district coalitions and other contracted community organizations to enable them to meet the expectations of their contracts; equitable distribution of resources

and services across neighborhood district coalitions; holding neighborhood district coalitions accountable to specific performance measures; and developing a consistent structure for all contracted organizations (such as requiring all of these organizations to be governed by a nonprofit board of directors) (19).

- "Foster networking and collaboration between neighborhood and business district associations and other local organizations and interest groups." Strategies included: "Promote opportunities for neighborhoods and other community to come together citywide," such as through an "annual citywide Community Assembly;" "Promote collaboration between organizations" by having ONI act as a convener, fostering partnerships through grants that encourage partnerships, and supporting ONI partner organizations to build "broad-based networks and partnerships with other groups;" and "Bring together different communities and interests to build shared understanding" through citywide dialogues on "controversial and divisive issues" and "study circles" (21).

Goal 3: "Increase community impact on public decisions."

- "Make public decision-making more responsive and accountable to community input." Strategies included: "Create a broad and inclusive City budgeting process" that includes early budget workshops in the community and easy to understand information; "Create an ongoing Community Needs Process;" Establish city government liaisons to different communities; "make

information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent;"

"Close the loop" with community members and explain government

decisions, the rationale for the decisions, and how community input was used

in making decisions; "Encourage City bureaus to create Bureau Advisory

Committees (BACS) that would review and advise "bureau directors on

budgets, key policies, and annual bureau work plans"—BAC members should

be recruited "from a broad cross-section of the community" and should

receive "adequate staffing and consistent training;" and "Give the community

direct control over certain decisions" by "giving communities direct control

over certain locally-specific projects or functions" and by empowering "the

local community to make decisions about designated revenue pools or give

the community priority input over certain locally-specific planning or

development issues" (22).

- "Institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement in decision-
  making." Strategies included: "Foster an internal culture within City

  government that supports a commitment to public involvement;" "Provide

  staff training and capacity building, and include quantifiable public

  involvement measurements in performance evaluations, particularly for upper

  management;" and involve community members in evaluating public

  involvement processes in which they participated.

  Community Connect members also called for the creation of "comprehensive

  public involvement standards and guidelines" and the implementation of PITF

and BIP 9 recommendations, including: Amending the City Charter to include language that commits the City to the "principles and values of community governance;" City Council adoption of community governance principles for city government by ordinance; requiring City bureaus to develop general formal written public involvement policies for their bureaus and written public involvement plans for certain types of major capital, policy and planning projects and budget decisions; ensuring the use of "culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques" to reach out to under-represented communities; the creation of a stable funding mechanism to support public involvement processes; and the establishment of a standing Public Involvement Standards Commission "to advise bureaus and hold the City accountable to adopted public involvement principles, standards, and guidelines" as well as the creation of a staff position to support the Commission (24).

- "Create the infrastructure to support the goals and recommendations in this Five Year Plan by updating [ONI's] internal structure." Strategies included: Renaming ONI to reflect its broader mission; strategic investments in neighborhood and community organizations; effective coordination and support for the decentralized neighborhood and community involvement system; support for strong collaboration and communication between community organizations; the provision of vehicles for neighborhoods, business, and other groups to work together on local and citywide issues;

formal recognition and access to City government for diverse groups and organizations; assistance to city bureaus to help them access community input on government decisions.

Community Connect members also set out criteria to guide any ONI structural changes, which included: all new programs should be funded with new funding and should not divert funding from existing programs; requirements and expectations for ONI contract organizations only should be expanded if adequate resources and capacity are provided to enable the organizations to meet the new requirements; all ONI contract organizations should meet "certain common criteria" and be held accountable to "specific performance and outcome measures" defined in the contracts, and the bureaucracy that supports the system should be limited and streamlined (25).

Community Connect—Some Lessons Learned: Community Connect is a fascinating example of an initially very poorly designed and implemented process that ultimately produced a very valuable product.

Process: The Community Connect process suffered from the beginning from a lack of dedicated and skilled staff support and funding. Poor process design, leadership, and implementation and the lack of a clear charge (nearly throughout the process) led many group members from communities of color and community organizations to drop out of the process and frustrated those who remained.[103]

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[103] One long-time and very respected neighborhood leader who participated in Community Connect continues to characterize Community Connect as the worst process in which she has ever participated, while strongly supporting the Community Connect final goals and recommendations.

Potter played a positive role by strongly and consistently advocating for the broader purpose of the project, which was to giving more people a voice—especially historically under-represented communities in Portland. His strong support for community involvement and his public commitment to implement the group's recommendations encouraged many participants to stick with the process. Potter was not effective at hearing, understanding, and articulating the type of strategic direction Community Connect members were looking for from him. For much of the process, Potter directed the Community Connect members to develop their own charge.

The lack of clarity about the charge also was aggravated by unfortunate public comments and mixed messages. Sometimes the group was told Community Connect was about improving the existing system, while at other times Community Connect members were told to think about designing a new system from scratch. This might have made sense if the City were developing a system for the first time. However, Portland had a 40-year-old community and neighborhood association system through which thousands of community members volunteered their time and energy and got things done. Negative comments about neighborhood associations during the process by staff from the Mayor's office during the process added to the problems. Greater sensitivity to this reality should have led the process to state definitively, early on, that it was intended to expand and strengthen the existing system, not replace it.

It is ironic that the BIP Report (2005) had directed ONI to "model the behaviors identified in the [PITF] guidelines for public engagement—openness, inclusion, and listening" in conducting the project. The Community Connect process showed that

accomplishing this requires much more than simply inviting a diverse group to participate. It also relies on strong and effective process design and implementation and treating the participants with respect. Also, Smock, in October 2005, gave very direct advice to the Community Connect steering committee about how to design and implement the process. She warned against the very approach Community Connect took early on. She warned that an "unstructured" process was not effective at engaging diverse groups and the most disenfranchised people. Smock instead argued for a "highly structured and aggressively facilitated" process.

The Community Connect process improved later on through skilled leadership from Southeast Uplift Director Cece Hughley-Noel who served on the steering committee and later chaired the group. Her work behind the scenes with the mayor's staff helped move the project forward more productively. Strong staffing by Balajee was essential to the success of the wide-ranging data collection process and the analysis of all the resulting input. The decision to contract with Smock and Brown, also brought their very high level skills to the process of moving from data collection to the creation of a very well-received and influential final report. Their influence at the end of the processes raises the question of what might have happened if the Mayor's Office had invested in hiring Smock at the outset to design and lead the process. Her involvement, or involvement by someone with her skills and experience—might have saved the process a lot of time and significant frustration.

The overall lesson from the Community Connect process is that good process design, leadership, and implementation matters. Large community involvement processes

that take up controversial topics and seek major change need to be well-designed, resourced, and staffed and led by individuals with a strong commitment to and skill at creating a welcoming and respectful environment and using people's time wisely and constructively. The poor design and implementation of Community Connect stands in sharp contrast to the much more inclusive and constructive process examples of Interwoven Tapestry, the Southeast Uplift DRC and DCLC, visionPDX, the Public Involvement Advisory Council, and the East Portland Action Plan (described below).

Clear Goals and Recommendations: One of the great lessons of the final Community Connect report and the "Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement" was the value of having a formal comprehensive and detailed report that accurately reflected the concerns, hopes and ideas of many communities and neighborhood and community organizations and that provided a clear vision of where the system needed to go and a comprehensive set of action items for how to get there.

One of the most important contributions of Community Connect was the finding that not everyone identifies their "community" through their geographic neighborhood. For decades, the primary focus of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system had been trying to get people from historically under-represented groups to participate in neighborhood associations. The recognition of "communities beyond neighborhood boundaries" had started with Charles Shi and the 1995-96 TFNI. Community Connect formally established that non-geographic communities needed to receive City support and be included in the formal system on their own.

Community Connect also drew attention to the need to get people more involved in their community through a wide variety of activities, events, and organizations as a first step to getting them involved in more formal policy processes and organizations. A system that only offered participation in formal groups, like neighborhood associations or other community organizations would miss the need for people to shift their thinking beyond themselves and their immediate families and friends and begin to make connections with other people in the community. This very much supports Putnam's work on the value and importance of developing "social capital"—both "bonding" and "bridging" social capital.

Community Connect also highlighted the need for the City to invest in building capacity in the community through leadership training, organizational development, and helping different groups build relationships and work together. For 40 years, the City of Portland had been providing this type of support for the formal neighborhood association system. Community Connect insisted that other communities and groups in Portland needed similar support if their constituents were going to have a voice in local civic life and decision making.

Community Connect also reaffirmed the crucial need for a strategy to be implemented to ensure that city government leaders and staff were willingness and able to work collaboratively with the community. Community Connect re-emphasized many of the major recommendations made earlier by the PITF and the BIP 9 Committee.

Community Connect's Five-year Plan has been a great success in that it has dramatically changed the focus and functions of Portland's community and neighborhood

involvement system. The next section describes the many changes at ONI implemented, partly in response to Community Connect's work, during the Potter administration.

ONI Expansion and System Changes

Mayor Tom Potter presided over the largest expansion of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system since it was founded in the 1970s.

From the beginning of his term of office, Mayor Potter chose to keep ONI in his portfolio—unlike Mayor Katz, who gave responsibility for ONI to other city commissioners, none of whom were viewed as strong supporters of community involvement. In Portland, when a mayor retains a bureau in his portfolio, this usually signifies that the bureau and its work are important to the mayor. Being in the Mayor's portfolio often increases the likelihood that an agency's budget requests will be funded. The mayor develops the city budget and is better able to insert his priorities into the document than the other city council members. During his one term in office, Potter directed over $3 million in new funds to strengthen and expand Portland community and neighborhood involvement system. Many of these system changes continue to be in place in 2013.

Potter brought in new leadership for ONI. In January 2006, Potter replaced Jimmy Brown and appointed Amalia Alarcón de Morris as ONI director. Many neighborhood leaders had complained that Brown did not strongly advocate for ONI's community empowerment role (a difficult challenge given his original boss' (Commissioner Leonard's) focus on neighborhood services) and was not very effective at strategically designing and leading open and inclusive decision-making processes. Alarcón de Morris,

at the time, was managing ONI's Neighborhood Resource Center. Prior to that, she had

managed ONI's Metropolitan Human Rights Center and had overseen ONI's

participation in the Interwoven Tapestry Project. Alarcón de Morris brought to her new

role as ONI Director her strong political and strategic skills and background working

with communities of color and her strong credibility in the community.[104] Also, in

contrast to Leonard's unilateral appointment of Brown as ONI Director without any input

from the community, Potter provided opportunities for community members to meet and

talk with the primary candidates for the ONI director position before he made his

decision.[105]

Alarcón de Morris quickly moved to revitalize the ONI Bureau Advisory

Committee (BAC) and made it a central focus of community discussion and policy

setting for the agency. During the FY 2007-08 budget process, the ONI BAC began using

the three Community Connect goals and Community Connect's strong focus on increased

the capacity and involvement of historically underrepresented groups to guide the group's

policy and budget decisions (Portland. *City Budget*. FY 2007-08 397). The ONI BAC

traditionally had been made up primarily of neighborhood system representatives, ONI's

grant and contract organization partners, and community members. Alarcón de Morris

and the BAC members expanded the group by inviting representatives of the

organizations that participated in ONI's new Diversity and Civic Leadership Program to

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[104] Alarcón de Morris continues to serve as ONI director at the time of this study in 2013. This makes her the longest serving director to date in ONA/ONI's history. Her long tenure as ONI Director has helped maintain ONI's focus on the values and direction for the agency established under Mayor Potter.
[105] Potter kept Jimmy Brown in his role as ONI Director during Potter's first year in office, despite some pressure from neighborhood activists who wanted Brown replaced as quickly as possible. In December 2005, Leonard, who was the City Commissioner in charge of the Water Bureau, announced that Jimmy Brown would move to the Water Bureau to manage the bureau's "community outreach and customer services group" (*Oregonian*, December 20, 2005).

join the group—which they did. The participation of the representatives of all these organizations on the ONI BAC in the years since them has helped build relationships between ONI's growing number of community partner organizations (Alarcón de Morris and Leistner 2009 50).

Potter moved quickly to undo many of the changes Leonard had instituted at ONI and redirected ONI to its traditional role of empowering community members and groups and helping them have a voice in City decision making. Potter moved the Noise Control Program out of ONI and back to BDS in FY 2005-06. The following year (FY 2006-07), he moved the Neighborhood Inspections Program back to BDS. Potter's renewed community empowerment focus for ONI and his desire for all city bureaus to develop the capacity to involve community members in their work, led him also to end ONI's role in supporting BES projects. BES's Downspout Disconnect Program and Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) outreach programs, some of which had been part of ONI since the mid 1990s, were moved back to BES (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2007-08 398).

Over his four-year term as mayor, Potter funded a number of new positions at ONI to support expanded parts of the system. Hoop, who had been the sole staff ONI person dedicated to supporting the neighborhood system and other community involvement efforts, became the manager of the ONI Neighborhood Resource Center when Alarcón was made ONI Director. Five staff people were hired to coordinate and support new and existing programs, including: the Disability Program, the Diversity and Civic Leadership Program, Public Involvement Best Practices Program (which supports the PIAC and CPIN), the Effective Solutions Program (which supported high stakes

conflict resolution processes), and the neighborhood system. ONI later changed the name of this group to the Community and Neighborhood Involvement Center (CNIC) to better reflect the broadened role of the group.

In 2005, Potter initiated the four Bureau Innovation Project projects described above—visionPDX, Community Connect, BIP 9, and Charter Review Commission. The recommendations of these projects—especially Community Connect and BIP 9 as well as the earlier PITF—would guide much of the expansion of ONI's program programs. This section reviews the primary program changes at ONI during the Potter administration.

ONI's Mission and Purpose: The ONI "Bureau Summary" in FY 2007-08 City Budget, identified, as "Significant Issues" for ONI, the difficulty the City had had in engaging underrepresented groups in City efforts and the need to increase capacity in the neighborhood system and to support the organizing effort of underrepresented communities. This new language read:

> "The City of Portland has long had a goal of engaging more people in government. The City has also recognized that, collectively, we have had problems engaging underrepresented groups in City efforts (people of color, renters, people with low income, etc.). In an effort to explore lasting solutions to this problem, ONI is working to strengthen the existing neighborhood system's capacity to fully and meaningfully engage all neighbors, we well as to consistently support the organizing efforts of historically underrepresented communities. ONI is doing this by supporting the recommendations the communities make about which approach will most successfully engage their constituents."
> "This year ONI enters its second year of capacity building in the communities. The bureau, at the direction of its Bureau Advisory Committee, used a three-pronged approach:"
> - "Build capacity and support self-determination in underrepresented groups."
> - "Build capacity among neighborhood and coalition partners to conduct research and engage all neighbors."

- "Build adequate infrastructure within ONI to support, measure, and evaluate these initiatives."

"This year's programs lay important groundwork for future efforts to bridge the gap between underrepresented groups and the City" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 2007-08 397).

The language in the City Budget that described ONI's role and purpose was updated in FY 2007-08 to reflect the Community Connect goals and to state clearly that ONI was pursuing a dual approach of building capacity both in the neighborhood system and supporting the organizing efforts of underrepresented groups as well. The new language read:

> "Expanding Civic Engagement: The City of Portland has long had a goal of engaging more people in government. As Portland grows and becomes more diverse, ONI seeks to expand involvement and bring additional people and communities into the public dialogue. The City has also recognized that efforts to engage underrepresented groups (people of color, renters, people with low income, etc.) in City initiatives have not been very effective. In exploring lasting solutions to this problem, ONI is working to strengthen the existing neighborhood system's capacity to fully and meaningfully engage all neighbors. The City has supported these efforts through funding for small grants, outreach, leadership training, and technical assistance. ONI also supports the organizing efforts of historically underrepresented communities, recognizing that it is critical to support groups developing their own civic capacity in their own cultural contexts. These two approaches of strengthening the neighborhood system and supporting underrepresented groups in their own organizing efforts are complementary" (Portland. *City Budget* FY 2008-09 395).

The "Strategic Direction" section also reported that ONI, "in partnership with its [ONI BAC]," used the Community Connect goals and Community Connect's "Five-Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement" to "develop a budget that supports the Community Connect implementation strategies. ONI's entire budget reflects these goals,

which build on years of hard work by volunteers throughout the city." The section

identified the Community Connect goals as:

- "Increase the number and diversity of people who are involved in their

  communities."

- "Strengthen community capacity."

- "Increase community impact on public decisions" (Portland. *City Budget,* FY

  2008-09 396).

ONI and the ONI BAC continued the process of embedding the Community

Connect goals into ONI's formal mission statement after Potter left office and Sam

Adams became Portland's mayor. In 2010, ONI staff and the ONI BAC members worked

together to develop a new mission, goals, and values for ONI that would further

formalize community empowerment as ONI's primary purpose. The individuals involved

in this effort saw this as an important strategy to help ward off any future attempts to

redirect ONI's purpose. ONI's new mission, goals, and values focused on including the

full community in civic life and city decision-making. The language of the mission,

goals, and values is presented below in Figure 5 (additional detail included under each

value statement has been omitted).

Figure 5: Office of Neighborhood Involvement Mission/Goals/Values

Office of Neighborhood Involvement
Mission/Goals/Values

Adopted by the ONI BAC on April 12, 2010

Office of Neighborhood Involvement Mission: Promote a culture of civic engagement by connecting and supporting all Portlanders working together and with government to build inclusive, safe and livable neighborhoods and communities.

Office of Neighborhood Involvement Goals:

- **Community Involvement**: Increase the number and diversity of people who are involved and volunteer in their communities and neighborhoods.
- **Capacity Building**: Strengthen neighborhood and community capacity to build identity, skills, relationships and partnerships.
- **Public Impact**: Increase community and neighborhood impact on public decisions.
- **Livability and Safety**: Provide tools and resources to improve neighborhood and community livability and safety.
- **Services**: Provide accurate information and responsive and effective services to community members and organizations.

Office of Neighborhood Involvement Values:

- **PREAMBLE**: "The Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) works towards a future where the community is a full and equal decision-making partner in all aspects of the City of Portland. We serve our increasingly diverse community through promoting collective civic engagement for all people in Portland, with a commitment to transparency, compassion, and relationship building. We strive to recognize and repair the disparities that exclude and harm the people of Portland. We strive to be authentic, accessible and accountable within government and the community. The values put forth here are intended as a guide and foundation for all our work."
- **VALUES**: "Inclusion - No one gets left out;" "Shared Power and Governance;" "Relationships—the cornerstone of our work;" and "Social Sustainability— people are our most important resource."

(Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. "Inside ONI," "Mission, Goals and Values." Web. Adopted April 10, 2010. <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/28363> . Downloaded October 20, 2013.)

New ONI Programs: Potter significantly increased the number and scope of the ONI programs that supported community involvement in Portland. Potter began this expansion in FY 2006-07 with $500,000 of funding. Potter continued to fund and support these programs throughout his administration. The new and expanded ONI programs are described below.

Table 2 below describes the major new ONI programs and staff positions created with the over $3 million in new funding provided to ONI to support neighborhood and community involvement activities during the Potter administration.

Table 2: Major New Funding for ONI under Mayor Potter (FY 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09)

ONI PROGRAMS AND POSITIONS	FY 2006-07	FY 2007-08	FY 2008-09	TOTAL
Additional Funding for Neighborhood Coalitions--communications	$95,000	$95,000	$95,000	$285,000
Additional Funding for Neighborhood Coalitions--organizer positions		$350,000	$350,000	$700,000
Neighborhood Small Grants Program (NSG)	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000	$600,000
Diversity and Civic Leadership (DCL) Leadership Academy	$70,000	$70,000	$70,000	$210,000
Diversity and Civic Leadership (DCL) Organizing Project		$268,000	$299,000	$567,000
Community Engagement Initiative	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	$135,000
Fund for Accessible Neighborhoods (FAN)		$15,000	$45,000	$60,000
New Position: ONI Effective Engagement Solutions		$58,000	$95,142	$153,142
New Position: ONI Neighborhood Program Coordinator			$93,973	$93,973
New Position: ONI Public Involvement Best Practices Program Coordinator (PIAC and CPIN)		$75,000	$89,497	$164,497
Small Business Support	$100,000	$50,000	$0	$150,000
Performance Indicators Project		$25,000	$25,000	$50,000
Total	**$510,000**	**$1,251,000**	**$1,407,612**	**$3,168,612**

(Kersting, Mike. ONI Financial Analyst, January 2009).

Increased Resources to Neighborhood Coalitions and Neighborhood

*Associations***:** Potter implemented a number of the recommendations that previous system

reviews had made to strengthen the neighborhood system. Most of these program

expansions became an ongoing part of the funding for the neighborhood system (at least through 2013). Potter began investing in new programs and positions in FY 2006-07 and continued to increase funding to ONI to expand existing programs, create new programs, and hire additional staff in the following two budget years.

The ONI section of the FY 2008-09 City Budget described the Neighborhood Program as the "core of ONI's mission and historical charge to administer, promote, and advocate for Portland's neighborhood system" (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2008-09 402). New funding for the Neighborhood Program, included:

- One-time infrastructure investments: $42,500 for ONI infrastructure needs, including "improving connectivity to remote locations, safety upgrades for ONI offices, and continued support for" BIP 8. (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2006-07 412)

- Communications: $95,000 each year, distributed among the seven neighborhood coalitions to support increased neighborhood associations communications (the $95,000 represented an average of $1,000 for each of the 95 neighborhood associations intended to allow each neighborhood association to send out two neighborhood-wide communications each year).

- Insurance: $35,000 "to mitigate rising insurance costs for coalitions and $5,000 for ONI Neighborhood Legal Defense fund (Portland. City Budget, FY 2006-07 412). ONI would continue to provide funding to help neighborhood coalitions purchase directors and officers and general liability coverage for neighborhood and coalition boards, events, and activities. ONI also continued

to build up the "legal defense fund" which, in 2013, was about $20,000. (No neighborhood association in Portland has been sued in recent memory—but the funds are there just in case.)

- Neighborhood Coalition Staff: In both FY 2007-08 and FY 2008-09, ONI provided an additional $350,000 funding to the seven neighborhood coalitions to allow each coalition to hire an additional staff person to improve outreach to historically under-represented community members (i.e., $50,000 per coalition). These funds also were intended to support new fiscal management and technical assistance and administration neighborhood coalition management of the new Neighborhood Small Grants Program in each district (Portland, *City Budget*, FY 2008-09 396).

- *ONI Staff person*: The FY 2008-09 City Budget provided ONI with one-time funding to hire a staff person specifically to help implement Community Connect's "Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement." The position description included "managing dialogue between the many diverse ONI stakeholders, improving performance tracking and evaluation, and expanding capacity to coordinate neighborhood program recommendations related to leadership development, small grants, and communications." (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2008-09 403) ONI filled the position in October 2009. The position later became part of ONI's "ongoing budget" and remains filled in 2013.

Neighborhood Small Grants Program: A number system reviews since the 1970s had recommended the creation of a neighborhood grants program. Potter finally implemented this recommendation in FY 2006-07, when he provided ONI with funds to create the "Neighborhood Small Grants Program." Potter provided ONI with $200,000 each year for the FY 2006-07, FY 2007-08 and FY 2008-09 for the program. ONI worked with the neighborhood coalitions to develop the program. ONI coordinated the overall goals for the program, worked with the neighborhood coalitions to develop a generic grant application template and distributed grant funds to the neighbor coalitions. The neighborhood coalitions took the lead in administering the program including holding workshops to help community members and groups learn about the grant program, helping community members prepare their grant applications, setting up review committees of community member to review the applications and choose the grant recipients, and then working with grantee organizations to monitor their progress and then reporting to ONI on the outcomes of the projects. ONI allows neighborhood coalitions to retain up to 15 percent of their allotted grant program funds to cover their cost to administer the program. The program has been very popular in the community and has led neighborhood and community groups to design and implement hundreds of different types of community projects. The program continued to be funded until FY 2013-14. The ONI BAC decided to meet the budget cuts required by Mayor Hales partly by not funding the Neighborhood Small Grant program for that budget year. ONI and neighborhood and community advocates plan to advocate for restored funding for the program in FY 2014-15.

Fund for Accessible Neighborhoods (FAN): ONI received funding over two years ($30,000 in FY 07-08 (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2007-08 398)and $30,000 in FY 08-09 (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2008-09 396)) to create the Fund for Accessible Neighborhoods (FAN). The FAN program was intended to help neighborhood coalitions reduce barriers to participation that had been identified in a number of earlier system reviews, including: translation/interpretation, child care, translation, transportation and ADA accessibility. ONI used the funds to pay for bus tickets, child care, interpretation and translation services, and services to accommodate the needs of some community members with disabilities.[106]

ONI and the neighborhood coalitions realized early on that child care could be delivered in two primary ways: providing child care at an event, and reimbursing community members for their cost to pay for a babysitting for their own children. Another issue was whether providing child care was intended to increase participation at a one-time meeting or event, or whether it was intended to increase participation in ongoing meetings—such as regular neighborhood associations meetings or meetings of an ongoing or shorter-term advisory committee. In either case, community members needed to know that the service would be available consistently, and they needed to feel comfortable that their child would be safe. Some people preferred to arrange for and pay their own babysitter for their children and then get reimbursed. Requests for

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[106] ONI also began to provide food for participants at major evening meetings, including the monthly meetings of the ONI BAC and the Public Involvement Advisory Council. A number of previous system reviews had emphasized that providing food was an important way to encourage participation and to show respect to community participants. Other City bureaus, such as the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, have started to provide food at the evening meetings of their community advisory committees, as well. City of Portland policy requires that at least 50 percent of the participants at a meeting be community members to justify the use of City funds to provide food at the meeting.

reimbursement came primarily from existing neighborhood association or neighborhood coalition board members, rather than new members. A question also arose about what kind of liability a neighborhood association or other community organization might be taking on when it provides child care. ONI staff and coalition staff recognized that these issues needed more research and that a well-thought-through guide to offering childcare for neighborhood associations and other community groups would be helpful.

The FAN Program also reimbursed neighborhood coalitions and associations for translation and interpretation costs. Some neighborhood groups used the funds but most did not. Again, it became clear that some strategic guidance was needed to help neighborhood groups understand how to use translation and interpretation services more effectively. A few years later, the City of Portland began working on a city-government-wide set of guidelines to help city bureaus understand when and how to use translation and interpretation more strategically as part of a larger community outreach plan.

ONI staff also worked with neighborhood coalitions and associations to help community members understand that they have a right to ask for ADA accommodation and help neighborhood associations and coalitions know how to respond when a someone asks for accommodations. ONI has funded one neighborhood coalition (NWNW) at about $4,000 per year to provide closed captioning at meetings for a community member who is sight and hearing impaired. Again, city government will needs to develop guidelines and a city-government-wide approach to advertizing, implementing, and funding ADA accommodations at city government meetings and events. The FAN program was ended as part of required ONI budget cuts.

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Initiative (NCEI): ONI received $45,000 each year for three years (FY 2006-07, FY 2007-08, and FY 2008-09) to fund a Neighborhood and Community Engagement Initiative (NCEI) (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2006-07 412). The purpose of the NCEI was to "provide leadership opportunities for neighborhood and district coalition leaders to engage and build relationships with under-represented groups towards creating a strong neighborhood system." ONI described the project as "the companion project to the Diversity and Civic Leadership Academy, which focuses more on engaging organizations of color to provide leadership training for and by leaders of color" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. "Mayor's Memo," for "Ordinance Title: Approve three grant agreements for the 2nd year of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Initiative," September 18, 2007).

In 2007, Central NE Neighbors neighborhood coalition (CNN) partnered with the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) on a NCEI project to reach out to and help organize area high-school students and provide networking opportunities with neighborhood associations in the CNN district. The East Portland Neighborhood Office (EPNO) partnered with Human Solutions (an agency that provides support services to low-income and homeless families and individuals) to reach out to low-income renters and recent immigrants and help them engage them with neighborhood association leaders on different community organizing issues (ONI, ordinance support materials—"Mayor's Memo," for "Ordinance Title: Approve three grant agreements for the 2nd year of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Initiative," September 18, 2007).

In 2009, the Neighbors West/Northwest (NWNW) neighborhood coalition partnered with Sisters of the Road (a non-profit organization that organizes and empowers people who are experiencing homelessness) to host an "interactive community forum." The forum brought together newly-elected City Commissioner Amanda Fritz and community activists to learn about "diverse organizing efforts in housing rights, homelessness, and local livability issues" and participate in skill-building workshops on issues "ranging from advocating at city hall to community organizing" (Neighbors West Northwest. *Community Advocacy in Action*. Event flyer. March 31, 2009).

Another NCEI project was a two-year joint effort between two neighborhood coalitions (Southeast Uplift and Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.) and the Somali Women's Association (SWA). The project included outreach by the SWA to Somali families in the Creston-Kenilworth Neighborhood in southeast Portland and the West Portland Park Neighborhood in southwest Portland. The SWA conducted door-to-door outreach to Somali families as part of an assessment of their needs. The SWA worked to "promote awareness of civic infrastructure and systems" available to support Somali families and developed resource guides for these families. The project also included "cultural awareness training about Somali culture and community" for neighborhood association members, social service providers, schools, and other relevant agencies identified through the needs assessment. The project culminated in a Community Engagement Fair that brought together Somali families, neighborhood associations, schools, and service providers to help them learn about "services, support and each

other's cultures" (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. NICE project brochure, 2007).

ONI staff person Brian Hoop, remembered that ONI offered each of the seven neighborhood coalitions about $6,300 to do a project each year. Hoop stated that about half did. Hoop reported that when neighborhood coalitions did not use the NCEI funds available to them, ONI shifted the unused funds to other neighborhood coalitions that were doing projects. ONI also used unused NCEI funds to assemble additional child care activity boxes and to purchase language translation headsets for use by ONI neighborhood and community organization partners (Hoop email to Leistner, October 21, 2013, 2:27 PM).

In some cases, neighborhood coalitions continued to work with community organizations they first partnered with on a NCEI project. Hoop remembered that Sisters of the Road applied for and received grants from the Neighborhood Small Grants Program funds administered by NWNW to document stories of individual experiencing homelessness in downtown and northwest Portland. Funding the NCEI was ended as part of the ONI budget cuts required in FY 2009-10 (Hoop email to Leistner, October 21, 2013, 2:34 PM).

Hoop reported that the NCEI projects were "some of the most innovative work [neighborhood] coalitions were doing out of the Five-year Plan [to Increase Community Involvement in Portland]." Hoop said the effort "was all a bit scattered and hard to keep track of since so many things were going on—hiring new [ONI] staff, getting the [Neighborhood Small Grants Program] going, and starting the [Diversity and Civic

Leadership Program]." Hoop said that ONI did not have the capacity to track and evaluate all the NCEI programs—a common challenge for ONI (Hoop email to Leistner, October 21, 2013, 2:34 PM). The NCEI program was ended as part of required ONI budget cuts.

Diversity and Civic Leadership Program (DCL): The Diversity and Civic Leadership (DCL) Program is one of the most significant new community involvement programs initiated during the Potter administration. For the first time, communities of color and immigrant and refugee organizations had a formal place in Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system. The program initially was funded by Mayor Potter in response to lobbying by the Southeast Uplift DCLC and supported by the work of Community Connect.

In FY 2006-07, Potter included $70,000 in ONI's for the program. ONI used the funds to hire Jeri Williams to work with community groups to develop the program. Williams brought to the position her strong background in community organizing and environmental justice, as well as her extensive experience working with communities of color, and the Native American community, of which she is a member. Williams continues to coordinate the DCL Program in 2013.

The DCL Program began as two programs—the Cultural Organizing Project and the Leadership Academy. (The two programs later would merge.) This was the first time ONI had "dedicated funds specifically to build leadership capacity and community organizing among people of color and immigrants and refugees in Portland." During Potter's administration, the Leadership Academy received $210,000 over three years, and

the Organizing Project received $567,000 over two years (Alarcón de Morris and

Leistner, 2009 51).

Alarcón de Morris and Leistner (2009) described the DCL Program as follows:

"The Leadership Academy provided leadership training through local community organizing groups that work with people of color and immigrants and refugees. One of the Leadership Academy projects was the **Pan-Immigrant Leadership and Organizing Training (PILOT) Program.** The Center for Intercultural Organizing and Latino Network each lead about 15 participants through a series of training sessions over 12 months and then brought the groups together for additional cross-cultural training. Training topics include: Basics of City Government, Introduction to Community Organizing, Meeting Planning, Turnout and Facilitation, Volunteer Recruitment and Base Building, Politics of Oppression (Poverty, Class, Gender, Immigration Status, Race, etc.), Power Analysis, Issue Selection & Campaign Planning."

"The DCL Organizing Project included funding for community-based organizations that serve under-engaged groups and that traditionally have operated in more of a service provider model. The program seeks to develop the organizations' outreach and community organizing capacity and increase participation of their constituents in civic governance. The organizations include: The Urban League of Portland, Native American Youth and Family Center, Latino Network/Verde, and Immigrant Refugee Community Organization (IRCO). **Engage '08** was IRCO's project under this initiative. Forty-one members of Portland's Slavic, African and Asian immigrant and refugee communities participated in civic workshops, visited City Hall and met with government leaders. The program focused on community organizing, helping participants feel more comfortable with government, and developing their leadership skills. Many participants had never engaged with government or thought they could. Program graduates now serve on city boards and commissions and budget workgroups, and actively are engaging with neighborhood associations and other community organizations" (51).

The DCL Program has been extremely successful at raising the visibility of ONI's

DCL partner organizations and ensuring that they have a seat at the table. Just as city

bureaus used to automatically reach out to neighborhood associations, most now know to

reach out to the DCL partner organizations as well. Representatives of DCL partner

organizations have served on many city boards and commissions and advisory committees, including the Planning and Sustainability Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Public Involvement Advisory Council, the Portland Plan Equity TAG, and a number of Comp Plan Update policy expert groups.

Relationship building has been another benefit of the DCL Program. Individuals representing the different ONI DCL partner organizations have gotten to know each other better over time through the monthly DCL Program meetings convened by Williams at ONI. Organizations that used to see each other more as competitors for limited resources now work together regularly to advocate for issues that benefit some or all of them. DCL representatives and neighborhood coalition leaders also have developed stronger relationships through their service together on the ONI BAC and many other city government community involvement committees and processes, and their joint participation in advocating with City Council for funding for ONI and ONI's programs. The DCL partner organizations and neighborhood coalitions and neighborhood associations still do not work together very often, but they have started talking about ways to collaborate and build stronger understanding and relationships.

City Government Best Practices Program: Potter implemented a couple of the 2003-04 PITF recommendations when he funded a new Public Involvement Best Practices Program in FY 2007-08. This included a new staff position at ONI to create and coordinate a new Public Involvement Task Force and to rejuvenate and support the city government peer group of city bureau public involvement staff, known as the City Public Involvement Network (CPIN).

ONI hired Afifa Ahmed-Shafi to fill this position. Ahmed-Shafi had been working at Southeast Uplift supporting the DRC and greater cultural competency among neighborhood associations. Ahmed-Shafi went on to help create and coordinate Public Involvement Task Force in 2008 (discussed in more detail below) and began coordinating regular CPIN meetings. Ahmed-Shafi helped arrange a number of CPIN meetings where DCL partners, people with disabilities, and neighborhood system representatives shared information with city staff about their communities and how best to reach out and work with them.

A few years later, Ahmed-Shafi's position began to be funded through the "overhead model"—to which city all bureaus contribute—as suggested by PITF, because her position serves all of city government, not just ONI.

Disability Program: ONI hired Nickole Cheron in February 2006 to re-establish the Disability Program and to re-establish and support a disability advisory committee. Cheron later would help create and support the Portland Commission on Disabilities.

The FY 2006-07 ONI Budget described the role of the Disability Program as "Community organizing and public education on disability issues; Assisting City policy development related to general disability and ADA issues; Acting as a resource for disabled persons by providing information on disability services, organizations, providers, and legal rights" (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2006-07 419). In FY 2008-09 the ONI Budget stated that "The Disability Program connects, supports, and encourages collaborative civic engagement among the disability community, neighborhoods, and City government through support for the Portland Citizens Disability Advisory

Committee" (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 08-09 402). The ONI budget stated that the advisory committee "promotes the civil, social, economic, political, and legal rights of persons with disabilities" (396). The advisory committee evolved into an going formal city government commission in 2008.

The Portland Citizens Disability Advisory Committee was re-established in November 2006 "to connect, support and encourage collaborative and inclusive engagement with all persons of the disability community, neighborhoods, and local government.

Mayor Potter and the City Council subsequently created the Portland Commission on Disabilities on December 17, 2008 after "extensive community input, a survey, focus group and research of successful local and national models" Potter intended that the commission would support people with disabilities in Portland and "improve intergovernmental collaboration with City bureaus and City Council" (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36658*, December 17, 2008).

The commission's current mission is "to guide the City in ensuring that it is a more universally accessible city for all." To do this the commission broadens "outreach and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Portland;" represents "a wide spectrum of disabilities on behalf of the residents of the City of Portland; " and facilitates "increased collaboration and information exchange between persons with disabilities, City bureaus and City Council" (Portland. Commission on Disabilities. *Our Mission*. Web. [no date]. <http://portlanddisability.com/our-mission/> .Downloaded October 26, 2013).

When the Office of Equity and Human Rights was created in 2011, responsibility for supporting the Portland Commission on Disability (and a support staff position) moved from ONI to the Office of Equity. The Disability Program and Cheron stayed with ONI.

Effective Engagement Solutions: Potter created the Effective Engagement Solutions Program at ONI in FY 2008-09. ONI hired long-time facilitator and community activist Judith Mowry to fill this position. Mowry's role was to support "communities experiencing a high degree of development pressure or other major changes;" bring "together different communities and groups to build shared understanding and to foster dialogue on controversial and potentially divisive issues;" and facilitate "high-stake, high-conflict community meetings" (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2008-09 396). Mowry would go on to be seen by city commissioners as a "go-to" person to help them navigate controversies in the community and to help them design (and survive) community meetings on hot topics. Mowry also would help create and facilitate a much-respected community dialogue process on gentrification in Northeast Portland, known as the "Restorative Listening Project." Mowry and her program were transferred to the Office of Equity and Human Rights, in 2011.

Elders in Action: ONI also has for many years provided funding support to a private non-profit organization, known as Elders in Action. Elders in Action "advocates for the needs of seniors and helps seniors advocate for themselves" (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2008-09 403).

ONI's relationship with Elders in Action goes back to FY 1989-90 when Bud Clark shifted responsibility for the Metropolitan Youth Commission, the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission and the City/County Commission on Aging from the City's Human Resources Bureau to ONA. The ONA budget that year stated 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" (Portland. "Office of Neighborhood Involvement." *City Budget*. FY 1988-89 167). The Commission on Aging transitioned out of ONI and into a private non-profit—Elders in Action—in 1997. ONI continues to partially fund Elders in Action each year through a contract.

Small Businesses: Potter initially sought to reestablish ONI's relationship with the business district associations and provided funding for a position at ONI to support these organizations. As discussed earlier, the 1995-96 TFNI had recommended expanding the ONI system to include business district associations, and the 1998 ONI Guidelines had provided a formal process by which business district associations could apply to ONI for formal recognition, although none ever did.

In FY 2006-07, Potter provided $100,000 to ONI to hire a staff person and to support business district association recruitment and organizational capacity, and improve connections with ONI, neighborhood coalitions, neighborhood associations, business associations, and other community organizations (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2006-07 412). In FY 2006-07, Potter gave ONI an additional $50,000 one-time allocation to continue to fund "a full-time staff position to provide organizational support and capacity

building for neighborhood business associations" (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2007-08

398).

The next year, the ONI Budget included a budget note that stated that the Alliance

of Portland Neighborhood Business Associations (APNBA) "will assume the

neighborhood business district support starting in FY 2008-09" (Portland. *City Budget*,

FY 2007-08 399). Future City funding support for neighborhood business district

associations would flow through the Portland Development Commission. This funding

would continue to support APNBA (later known as "Venture Portland") which provided

business districts associations with similar support and services as a neighborhood district

coalition office. Under Mayor Adams, PDC also would fund, and Venture Portland

would administer, a small grants program for business district associations.

Performance Measurement: Proponents of community involvement long have

sought ways to make the case to skeptical elected leaders, the media, and the public for

the value of involving the community in decision making and the effectiveness of

spending public funds on community involvement programs. However, it is much easier

to measure activity (i.e., the number of people who attended a training) than the results

(i.e., the effect the training had on a participants ability to effective organize and advocate

for issues they care about).

ONI traditionally had required neighborhood district coalitions—as a condition of

their ONI grant agreement—to submit regular performance reports. Neighborhood

coalition reported to ONI the number of technical assistance contacts, community

involvement projects, partner organizations, efforts to involve historically

underrepresented groups, neighborhood and coalition meetings, meetings attended by coalition staff, community members who participate in leadership trainings, total attendance at neighborhood association and coalition meetings and the number of newsletters distributed in the community (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Performance Indicators for District Coalition and Neighborhood Offices* 2006).

This data often was not particularly very reliable or comparable. Each district coalition defined the categories differently (for example, one neighborhood coalition would list hundreds of partnerships in a reporting period, while another large coalition would list three or four). Neighborhood coalitions also varied in the rigor and consistency with which they gathered the information. The lack of consistency across the system made it difficult to aggregate the data into reliable citywide numbers.

During Mayor Potter's administration, staff from the mayor's office and ONI sought to improve the measurement of the system's performance. Potter allocated $50,000 in one-time funding to ONI in FY 2007-08 to hire a consultant to work with ONI and community partners to develop performances measures (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2007-08 398). ONI contracted with Sanj Balajee, who had staffed Community Connect's extensive data gathering and analysis work. Balajee worked with neighborhood coalition representatives over many months and developed a system of intake and reporting forms that measured a much broader range of activities and impacts than ONI's previous performance indicator system.

ONI and neighborhood coalition leaders determined that implementation of Balajee's proposed system would require extensive additional staff resources at the neighborhood district coalitions and ONI to gather, report and analyze the data. While both City Commissioner Fritz, who was the commissioner in charge of ONI at the time, and Mayor Adams had asked for better measurement of the performance of ONI and the neighborhood system, they did not support committing significant additional resources to this purpose.

ONI staff abandoned Balajee's more complex measurement system and instead worked with neighborhood coalition leaders and staff to develop common definitions and a common set of Excel spreadsheets to improve the consistency and comparability of the more traditional quarterly "activity-based" tracking and reporting. ONI also asks neighborhood coalitions to share a few qualitative success stories each quarter to help illustrate the impacts of different neighborhood system programs and activities required in the ONI/coalition grant agreement. In 2013, ONI staff and neighborhood coalition leaders and staff talked about sharing their experiences with this relatively new performance measurement system and updating and revising the system, as needed.

Some people noted that ONI's performance measurement system only looked at what was happening within the neighborhood system, but did not provide any insights into that state of civic participation by the community at large. In the late 2000s, the City Auditor offered ONI an opportunity to include a couple questions in the Auditor's annual community survey that measured community attitudes about city government services.

ONI staff developed two questions that the City Auditor has included in the annual survey since 2009. The questions include:

- "In the past 12 months, how often have you been involved in a community project or attended a public meeting?" (Options: "More than 10 times," "6 to 10 times," "3 to 5 times," "Once or twice," and "Never."

- "Overall, how to rate the quality of each of the following City services?" One of the fourteen serve areas options is: "Opportunities to influence government decisions."

The results over the four years of data available at the time of this study showed that:

- The percentage of people who were involved in a community project or attended a public meeting rose steadily from 36 percent in 2009 to 42 percent in 2012 and 41 percent in 2013.

- Community members who rated the City's opportunities to influence government decision making as "very good" or "good" started at 32 percent in 2009 and dipped to 26 percent in 2011 and rose again to 28 percent in 2012 and 2013 (Portland. Office of the City Auditor. *Annual Community Survey Results*, 2009 through 2013).

It is not clear how useful this information is, but at least it will allow ONI staff and others to identify any changes over time.

Other Potter Innovations: Potter supported a number of projects and initiatives that sought to provide a greater voice for under-represented communities in Portland. Some of the most prominent are described below.

Children: During his mayoral campaign, Potter asserted his belief that the health and well being of children was a major benchmark of the health of the city as a whole. He "pledged to make children the center of his mayoralty" ("Creating a child-friendly city." Editorial. _Oregonian_ 2 January 2005). Potter strongly supported children and children's rights throughout his term as Portland mayor. Potter argued that "Our children are suffering right now. They're sending messages to the adult population they need help. We tell them, it's not in the budget, it's not our responsibility" (Sarasohn. _Oregonian_, January 30, 2005). One way Potter drew attention to the condition of children in Portland was by starting every City Council meeting by "asking some version of the question 'How are the children doing?'" He also invited school children to testify at the beginning of city council meeting every week about their concerns and what they believed needed to happen—and many did (Griffin. _Oregonian_, March 6, 2005).[107]

Potter began championing the development of a "Children's Bill of Rights" at the start of his administration. The _Oregonian_ quoted Potter as saying that this document would include "adequate housing, proper nutrition, adequate health care, adults in their lives who are nurturing, and access to excellent education." Potter asserted that public spending need to support this vision for children. His goal was to use "the Children's Bill

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[107] The Oregonian reported that Potter tied "the tradition back to African tribesmen and women who great each other with the question, 'What about the children?' and use the health of a society's young people to gauge quality of life" (Griffin. _Oregonian_, August 16, 2006).

of Rights to create a vehicle for community discussion" and to draw "attention to the issue and [create] a scenario for the change" (Sarasohn. *Oregonian*, January 30, 2005).

Potter and the Multnomah Youth Commission co-sponsored a "Bill of Rights Convention" in May 2006. Nearly 350 students participated in the event and overwhelmingly approved the "Our Bill of rights: Children and Youth" document. One of the students involved stated that "What we're hoping to have the Bill of Rights be is something to hold government and city officials accountable for decisions that they make that affect us, the youth." The *Oregonian* reported that Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong with the mayor's office said the document was part of Potter's commitment to giving youth a strong voice in decision making (Nkrumah. *Oregonian*, June 2, 2006). The "Bill of Rights," written by a committee of more than 30 youth, was seen as being the first such document in for a major U.S. city that actually was written by youth themselves (Griffin, *Oregonian*, August 16, 2006). The Portland City Council formally adopted the "Bill of Rights" in August 2006, and the Multnomah County Commission did the same in May 2007 (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36432*, August 16, 2006; Multnomah. County Commission. *Resolution No. 07-102*, May 22, 2007).

The "Bill of Rights" asserts that youth are "entitled to a voice and opinion in decision that will impact our lives," a "quality education," "physical, mental, and spiritual wellness," "the tools that will lead to a healthy and productive life, "loving care and a healthy environment at home," and "access to safe and clean recreational areas" (2006). The members of the Multnomah Youth Commission (all youth, ages 13-21) continue to use the Bill of Rights as a guiding document. The commission is the "the official youth

policy body for both Multnomah County and the City of Portland" "that strives to provide a voice for youth in the County & City's work" (Multnomah Youth Commission. "Home." Web. <http://web.multco.us/multnomah-youth-commission> .Downloaded October 27, 2013).

Potter also funded the creation of a Youth Planning Program at BPS (Portland. "Mayor's Message." *City Budget*, FY 2008-09 9). During the time the program was active—during both the Potter and early Adams administrations—young people involved in the program engaged in outreach to youth as part of the Portland Plan, helped manage Vision into Action Grants for youth projects and developed the "Youth Manual"—a very accessible and high quality manual for people who "want to engage youth in local government" (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. *Youth Manual*. [no date]. Web. < http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/436057> .Downloaded October 27, 2013). Funding for the Youth Planning Program ended during the Adams administration.

Immigrant and Refugee Task Force: In October 2006, the City Council passed a resolution affirming its commitment to include "immigrants and refugees in civic and public life" in Portland. The city council also established a "short-term task force of immigrant and refugee community members, city representatives and other stakeholders to investigate barriers experienced by Portland's growing immigrant and refugee population, and identify possible solutions" and to report back to City Council (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36447*, October 18, 2006).

The Immigrant and Refugee Task Force completed its review and submitted its report in December 2007. The task force recommended specific actions, which included:

- Creation of an "office of immigrant and refugee affairs, with a multi-ethnic staff, that would serve as a bridge and facilitator between the immigrant and refugee community and City government."

- Establishment of "a multicultural community center that can house a variety of immigrant and refugee organizations, has space for large meetings and community gatherings, and offers opportunities for people of different ethnicities to mingle."

- Provision of "additional resources for immigrant and refugee organizations to train or support their constituents in civic engagement."

- Conduct of "a professional evaluation to (1) assess the City's current Human Resources (HR) policies and practices, and (2) recommend change that would result in the recruitment, hiring, and retention of multilingual and multicultural staff to serve Portland's fast-growing immigrant and refugee communities" (Portland. Immigrant and Refugee Task Force. *New Portlanders Speak*, December 2007).

Many of these recommendations would be taken up by the Office of Human Relations, created by Potter in 2008, and then the Office of Equity and Human Rights, created by Adams and Fritz in 2011.

Human Relations Office and Human Rights Commission: In 2006, Potter commissioned a study to recommend a framework to re-establish a human relations entity for the City of Portland. The resulting report, presented in January 2007, chided the City of Portland for having "no human rights entity that holds us accountable for fulfilling our

commitments under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."The report noted that 2008 was the 60th anniversary both the UN declaration and the formation of "Portland's first human rights entity—the Portland Inter-group Relations Commission" (Portillo and Frederick, 2007 3). The report noted that this early group later became the "Portland Human Relations Commission," and then, in 1978, became the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission (MHRC). The report stated that "The MHRC saw its ups and downs until its final demise in 2003 when, as a program of [ONI] it was cut from the [City] budget." The report questioned how Portland—"the most populous city in the state"—could not have a human rights commission when so many other cities in the northwest did. The report proposed a framework for creating "a permanent entity that plays proactive role in affirming human rights and is charged with addressing discrimination and strengthening intergroup and interpersonal relation so that Portland can truly embody its values of diversity and inclusion" (4).

In January 2008, the City Council created the City of Portland Office of Human Relations. The city council stated that the office's mission would be to "create greater cohesion in our community by promoting mutual respect, dignity and open communication among all people." The city council stated that the "primary purpose" of the new office would be "to empower and serve the residents of Portland by advocating for the rights of all people and resolution to issues rooted in bias and discrimination through education, research, advocacy and intervention." The city council also directed the office to "staff a 15-member Human Rights Commission and the Racial Profiling

Committee" and "implement the recommendations of the Immigrant and Refugee Task Force" (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36571*, January 16, 2008).[108]

While all four city council members present for the vote, voted to create the Office of Human Relations, the *Oregonian* reported that some of the city commissioners "expressed concern about its broad mission." The *Oregonian* reported that City Commissioner Randy Leonard "said he wanted the group to actually reduce wrongs, such as job and housing discrimination, instead of just making recommendations." The *Oregonian* reported that City Commission Dan Saltzman "said he worried about 'mission creep' and high budgets, noting the city already has staff focused on disability rights, police abuses and other issues" (Dworkin. *Oregonian*, January 17, 2008).

In March 2008, the City Council formally created the City of Portland Human Rights Commission. The City Council directed the new commission to "eliminate discrimination and bigotry, to strengthen intergroup relationships and to foster greater understanding, inclusion and justice for those who live, work, study, workshop, travel and play in the City of Portland." The City Council established the jurisdiction of the commission would include "all practices and incidents occurring in the City of Portland" that affected the people listed above, and authorized the commission to "address such practices and incidents through education, research, advocacy and/or intervention, but shall not have civil rights enforcement authority" (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 181670*, March 19, 2008).

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[108] Potter had created the Racial Profiling Committee to review concerns, especially from communities of color, of racial profiling by Portland police.

In 2011, Mayor Adams and City Commissioner Amanda Fritz would lead an effort that would result in the City Council's creation of a new "Office of Equity and Human Rights." The Office of Human Relations would be folded into the new entity, which would support both the Human Rights Commission and the Portland Commission on Disability (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 184880 as amended*, September 21, 2011).

Voter Owned Elections: In 2005, during Potter's administration, the City Council would approve a unique, but short-lived program that provided public funds to candidates running for city government offices. City Commissioner Erik Sten and City Auditor Gary Blackmer had begun advocating for the program a few years earlier. They believed the public funding of local campaigns would help respond to "public concerns about campaign spending in Portland." Sten and Blackmer warned that the "trend of escalating campaign spending" and the "strong influence of money on elections outcomes" had led to a "dominance of money" that "discourages many good leaders from running and changes the dynamics of voter-candidate relationships." They asserted that "A healthy elections system should ensure government is responsive to the voters. Yet market-tested sound bites cannot replace the political dialogue that bring out City voters and leaders together." Sten and Blackmer argued that public funding of campaigns would level "the playing field by giving candidates who demonstrate real grassroots support the financing they need to run an effective campaign." They asserted that the program would reduce the reliance of candidates, particularly incumbents, on "large contributions from a few contributors." They noted that similar public funding of campaign programs had been

operating successfully in other parts of the country for over 20 years (Portland. Office of City Auditor Gary Blackmer and Office of City Commission Erik Sten. *Publicly Financed Campaigns in Portland*. March 22, 2005 cover letter).

On May 18, 2005, the City Council approved the creation of a public campaign funding system for the "Auditor, City Commissioner and Mayoral elections." The City Council also directed the City Auditor to refer the system to the voters at the November 2010 election (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 179258* as amended, May 18, 2005). This was intended to give Portlanders an opportunity to see how the system worked for a few elections before they would be asked to vote on whether to continue the program. Potter strongly supported the creation of the new "Voter Owned Elections" system.[109]

The new "Voter Owned Elections" system had mixed results. The system functioned for three election cycles, and provided candidates with $1.76 million—administration of the system cost another $220,000. Two of the nine candidates who participated won seats on the city council through the system—Erik Sten, an incumbent city commissioner who had been one of the authors of the system—and Amanda Fritz, a long-time neighborhood activist, who ran twice under the system and won on her second try—becoming the first and only non-incumbent to win election through the system. The system also experienced controversy. One publicly funded candidate misused the funds provided by the system and left the state still owing Portland taxpayers $90,000. Another

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[109] Some critics of the system argued that the fact that Potter—who limited his campaign contributions and did no traditional campaign fundraising—defeated Francesconi—who set a new record for money raised in a Portland mayoral election—showed that the system was not need. Proponents of the system said that Potter's election was an anomaly and that research showed that incumbent elected officials almost always won contest elections as did nearly every candidate who raised the most money.

candidate was convicted of forging some of the signatures he gathered to quality for

funding under the program (Schmidt. *Oregonian*, November 4, 2010).

In November 2010, Portlanders very narrowly voted to end the system—50.3

percent against the system and 49.7 for it (Multnomah. Election Archive, November 2,

2010 General Election, Web, <http://web.multco.us/elections/november-2010-general-

election> . Downloaded October 27, 2013).

The *Oregonian* suggested that while proponents of the system remained "more

convinced than ever that the corrosive influence of money in politics must be addressed

at all levels of government," opponents had been motivated by a number of factors. Some

voters "objected to the basic premise of spending public money on political campaigns.

Others resented that city politicians [had] implemented the program without initially

referring it to voters;" some were reacting to the controversies that had occurred. The

Portland Business Alliance (PBA) (Portland's influential downtown business

association), which "largely funded the opposition campaign" asserted that "voter-owned

elections was a solution in search of a problem" (Schmidt. *Oregonian*, November 4,

2010). Proponents of the system accused the PBA of opposing the system so aggressively

because it reduced the influence of big downtown business people and the large

campaign contributions they often made.

Elections in Portland have returned to the traditional campaign funding model.[110]

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[110] It is interesting to note that Fritz was able to win reelection as a city council member against a well-funded opponent in 2010 without the Voter Owned Elections system. However, like Potter had done, Fritz set upper limits on the size of the individual campaign contributions she would accept, but also spent about $250,000 of her own money on her campaign, in effect self-funding her campaign (Schmidt. *OregonLive*, October 16, 2012).

VOZ Day Laborer Facility: Potter had been "an outspoken advocate for the rights of immigrant workers" for many years. During his mayoral campaign in 2004, he spoke about creating a hiring center to support day laborers in Portland. The *Oregonian* quoted Potter as saying "This is one of our most vulnerable populations. These are people who are trying to do an honest day's work." Once in office, Potter created a committee to explore how to move forward on this goal. Community and immigrant activists supported the project. Some local business owners and anti-illegal immigration groups opposed it (Griffin. *Oregonian*, July 29, 2007). In March 2008, Potter led the City Council in approving $200,000 grant to VOZ Workers' Right Education Project "to operate a day labor hire site in Portland." The grant was intended to fund the "cost of the facility and a contract staff person" (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 181651*, March 5, 2008). VOZ created the day laborer center on land owned by the Portland Development Commission (PDC) close to where day laborers traditionally had congregated. The City Council continued to provide funding to support the project. Five years later, in 2013, VOZ was still operating the day laborer center and was negotiating with PDC about the future of the center on that particular site. The *Oregonian* reported that "the center still has the city's support, according to aides in Mayor Charlie Hales' office and the [PDC[leaders. But a permanent solution isn't any closer to becoming a reality" (Theen. *Oregonian,* October 27, 2013).

East Portland Action Plan: Another major innovative community involvement process begun during Mayor Potter's administration was the East Portland Action Plan. For many years, people in east Portland, a large area annexed by the City of Portland in

the 1980s and 1990s, had complained that City Council and the city staff were not paying

attention to their needs. Their area was shifting rapidly from its previous rural and

suburban character and becoming more urbanized. Other issues included a significant

shift of people with low incomes out of gentrifying northeast Portland to east Portland,

new housing being built that was of poor quality and did not fit the character of existing

development, a significant increase in the diversity of the community—especially the

growth of immigrant and refugee communities, and a strong need for economic

development and jobs. Mayor Potter joined with Multnomah County leaders and State

Speaker of the House Jeff Merkley (whose district included east Portland) to initiate a

broad and inclusive community strategic planning process for east Portland, known as the

East Portland Plan. The EPAP Committee completed most of its work during 2008,

Potter's last year in office.

Implementation of the EPAP action items, which began in 2009, is being led by

an EPAP Implementation Committee that represents a wide range of interests in the

community and receives strong staff and funding support from the City to carry out its

activities. The combination of strong community involvement in developing the EPAP

and in the implementation of the plan is seen by many as a good model for a process that

attracts and involves a broad spectrum of the community and implements actions that are

important to the community. The EPAP Implementation Committee models many of the

best practices learn in Portland over the last twenty years. (The EPAP is discussed in

more detail below.)

Mayor's Budget Messages – Tom Potter – 2005-06 to 2008-09

Potter's four-year term as Portland's mayor was characterized by a strengthening economy and high levels of discretionary one-time resources that allowed Potter to fund a number of new programs and projects. In his first mayor's budget message, Potter recognized that FY 2005-06 was "the sixth straight year" that the City Council needed to cut services "due to a recession" (FY 2005-06 3)**.** By the next year (FY 2006-07), the economy began to recover ushering in three years of extra revenue beyond that needed to fund basic government services—over $30 million in FY 2006-07 (8), $37 million in FY 2007-08 (5), and $33 million in FY 2008-09 (3).

Values and Priorities: Potter expressed consistent priorities and values throughout his four budget messages. Potter pledged to Portland's citizens to protect "frontline services" and support "innovation and efficiency" to "enhance customer service"…."and that citizens' concerns will be heard" (FY 2005-06 4).

Potter convened the city council members in fall 2005, and they identified "five focus areas" for the budget: "Building a Family-friendly City;" "Creating Sustainable Economic Development;" "Enhancing Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness;" "Finding Energy Alternatives;" and "Rebuilding the City's Infrastructure" (FY 2006-07 3).

Potter also prioritized creating a city that cherished its children and protected vulnerable Portlanders. In FY 2005-06, he stated that "working with our citizens, we have delivered a budget that makes our community stronger, our children's futures brighter, and our most vulnerable residents more secure" (FY 2005-06 3)

In his FY 2007-08 budget message, Potter stated that that year's budget "now presents us with an opportunity to restore, enhance and protect those basic services that the community looks to its government to provide." Among these basic services, Potter listed "green parks and safe neighborhoods, affordable housing and good roads, family wage jobs, and a healthy environment" (FY 2007-08 3).

Potter also pursued greater efficiency and transparency in government. In FY 2005-06 he stated his belief that "good government is possible at a reasonable cost" (FY 2005-06 3). In FY2006-07 Potter referred to the "20 Bureau Innovation Projects" that were "making our City more diverse, creating greater transparency and accountability, requiring collaboration between City bureaus and Portlanders, and providing effective use of taxpayer dollars" (FY 2006-07 3).

Potter's community visioning project—visionPDX—was part of his bigger effort to establish the community's vision for the city and then use that input to create a long-term strategic plan for City government. In FY 2006-07, Potter reported that the "Visioning Project is now engaging our community in a discussion about its aspirations for Portland's future." Potter then stated his plan is to use the community's vision to "shape our future through a strategic plan with the incremental steps necessary to achieve a better Portland for everyone" (FY 2006-07 3). In FY 2007-08, Potter noted that "In the months ahead, the work gathered from the Visioning Project will inform the creation of a strategic plan that will link the aspirations of Portlanders to the actions of future City Councils" (FY 2007-08 4).

In his last budget message, for FY 2008-09, Potter presented what he believed were important "lessons learned" for "the next Council:"

- "*The City must fix its aging infrastructure*."

- "*Core services must come first*." Potter stressed that "core services" do not just include "public safety, roads, and parks" but "also the human infrastructure we have built over the last four years to invite more members of the community—and more diverse members of the community—into the decision-making process. We will open the doors of City Hall to more people through such acts as the Council's funding of a Human Rights Commission. Now they must remain open" (4) [emphasis added].

- "*In Portland, of all places, we should save for a rainy day*."

- "*Our entire budget must be more transparent*." Potter advocated for a budget that was more understandable to community members, and that clearly identified "shadow" obligations, including "one-time funded" programs that really are meant to be ongoing, and obligations, like Milwaukie light rail, for which future councils would need to provide matching funding (4).

- "*The Council must share a strategic, long-range plan for Portland's future, and stick with it.*" Potter reported that "The City is developing new, comprehensive plans that should provide a guide to how our city grows for the next 20 years. These plans—including an East Portland Plan—will also reflect the dreams of thousands of everyday Portlanders who shared their vision for their community's future during visionPDX." Potter stressed that "these plans

will only matter if the Council not only shares the vision, but is able to work
together on a common set of long-term goals and programs, making these the
basis for future budget decisions" (FY 2008-09 5).

- "*The City must form more public-private partnerships*." "Government is not
  the solution to every problem. Our City must work more closely with our
  business and civic communities to find solutions" (5).

- "*Portland must work more closely with its regional partners*" (5).

Budget Process: Potter instituted a new approach to involving the community in
the development of the city budget, which he used throughout his four years as
Portland's mayor. In FY 2005-06, Potter announced that he had "formed two work teams
made up of Commissioners and citizens to look at the City budget as a whole and make
recommendations (FY 2005-06 3) Potter charged the two budget teams with "thinking
more strategically" and placing the highest priority on "funding those programs that most
closely match our community's needs and priorities" (3). Potter reported that these
budget teams "collaborated in a transparent process, thinking strategically not just about
the needs of individual bureaus, but about our City as a whole" (FY 2006-07 4).

In each of his budget messages, Potter recognized that the city budget was "the
thoughtful product of many people within and outside Portland government." He always
thanked "the City Commissioners, our citizen budget advisors, community budget forum
participants" and different city staff people (FY 2006-07 3) Potter made a point of
thanking "citizen advisors on these teams by name" each year.

In his last budget message, for FY 2008-09, Potter again praised the work of the budget teams of City Commissioners and citizen budget advisors, and reported that "hundreds of citizens have directly participated in the development of this budget through work on bureau advisory committees and oral or written testimony" (FY 2008-09 3).

Potter also stated his belief that, with the help of the City Council "and the involvement of our citizens," the budget "charts a future for our city that keeps our neighborhoods strong, protects our children, and strengthens our economy" (FY 2006-07).

Budget Highlights: Potter chose to highlight many different community involvement programs and projects in his budget messages.

In FY 2005-06, Potter reported that "Community policing programs have been retained…and $1.0 million in one-time funds is provided for problem-oriented policing strategies" and that all the City's community centers would remain open. However, Potter also announced that funding or some community centers would be reduced to 80 percent with the expectation that they would seek "new community sources of financial support and business partnerships." He reiterated one of his messages during the campaign: "Residents cannot continue to assume that government is the only solution for community needs" (FY 2005-06 5).

Potter also announced that "by trimming [ONI's] central administration" he was able to create a "$500,000 Community Investment and Empowerment account, designed to provide more direct funding and services to neighborhoods." (This funding was transferred to the mayor's office to support visionPDX in FY 2005-06.) Potter also

reported that "Elders in Action and neighborhood mediation services" were funded, and that the budget supported "community gardens because citizens told us they are an important part of our neighborhoods" (FY 2005-06 6).

In addition to a description of the visionPDX project, Potter also announced that "a City Charter Review Commission will be appointed in the coming months" to assess "alternative governing structures or changes to the current structure that will improve customer service, streamline government operations, offer greater flexibility in hiring, and encourage better collaboration across City bureaus and with the Portland Development Commission" (FY 2005-06 6).

Potter focused on increasing workforce diversity and cultural awareness within city government. He reported that the "Council is firmly committed to increasing workforce diversity and cultural awareness." He noted that the budget includes funding for "a new Citywide training initiative" and that the Bureau of Human Resources "will work with every bureau to maintain aggressive recruitment efforts to bring qualified minorities and underrepresented classes into the City workforce" (FY 2005-06 7).

In FY 2006-07, Potter provided budget highlights in five priority areas identified by the City Council in fall 2005. Under the first priority--"Build a family-friendly city, where families can afford to live and children can be reared and educated in a supportive community," he asserted that the "City must step up its efforts to meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens" (FY 2006-07 5). Under the second priority—"create a strong economy, planning for both the success of our business community and individual and family prosperity," he mentioned funding to "enhance graffiti abatement" and "$100,000

for the Office of Neighborhood Involvement to work with the small business community"
(6). Under the third priority, "enhance public safety and emergency preparedness by
reviewing service delivery in the city, and with our regional partners, ensure a safe and
peaceful community," Potter reported that the budget allocates "$509,000 to "Strengthen
community policing" by opening "precincts around the clock and on weekends" (6).

In FY 2007-08, Potter mentioned that much of the $23 million in one-time money
allocated by the council in November went to giving "an early start to programs that are
part of a series of five Council-wide initiatives that we have inaugurated this year to help
organize City priorities for investments, encourage collaboration among bureaus and
agencies, and focus Citywide activities." Potter again mentioned his intention that "These
initiatives will encourage the Council to continue collaborating on an integrated, strategic
vision that informs all our spending decisions" (4). Among the community involvement
initiatives, he mentioned:

- "The Children and Youth Bill of Rights, sponsored by the Mayor's Office,
  educating Portlanders about the needs for, and availability of, services for
  children and how best to fill any gaps" (FY 2007-08 4).
- Initial funding to establish "a Human Relations Commission that will create
  greater cohesion in our community by promoting mutual respect and open
  communication" (FY 2007-08 4).

Potter again highlighted programs and projects that supported the City Council's
five priority areas: stabilizing and restoring core services, rebuilding critical
infrastructure, creating a vibrant business climate, striving to improve Portland's

livability, and helping "the community engage their government and participate in civic life" (FY 2007-08 5-7).

Under "strive to improve Portland's livability," Potter noted that the budget includes $1.8 million for the Bureau of Planning to complete visionPDX and continue to work on the Central Portland Plan and Comprehensive Plan update, to ensure that the growth in the city is smart and reflects the community aspirations" (FY 2007-08 7).

Under "help the community engage their government and participate in civic life," Potter highlights:

- "$125,000 for the East Portland Action Plan, which will bring together neighborhood, business, and elected leaders with school officials, law enforcement, and City agencies to identify and prioritize short- and longer-term actions to improve livability in east Portland neighborhoods" (FY 2007-08 7).

- "$200,000 to start a Human Relations Commission that will provide a venue to address individuals' concerns of unfair treatment by local government because of their race, ethnicity, or culture" (7).

- "$580,000 for [ONI] to increase funding for each district coalition office for the first time in 15 years and to help underrepresented groups develop leadership and organizing skills to gain more access to government" (7).

In his last budget message, for FY 2008-09, under his fourth goal—"grow Portland's reputation as the nation's most livable city"—Potter highlighted:

- "$1.8 million for the Bureau of Planning for the Central Portland Plan and Comprehensive Plan update. Funds will also be provided to enhance the Planning Bureau's district liaison program and support the Youth Planning program. All of these planning efforts are intended to ensure that the growth in the city is smart growth that reflects the community's aspirations" (FY 2008-09 9).

- "$500,000 to implement the East Portland Action Plan, which has brought together neighborhood, business, and elected leaders with school officials, law enforcement, and City agencies to identify and prioritize short- and longer-term actions to improve livability in east Portland neighborhoods" (9).

- "$125,000 for additional small neighborhood grants to immediately fund planning projects to bring the Vision into Action" (9).

Under Potter's fifth goal—"make Portland welcoming to every resident"—Potter highlighted:

- "$377,000 to create the Office of Human Relations and restore the City's Human Rights Commission, which will provide a venue to address individuals' concerns of unfair treatment by local government because of their race, ethnicity, culture, immigration status, disability, or sexual preference" (Fy 2008-09 9).

- "$103,250 to further address issues specific to immigrant and refugee populations in Portland as part of the Office of Human Relations over the next two years" (9).

- "$1.0 million for the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) to enhance the capacity of district coalition office staffing; expand core ONI staff that can help neighborhoods resolve disputes; implement the recommendations of Community Connect, which will make government more accessible to residents; and assist underrepresented communities with finding their voice in the neighborhoods by giving them the organization and experience they need to make themselves heard" (9).

Closing Statements: Potter closed his budget messages by recognizing and celebrating the high levels of collaboration between city council members, city government staff, and community members in developing the city budgets. In FY 2005-06, Potter stated that the budget process "only becomes stronger the more we are able to involve Portland's citizens. Next year, I promise we will hear their voices earlier and even more often" (FY 2005-06 8) In FY 2006-07 Potter stated that he was "pleased" with the budget "because of the hard work and involvement of so many people." He reported that that year "we held more public workshops and held them earlier. Our five citizen advisors brought the critical eye of the private sector and important community questions to our process, often challenging how we were approaching decisions and helping to make them better. Our citizens' voices are clearly represented in this document" He also noted that the City had made a good started one of the previous year's goals "to begin building more effective partnerships between the City and its citizens, between the private sector and the public" (FY 2006-07 8).

In FY 2007-08, Potter opened his concluding remarks again by celebrating the "unprecedented level of collaboration among the entire City Council, our staffs, and the community. He ended by stating: "I hope Portlanders will continue to participate in government as this budget is implemented over the next year, as so many of you participated in developing it. As always, we want to hear from you" (FY 2007-08 8).

In Potter ended his fourth and final budget message by stating that: "In my first Proposed Budget in 2005, I wrote that 'working with our citizens, we have delivered a budget that makes our community stronger, makes our children more secure, and protects those among us most in need of our help.' I believe this budget accomplishes those same goals. Thank you" (FY 2008-09 10).

Potter's budget messages reflect his strong commitment to community involvement in government decision making, government efficiency, strategic management of city government as a whole, and long-term strategic direction based on the community vision. Potter frequently mentions the valuable role he believes community member play in the budget process. He also makes a point of highlighting many programs and projects that expanded and strengthened Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system.

Citywide Policy Bodies--Citywide Land Use Group and Citywide Parks Team

Different system reviews and individual community activists have called for the creation of some sort of city wide body or vehicle that neighborhood and community activists could use to discuss citywide policy issues and organize themselves to take action. Citywide bodies have been created from time to time—i.e., the PAN in the 1970s,

APN in the 1980s, and NPAC in the mid 2000s, but they each only were active for a short period of time.

As of 2013, Portland still does not have a formal citywide neighborhood or community council. One citywide body that has functioned for many years is the Citywide Land Use Group. Another similar body that was created in 2005 is the Citywide Park Team. Although the Citywide Park Team was only active for a few years, in 2013 City Commissioner Amanda Fritz called on each of the seven neighborhood district coalitions to create a Parks Committee, which might lead to the resurrection of this citywide committee.

Citywide Land Use Group: Neighborhood activists create the Citywide Land Use Group (CWLU) sometime in the 1990s. Neighborhood association leader Tom Badrick, chaired the CWLU early in its history. Badrick said the group already existed when he got involved with it in the mid 1990s. Bradick reported that, at the time, his neighborhood association just had won a land use case that prevented an electric utility company from locating a cell tower at a substation along an arterial in his neighborhood. Badrick remembered that "Like other future issues, it wasn't about yes/no, but isn't there a better way." He reported that his neighborhood association "worked with the cell provider to place antennas on roof tops to accomplish the same effect." A couple months later the same issue came up when a cell tower was proposed at a property across the street from Badrick's house along another arterial in the neighborhood. Badrick stated that "it seemed like a topic NA's could work on together instead of fighting it one at a time in a void."

Badrick remembered that he emailed the ONA director at the time, Diane Linn, about the issue. She invited him to come to a CWLU meeting to talk about it. Badrick made a presentation to the small group of people at the meeting and he "suggested the group could be helpful." He said the group's members politely listened to him and the meeting ended. When he came back the next month, none of the people who had been at the previous meeting were there, and Badrick agreed to chair the group to fill the leadership void. Badrick said that Linn helped him "connect to a few other people, and soon we built a larger group. We kept working the issues of helping each other." Badrick reported that participation in the group increased dramatically when the City "signed onto Metro's goals of accepting greater density and the upped the ante by agreeing to take more." Badrick remembered that the group went from a few attendees to "a meeting with 89 people from all over the city where David Knowles, then Planning Director explained and justified the city position." Badrick reported that, a few years later, when he was preparing to "retire" from the CWLU, he was watching Portland's local community access television channel and saw the director of the City's development and permitting bureau describing the community outreach her bureau had done on a project—"top of the list was CWLU." Badrick said he was very gratified to realize that CWLU had developed enough clout "to matter." Badrick reported that he handed off the leadership of the group to "the most capable people one could find—three Spirit of Portland winners—Arlene Kimura, Bonny McKnight and Amanda Fritz"[111] (Badrick email to Leistner, October 17, 2013).

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[111] Kimura and McKnight are long-time neighborhood leaders from east Portland. Fritz is a long-time neighborhood activist from southwest Portland. Fritz served for seven years on the Portland Planning

ONI staff person Brian Hoop remembers helping Badrick, in the early 2000s, develop a database of contacts for the CWLU and send out meeting announcements. Hoop reported that when McKnight took over as chair of the CWLU in 2003, she chose to end the group's relationship with ONI. McKnight has continued to chair the CWLU to the time of this study in 2013. McKnight prepares the meeting agendas, sends out meeting notices, and facilitates the CWLU meetings. The CWLU meetings continue to be a regular community outreach stop for city staff working on land use planning related projects. In 2013, some CWLU members discussed creating a new alternative city wide land use group that would have a more open and inclusive leadership structure and more open approach to setting the meeting agendas. They also discussed partnering with ONI again to strengthen the group's outreach and recruitment efforts and to expand online opportunities for community dialogue and information sharing on land use issues.

Citywide Parks Team: In the early 2000s, east Portland neighborhood activists Linda Robinson and Alesia Reese wanted to start an east Portland neighborhood "coalition-wide committee to address parks issues in East Portland." They reached out to southwest Portland neighborhood parks activist Amanda Fritz to learn more about a coalition-wide parks committee that they had heard that the southwest neighborhood coalition (SWNI) had created. In their conversations with Fritz, Fritz "mentioned her idea of forming an ad hoc citywide parks group, open to anyone interested in Portland parks," similar to the CWLU group led by Bonny McKnight (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 1:51 AM).

Commission before being elected to the Portland City Council in 2008 as the first non-incumbent to successfully use Portland's short-lived Voter Owned Elections funding to win a seat on the city council.

Robinson, Reese, and Fritz went on to create the "Citywide Parks Team" in 2005.

Fritz chaired the group during its first year, and then Robinson took over. Fritz reports

that "We had people from all over, mostly from [park] Friends and NA groups" (Fritz.

Email to Leistner, October 17, 2013).

The Citywide Parks Team website identified the group's mission as:

"The Citywide Parks Team partnership brings together many
special focus groups and individuals, such as Neighborhood
Association and district/coalition parks committees, "Friends of..."
organizations, businesses, and so on. It's also a place for people
who don't otherwise participate in parks organizational discussions
to add their voices -- for example, sports facility users, social and
cultural service providers sharing building space, etc. And it
provides opportunities for liaison with the Parks Bureau, Parks
Board, Portland Parks Foundation, and other stakeholders. It's
citizen-initiated, citizen-led, citizen-owned, and intended for all
Portlanders who care about getting things done in and for parks in
Portland" (Citywide Parks Team. Web.
<http://explorepdx.org/pcwpt.html> . Downloaded October 17,
2013).

Fritz shared her recollections about the original purpose and activities of the

group:

"I hoped it would help us organize and become more cohesive
citywide, and it did. We had mostly presentations from Parks staff
and other staff. Two meetings I particularly remember were one
where we talked about fire hazards in relation to tree preservation
and home safety which filled either Pettygrove or Lovejoy,
[Rooms in City Hall] and another on community gardens which
filled the Rose Room [in City Hall]. It was basically the only
forum (then or since) where any interested citizen could show up
and talk with staff and other citizens about the topic of the month.
For the fire session, I got the impression the various bureau staff
were talking to each other for the first time, too" (Fritz. Email to
Leistner, October 17, 2013).

Robinson reported that "Most meetings had a special topic, including a speaker on the topic and lots of time for discussion, but the dominating topic that we came back to, over and over, was equity—geographical equity, racial/ethnic equity, socioeconomic equity, etc" (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 1:51 AM).

Robinson stated that "One of the primary goals of the group was to increase/improve communication between [Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R)] and park advocates. While it was obvious people in Portland loved their parks, there was a lot of distrust of PP&R itself. We were hoping to change that." Robinson continued, "My hope was that we could show PP&R management that we could help them if they would share more information with us and involve us in projects at an earlier stage. I was convinced that we could become better advocates for the Bureau if we could establish a more collaborative relationship with them. They kept telling us how dependent they were becoming on park volunteers, but their immediate response to most suggestion from park advocates was, 'I don't think we can do that'" (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 1:51 AM).

Robinson recalled that the group initially met at City Hall, but then had to move the meetings to other locations when the rules for the use of after-hours meetings in City Hall changed. Robinson said the frequent changes of meeting location "did NOT work well," and attendance dropped off. Robinson stopped facilitating the meeting after she was appointed to the Portland Parks Board in late 2009. She recalled that last meeting of the Citywide Parks Team was in early 2010. Robinson said that, in early 2005, the group "set up an email listserv through Yahoo Groups—a list that still exists, though it's not

used very much." Robinson says she still forwards PP&R press releases to the listserv, and "occasionally someone else posts something." She thought "there are still 20 or 30 people in that group" (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 1:51 AM).

Fritz stated that she believed that the primary accomplishment of the Citywide Parks Team was to grow "friendships across the city" and to advance "knowledge and understanding," which she said she believed was "accomplishing a lot" (Fritz. Email to Leistner, October 17, 2013).

Robinson said, at some time before 2010, "Parks started tracking all the Friends groups that had formed over the years." She said the bureau "seems to be making an effort to work more collaboratively with them" (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 1:51 AM). Robinson also stated that, in her personal experience and the experience of several east Portland neighborhood activists, "there is MUCH MORE grassroots participation in Parks now than there was there was ten years ago, or even five years ago! A number of things have contributed to that—but I have to think that the Citywide Parks Team [made] a significant contribution, if nothing else" through the relationships developed through the group (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 10:06 AM).

Robinson reported that east Portland park activists went on to form the "East Portland Parks Coalition." She said that this group also has helped improve relations with PP&R. Robinson stated that: "The fact that the [PP&R] Zone Manager attends nearly every one of those monthly meetings has been a HUGE factor in making that group effective." The zone manager often plays "a 'listening role,' getting a much better feel for

the wishes and concerns of folks who are intimately involved with these parks." She

reported that the zone manager, at other times, serves as a "great sounding board, giving

valuable feedback as to what might (or might not) be possible and why—and when."

Robinson noted that the zone manager "after hearing a consistent theme come up in the

meetings," knows they "whole system well enough to realize there's an existing program

that, with just a bit of tweaking, could provide the desired service—and they are in a

position to connect the folks who can make it happen" (Robinson. Email to Leistner,

October 20, 2013, 10:06 AM).[112]

 Robinson noted that both the Citywide Park Team and the East Portland Parks

Coalition "were set up as ad hoc groups—open to anyone interested in participating.

There are no specific representatives from each neighborhood association." Robinson

reported that Alesia Reese, who facilitates the East Portland Parks Coalition meetings,

regularly reports to the East Portland Neighborhood Office (EPNO) neighborhood

association chairs group on the activities of the East Portland Parks Coalition. She also

noted that when the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) implementation committee

established its subcommittees, the group "did NOT form a committee to deal with park

issues (even thought parks are a big issue in the area) because they were all aware of the

existence of the East Portland Parks Coalition. Robinson and EPAP co-chair Arlene

Kimura, a long-time east Portland neighborhood activist, serve as the official EPAP

representatives to the East Portland Parks Coalition and regularly report on the parks

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[112] The regular participation of the Park Bureau zone manager in the East Portland Parks Coalition meeting, is a good example of a city staff person building a relationship over time with community members the benefits both his work and the work of the community members.

coalition's "accomplishments, events and issues to the full EPAP group" (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 11:04 AM).

Fritz was elected to the Portland City Council in 2008 and re-elected to a second term on the city council in 2012. In July 2012, Mayor Charles Hales designated Fritz as the commissioner-in-charge of the City of Portland Parks and Recreation Bureau. In fall 2013, Fritz called on each of the seven neighborhood district coalitions to develop a "Parks Committee" to advise her how community members wanted the City to utilize $8 million in revenue from systems develop charges, which was available to spend on the City's park system (Ashton. *East Portland News*. 2013). Fritz suggested that a new Citywide Parks Team could evolve out of the seven neighborhood coalition park committees, "in a year or two once the area parks committees get established, if the participants want to do that." She added that "I'd like to see a Citywide Transportation Committee and a Citywide Crime Prevention Committee run by grassroots activists, too" (Fritz. Email to Leistner, October 17, 2013).

Unlike the PAN from the 1970s and APN from the 1980s and the Citywide Parks Team of the mid 2000s, only the CWLU group has been able to sustain its activities over time (nearly twenty years by 2013). While individual community activists periodically see the value of creating a citywide group, the history of these groups appears to indicate that their continued existence depends heavily on ongoing support, either from one or more dedicated and skilled community members—like McKnight—or from a paid and skilled staff person assigned to support the group. District area subject committees—like the East Portland Parks Coalition—often are better able to sustain their focus and energy

than a citywide committee. The East Portland Parks Coalition also benefits from its good relationship with the East Portland Action Plan, one of the most innovative and effective community organizing initiatives implemented in Portland.[113]

<u>Mayor Sam Adams and ONI Commissioner Amanda Fritz (2009-2012)</u>

Mayor Sam Adams took office in January 2009. Adams came in with a reputation for having lots of energy and lots of ideas. Adams also knew how city government worked. Adams had been Mayor Katz's chief of staff for her entire twelve years as mayor, and he had served one term as a city commissioner. Adams had not gotten along particularly well with Potter on the city council, and Potter actively campaigned for Adams' opponent in the mayoral race. Many community and neighborhood activists wondered whether Adams would continue to support the expansion of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system implemented under Potter.[114]

One early sign of Adams' attitude toward ONI and community involvement was his decision to give responsibility for ONI to newly-elected City Commissioner Amanda Fritz. Fritz was a long-time neighborhood activist, had served for many years on the Portland Planning Commission, and was the first (and only) non-incumbent to win election through Portland's short-lived "Voter Owned Elections" program. During

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[113] Robinson states that the East Portland Action Plan is "the BEST thing that has happened to East Portland in the nearly 40 years I've lived there!" (Robinson. Email to Leistner, October 20, 2013, 11:04 AM).

[114] Adams' effectiveness and focus initially was damaged by a sex scandal that broke only a few weeks after he took office. The *Oregonian* wrote at the end of Adams one term as mayor that he "survived a state criminal investigation and two recall attempts" but that "his reputation was so damaged" that he decided not to "seek a second term." The *Oregonian* also noted that "yet through sheer will and hard work Adams rammed through an ambitious priority list, easily eclipsing the record of predecessor Tom Potter. The scandal forced Adams to adapt, to become more collaborative and reliant on others." The *Oregonian* quoted Adams' former boss, Portland Mayor Vera Katz, as saying "I think he had an incredible four years. Had we not had this scandal, he would have run for re-election and he would have had an incredible legacy" (Schmidt. *Oregonian*, December 23, 2012).

Adams' one term in office, he and Fritz often joined together to protect ONI and the ONI programs from the severe budget cuts being required of other General Fund supported city bureaus and programs during the Great Recession. Adams also became a major proponent of "equity" in Portland during his very hands on leadership of the City's strategic planning process known as the Portland Plan.[115]

During the four years that she was the ONI Commissioner, Fritz strongly advocated for funding for ONI and its programs and community partners and was a dependable and vocal advocate for community involvement in city decision making. She also spent a lot of time out in the community attending community events and meetings and stayed up late at night personally responding to emails from community members.

City Bureau Budget Advisory Committees (BACs): City bureau budget advisory committees (BACs) finally made a comeback in the FY 2009-10 budget process. Neighborhood and community activists had been asking for a reinstatement of BACs as part of the city budget development process since Mayor Katz had dissolved the program in the early 1990s. Mayor-elect Sam Adams came to the monthly meetings of the Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) (only two days after his election) and announced that he was requiring each city bureau to create a Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) as part of the FY 2008-09 budget process.[116] Adams told the PIAC members that bureaus would be required to evaluate and rank their programs against the program's

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[115] A number of people believe some of Adams' support for "equity" in Portland was rooted in his experiences as a gay man and an advocate for gay rights and his experience growing up in a low-income family.

[116] The formal "council budget direction" to bureaus stated that "Bureaus will be expected to form Bureau Budget Advisory Committees that include management, labor, customers, and internal and external stakeholders" (Portland. Office of Management and Finance. Memo from Casey Short and Andrew Scott to Bureau Directors et al. SUBJECT: FY 2009-10 Budget Approach and Process, October 17, 2008).

relation to the bureau's core mission and against equity and social justice principles.

Adams asked PIAC members for advice on the best ways to get community input for the

budget process. Adams told PIAC members that he wanted to disable the existing

dynamic of "who can stack the town hall meeting" in which groups that show up in the

largest numbers get their requests met. PIAC members offered Adams a wide range of

ideas and suggestions (PIAC Meeting Notes, November 6, 2008). PIAC members also

created a workgroup that tracked activities of the BACs over the next few years and

submitted a set of recommended guidelines for BACs that was adopted by the City

Council in September 2012. (See below for a more detailed discussion of these BAC

guidelines.)

ONI Budgets: During Adams' term in office, Portland and the nation were going

through the Great Recession. As city revenues diminished, Adams' was forced to require

city bureaus to cut their budgets. Every year, the ONI BAC members (often 50 to 70

people) engaged in an extensive series of meetings and identified program cuts that

would meet the targets set by the mayor and the City's Office of Management and

Finance. The ONI BAC members then would develop a counter proposal that they called

the "Right Budget for ONI" that added back some of the funding. ONI BAC members

argued that cuts beyond this point would cause significant damage to the progress that

had been made in recent years in strengthening Portland's community and neighborhood

involvement system and the system's ability to involve a broader spectrum of the

community. City Commissioner Fritz worked with ONI BAC members to develop and

implement a strategy that mobilized members of ONI's neighborhood and community

partner organizations to advocate together for the "Right Budget for ONI." Because of

the relationships that representatives of different neighborhood and community

organizations on the ONI BAC had developed over the years of working together, each

year they were able to pack the City Council chambers budget meeting on the ONI

budget with a striking diversity of community members all supporting the "Right Budget

for ONI." Adams and Fritz worked together every year of Adam's term as mayor and

successfully protected ONI, its programs, and community partner organizations from

more severe cuts, and, in some cases, were able to use one-time money to back fill much

of what otherwise would have been lost.

A key strength of the ONI BAC process was that all the affected partners worked

together over many meetings to understand each other's programs, set joint priorities, and

agree to and implement a unified budget advocacy strategy. Most of the system advances

made during the Potter administration remained in place.

Portland Plan: One of Adams' major accomplishments during his term as mayor

was the completion of the Portland Plan. The Portland Plan initially was started under

Mayor Potter following the completion of visionPDX and was intended to develop a

strategic plan for the City that would implement the vision established by visionPDX.

Adams, initially distanced himself from visionPDX and its association with Potter and

expanded the scope of the Portland Plan to include more "visioning-like" outreach to the

community and the involvement of more than twenty government and institutional

partners in the Portland area. The final Portland Plan, adopted by the City Council in

April 2012, defined itself as "a strategic plan to make Portland prosperous, healthy,

educated and equitable. It provides a structure for aligning budgets and projects across numerous public agencies, guiding policies with an eye toward the year 2034, and a five-year action plan to get things started" (Portland. *The Portland Plan: Summary*, April 2012 1).

The Portland Plan had begun under Tom Potter after the completion of visionPDX in February 2008. Community members familiar with the very inclusive process used in visionPDX and the broad reaching Community Connect recommendations expected that the Portland Plan would implement many of the best practices identified by these processes to involve the community in the development of the Portland Plan. Instead the Bureau of Planning followed its more traditional policy (described by Hovey and Irazabal) of attempting to do much of the early work without the community. BOP set up a number of advisory committees to begin to research and establish the frame work for the Portland Plan. The committees were largely made up of city employees with few or no community members. When community members found out and asked to see lists of who was serving on these committees and to get copies of notes from the meetings, senior managers at BOP refused to share the information. In response to community concerns, BOP proposed what many community members saw as a very superficial community involvement process separate from the work of these substantive committees. Community members objected and charged that state planning goals required BOP to develop a complete community involvement plan before work started on the project. A small, diverse group of neighborhood and community leaders met with Gil Kelley to ask him to open up the process. He expressed concern that opening up the process would

prevent BOP from completing the Portland Plan in a timely way. Some community members took their complaints about the process to the Oregon State Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA).[117] LUBA did not take any substantive action in response to the complaints. Community members also met with Mayor Potter to complain about lack of public involvement in the Portland Plan and to ask him to intervene.[118] Potter promised to talk with BOP director Gil Kelley, but no subsequent changes in the process were implemented. ONI staff contacted BOP to offer assistance in helping design a good community involvement process. BOP senior management declined ONI's offer of assistance.

One of the key structural changes Adams made early in his term as mayor was to consolidate the City's Bureau of Planning (BOP) and the Office of Sustainable Development (OSD). The new Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) became the lead agency that would support the Portland Plan process. The new agency only needed one executive director. Adams choose to retain Susan Anderson, former director of OSD, to serve as the director of BPS. Gil Kelley subsequently left Portland city government service. This change in leadership created an opportunity to open up community involvement in the Portland Plan.

Portland Plan "technical advisory groups" (TAGs)—made up almost entirely of city staff—continued to meet to frame up issues and alternatives to take out to the community. One of these TAGs was the "Equity, Community Engagement, and Quality of Life" TAG (which later became known simply as the "Equity TAG.") The Equity

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[117] Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition. *Testimony before Oregon State Land Conservation and Development Commission*. May 1, 2008.
[118] Leistner personal notes on meeting with Mayor Tom Potter, April 18, 2008.

TAG, initially was co-lead by Laurel Butman, with the Office of Management and Finance and former co-chair of the PITF. A number of staff people from different city bureaus who were involved in public involvement, including ONI, served on the TAG. Butman tightly controlled the agendas and conversations on the Equity TAG in an effort to meet the requirements and timelines set by BPS management.

In April 2010, Butman left her job with the City of Portland and went to work for Clackamas County. Mayor Adams assigned City Commissioner Fritz responsibility for overseeing "equity" in the Portland Plan. ONI Director Alarcón de Morris took over for Butman as co-chair of the Equity TAG (Portland. Butman. Email to ECEQL TAG members, April 23, 2010).

Alarcón de Morris moved quickly to get permission from BPS senior management to invite community members to join the TAG, and she advocated for other TAGs to do the same. Representatives of many of ONI's DCL partner organizations, other communities of color organizations, Vision into Action committee members, and PSU faculty, joined the group. The Equity TAG also began meeting out in the community at the office of the City's Office of Human Relations. Equity TAG members worked together to develop language around what equity meant and why it was important. Equity TAG members argued that "equity" should be an overarching theme for the Portland Plan. They generally asserted that aspects of who you are that are out of your control should not be predictors of your ability to fulfill your potential in Portland. Alarcón de Morris, through her status as a "TAG Lead" and a bureau director was able to share the message of equity with the other TAG leads, BOP senior management, and Mayor

Adams and his staff, as well as advocating for greater inclusiveness and diverse

participation the Portland Plan development.

The rapid rise of "equity" as a major theme for the Portland Plan largely grew out

of the release of a number of studies showing that, while white, middle class Portlanders

had done very well during the 1990s and 2000s, conditions for many people in

communities of color in Portland had gotten worse. The most important of these studies

was the Urban League of Portland's July 2009 study "The State of Black Oregon."

Another influential report was released in 2010 by the Coalition of Communities of Color

and Portland State University, titled "Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An

Unsettling Profile" (Curry-Stevens et al 2010). The Coalition for a Livable Future (CLF)

also had published its influential "Regional Equity Atlas" in 2007. [119] These studies

documented significant race-and-ethnicity-based disparities in Portland. These studies

were a wake-up call for many white progressive Portlanders and city leaders and staff.

Mayor Adams soon became a strong "equity" champion. "Equity" also became

the overall framework for Portland Plan's "three integrated strategies" ("Thriving

Educated Youth," "Economic Prosperity and Affordability," and "Healthy Connected

City") and its twelve success measures (Portland. *The Portland Plan: Summary*, April

2012 1). The Portland Plan's Equity Framework stated that "The City and Portland Plan

partners will use the framework as a guide when they implement actions in other sections

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[119] The CLF Regional Equity Atlas (2007) used "maps, policy analysis, community based research, and other tools" to "assesses how well different populations across the four-county Portland-Vancouver metro region" could "access key resources necessary for meeting their basic needs and advancing their health and well-being" (Coalition for a Livable Future website, "Regional Equity Atlas," http://clfuture.org/equity-atlas, downloaded November 3, 2013).

[of the Portland Plan] and develop their work plans to make the goals of the Portland Plan reality" (Portland. *Portland Plan: A Framework for Equity,* April 2012 17).

The Portland Plan Equity Framework defined "equity" as follows:

"Equity is when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential. We have a shared fate as individuals within a community and communities within society. All communities need the ability to shape their own present and future. Equity is both the means to healthy communities and an end that benefits us all" (Portland. *Portland Plan: A Framework for Equity*, April 2012 18).

The Equity Framework also described an equitable community as follows:

"We make the promise of opportunity real when:"
- "All Portlanders have access to a high-quality education, living wage jobs, safe neighborhoods, basic services, a healthy natural environment, efficient public transit, parks and greenspaces, decent housing and healthy good."
- "The benefits of growth and change are equitably shared across our communities. No one community is overly burdened by the region's growth."
- "<u>All Portlanders and communities fully participate in and influence public decision-making</u>." [emphasis added]
- "Portland is a place where your future is not limited by your race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, income, where you were born or where you live."
- "Underrepresented communities are engaged partners in policy decisions" (Portland. *Portland Plan: A Framework for Equity*, April 2012 18)..

The definition and endorsement of "equity" as a primary goal for city government and other important government entities and institutions in Portland would lend significant momentum to further efforts to get city leaders and staff to think differently about their roles and responsibilities in increasing equity in Portland. The emphasis on meaningful community involvement for all community members—but especially

"underrepresented communities—further emphasized the need to preserve and build on the important reforms and expansion Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system implemented under Mayor Potter, and further embedded community involvement values in city government culture and practices.

Charter Commission 2011: In 2007, Portlander voters had approved Ballot Measure 26-98—the measure proposed by the 2005-07 Charter Review Commission. Measure 26-98 required the Portland City Council regularly to establish commissions of community representatives to review the Portland City Charter. Mayor Potter and others saw mandatory regular community review of the city charter as an important strategy for ensuring greater community voice in shaping city government policies and structures. In spring 2010, ONI staff alerted the mayor's office that the deadline was approaching for establishing the first commission required by Measure 26-98.

Commissioner Fritz asked Mayor Adams if she could be in charge of setting up the charter review process. Fritz proposed a two-part process, which included setting up an initial charter review commission with a very limited scope and timeframe (to meet the requirement of Measure 26-98), followed, sometime later, by another charter review commission that would engage in a full review of the city charter. Fritz was concerned that 2010-11 was not a good time for a full charter review. The Portland Plan, which was using up a lot of city staff and resources at the time, still had a year to go until it would be completed. Fritz thought that this strategic planning process might generate ideas for charter changes that should not have to wait another ten years until another charter

commission was created.[120] Fritz also was concerned that, because of the economic recession and the tight city budget, the city did not have the resources to adequately fund and support a full charter review and community outreach process.

Fritz proposed that the first charter review commission meet for only six months and focus narrowly on identifying housekeeping changes in the city charter and designing a process and identifying possible issues for the second charter review commission. Fritz also sought to ensure that the people on the initial charter review commission would have the skills and experience to get up to speed quickly. She decided to recruit many of the commission members from the pool of individuals who already were serving on City board and commissions rather than the community at large.

City Council Resolution: In December 2010, the Portland City Council adopted a resolution that created the 2011 Charter Review Commission (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36836*, December 15, 2010). The City Council recognized that it could not limit what the commission members chose to work on, but asked the group to complete three tasks:

- Identify "housekeeping amendments" to remove " offensive and outdated language from the Charter, while not making changes with greater policy implications" that would be placed on the ballot in May or November 2011;

- Recommend a process for setting up a second charter commission "soon after conclusion of the Portland plan" to "discuss and propose more extensive

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[120] The actual language of Measure 26-98 allowed the City Council to establish a charter review commission at any time. The ballot measure language just required the City Council to convene a charter review commission "From time to time, but no less frequently than every 10 years…." (Portland. *City Charter*, Section 13-301. Charter Commission).

policy changes based on wide public outreach and drawing from the conclusion reached in the Portland Plan…;"

- Prepare a list of policy issues for review by the next charter review commission.

The City Council declared that the charter review commission should convene in January 2011, and committed to funding the group for six months.[121]

The City Council members at the time also formally committed to "appointing a second Charter Commission soon after the Portland Plan is adopted." This charter commission would be "encouraged and funded to address broad policy amendments to the Charter" and would be "informed by an extensive citywide public process and discussion."[122]

Charter Review Commission Process: The charter review commission met monthly from January 2011 to February 2012.

At the Charter Review Commission's first meeting, former Mayor Potter told the group that, when he was mayor, he saw that no provision existed for periodic review of the City Charter. He said he felt that review of the charter "was an excellent forum for community engagement." He noted that the charter review commission was required to represented the "diversity of the city," and that the City Council was required to forward to the ballot any charter changes that at least fifteen commission members supported.

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[121] The ordinance states that "the citywide outreach and input process leading to the 2007 Charter changes cost \$600,000" and makes the case that the poor economy prevented city government from investing similar resources to ensure adequate funding and capacity for the extensive community involvement required for a meaningful and full charter review process.

[122] As of October 2013, the City Council has taken no action to prepare for or initiate a second charter review commission.

Potter told the groups that "The Charter Commission is an opportunity for citizens to get their hands directly on the levers of power. Everything we do is impacted by the City Charter." Potter encouraged commission members to listen to their neighborhoods "to learn about issues facing the daily lives of Portland citizens." Robert Ball, who served on the 2005-07 Charter Review Commission, told the group that this earlier charter review commission was restricted to looking at only four topics. He said the 2005-07 Charter Review commission members saw many issues they would have like to consider. Ball said that was why they ensured that future charter review commissions would have the authority to look at any issue they chose to. Despite the City Council's request for the current charter review commission to limit its focus, Ball encouraged the commission members to "look at all aspects of the Charter, and to use their power to bring big ideas to the voters" (Portland. Charter Review Commission. *Meeting notes*. January 24, 2011).

Initially the commission was supported by a staff person assigned by Fritz. After the commission's six-month term ended, commission members told the city council they had not completed their work and asked for more time. Mayor Adams shifted responsibility for the commission to City Commissioner Dan Saltzman. Saltzman assigned a new staff member to support the commission. City Council also appointed new commission members to replace members who left because they had not planned on participating for more than six months.

Commission members made efforts to provide time for public comment at each of their meetings. They also did some community outreach at BPS Portland Plan open houses and held some community forums. Commission members also formed committees

to explore charter amendments in areas identified through the outreach process, including a human rights commission, instant run-off voting, creation of an independent utility commission, and police accountability (Portland. Charter Commission. *City of Portland Charter Commission Report* [no date]).

The charter review commission members referred nine charter amendments to the City Council for referral to the May 2012 ballot. Each amendment had been approved by 15 or more commission members, which required the City Council to refer the proposed amendments to the ballot with any changes. Most of the measures corrected or removed outdated or offensive language. One of the measures established a two-year term for future charter review commission members. Portland voters approved all nine measures.[123]

Findings/Recommendations: The commission's final report documented the group's process, listed topics for consideration by the next charter review commission, shares some of the commission members' frustrations with the process, and offered suggestions for how to improve the process for the next charter review commission. Some of the challenges with the process identified by commission members included:

- The significant time and energy needed to orient new commission members who replaced members who left in June 2011.

- The mid-stream change in staff supporting the commission and the second staff person's lack of knowledge of city government and lack of skill in supporting a formal group process.

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[123]The nine measures passed with support ranging from 77 percent to 90 percent (Multnomah County Election Archives, May 15, 2012 Primary Election—Election Results).

- The inability of the commission members to access and update the commission's website when one of the original commission members left and took the password for the site with him.

- Insufficient time and funding "for the in-depth study that proposals recommended and requested by the public deserved."

- Lack of support from city bureaus to help the commission carry out its work and investigations.

- Discovery toward the end of the process that "notices and announcements of meetings, public forums, and public hearings had not been forwarded through the [ONI] email list as thought, resulting in the loss of an important means of dissemination of information.

Recommendations: The commission members recommended changes in the process for the next charter review commission. These included:

- Appointment of charter members through an open and inclusive process (rather than the process used to select the members of this commission);

- "Appointment of commission members for a minimum of 2-year terms" (which Portland voters mandated through their passage of Measure 26-133 in May 2012);

- A clear understanding by, and recognition of, the role of the charter commission and commission members by City Council members;

- Early appointment of commission members to allow "sufficient time to study" the city charter and to prepare for the first commission meeting;

- "Adequate funding to allow for in-depth study of issues...;"

- Staff support for the commission by "personnel with skills and knowledge necessary to keep minutes for all commission and committee meetings, public forums, and hearings" and to "manage the website site;"

- Support and cooperation from city bureaus and departments and "publication of commission functions on city calendars and email distribution lists;"

- Effective outreach to the community, including "publicizing meetings, hearings, and the work of the commission;"

- Scheduling of meeting dates so "all appointees are able to attend" at least half of the meetings;

- "Recognition of the importance of the City Charter to the function and future of the City of Portland and therefore the importance of the work of those who review and change it" (some commission members felt the city council did not respect their role or their work)

The experience of the 2011 Charter Review Commission illustrated some of the strengths and weaknesses of the charter review process established by Portland voters in 2007. The requirement that the City Council create a community charter review commission at least every ten years ensured that some level of community review of the city charter would take place periodically. Other strengths included the requirement that the group represent the diversity of the city, that the group can choose what it will work on, and the power the group has to send proposed amendments to the ballot without City Council being able to change the language. As Mayor Potter told the group, giving the

community the opportunity to review and amend the City of Portland's most fundamental governing document, put a lot of power in the hands of community members.

Some of the weaknesses of the process included the reliance of charter review commissions on the city council for funding and staffing. Without strong staffing and support, future commissions will have difficulty functioning effectively and also adequately reaching out to and involving the community in their process. Effective community outreach is needed to help community members understand what the city charter is and how it works and how the city charter relates to and can affect issues their care about. Commission members also need to have enough time to do their work. Commission members solved this problem to some extent by getting voters to approve a City Charter amendment that established minimum two-year terms for future charter review commission members.

Comprehensive Plan—Community Involvement PEG: One of the high priority recommendations of the PITF (2003-2004) was to update and strengthen the community involvement goals and policies in Portland's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan (unlike the broader Portland Plan) establishes legally binding policies that apply to a large portion of the land use planning and capital improvement project activities of city government. The opportunity to implement this PITF recommendation arose when BPS completed the Portland Plan in early 2012 and began to work on updating Portland's Comprehensive Plan, which included developing new and revised goals and policies for the Comprehensive Plan and updating the Comprehensive Plan map, which sets the future direction for land use zoning across the city.

BPS staff sought to improve involvement of the community in the development of the Comprehensive Plan and to involve the community earlier and more fully in the process than it had with the Portland Plan. BPS staff consulted with ONI staff on the process design. BPS created a number of "policy expert groups" (PEGs) to work on different parts of the plan. BPS included a diversity of community members, along with city staff and other stakeholders, on the PEGs from the outset of the process. They also hired independent, professional facilitators to facilitate the PEG meetings. Equity was a major theme and focus throughout the work of the PEGs. BPS formed the PEGS in May 2012. The PEGs began meeting in June 2012 and ended their work in June 2013. BPS staff prepared "summary memos" that reported on the work of each PEG and the PEGs recommendation new or updated goal and policy language (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Comprehensive Plan Update: Policy Expert Groups). <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/58187, downloaded October 30, 2013).[124]

The Community Involvement PEG (CI PEG) was assigned to update the Comprehensive Plan's community involvement goal and policies. The CI PEG's work is described below as part of the description of the work of the Public Involvement Advisory Council.

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[124] BPS designed the PEG groups to take a broader approach to the Comprehensive Plan update than the traditional land use planning focus on specific service areas such as transportation, land use, sewers, water, etc. The PEG groups included: Community Involvement, Economic Development, Education and Youth Success, Equity Work Group, Industrial Land and Watershed Health Working Group, Infrastructure Equity, Neighborhood Centers, networks, Residential Development and Compatibility, and Watershed Health and Environment (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. *Comprehensive Plan Update: Policy Expert Groups*).

Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) (2008 to present)

Mayor Tom Potter implemented one of the primary PITF recommendations when he supported the City Council's creation of the Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC) in February 2008. The City Council charged the PIAC to serve "as a standing body charged with developing recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement through adopted principles, policies, and guidelines that assist City bureaus in creating consistent expectations and processes for public involvement activities…." The City Council also directed PIAC to "address recommendations raised by BIP 9, Community Connect, and draft recommendations of the Public Involvement Task Force" (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36582* 27 February 2008).

The PIAC was to be made up of half city staff and half community members. The "Preferred Qualifications for Membership" on the PIAC including: a commitment to the PIAC goals, representation from a "range of perspectives and experiences," diversity "in ethnic, age, gender, geographic and other demographics," experience "in public involvement or community outreach effort" either through work or leadership in a "neighborhood or community organization," and the ability to attend monthly meetings in the evening (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36582* Exhibit A).

ONI hired Afifa Ahmed-Shafi in 2007 to help create and coordinate the PIAC (and to reconvene the City public involvement staff peer support group—the City Public Involvement Network (CPIN)). Ahmed-Shafi brought to her work a strong commitment to social justice, her strong skills in process development and coordination, and her great

commitment and sensitivity to ensuring that the PIAC members represented a wide diversity of communities and experiences, that they felt respected and listened to, and that PIAC meetings and processes were open, welcoming, and productive.

Once the City Council had formally established the PIAC, Ahmed-Shafi recruited a very diverse group of 34 individuals to serve on the body. The PIAC members included some individuals who had served on the PITF and BIP 9, representatives of ONI's DCL Program partner organizations, representatives from fourteen city bureaus, and community members representing a variety of communities, backgrounds, and perspectives. Ahmed-Shafi, over time, ensured that, unlike many other city boards and commissions, PIAC maintained strong and ongoing participation from its representatives from under-represented communities.

PIAC members first convened and began their work in fall 2008. Early on, Ahmed-Shafi led the group in an exercise in which group members reviewed, divided up and sorted all the recommendations from previous reviews of Portland's city government public involvement. Group members organized the recommendations on a "sticky wall" into three groupings. PIAC members created workgroups to further prioritize and work on these recommendations in each area—the workgroups included "Policy," "Process," and "Community." PIAC members have created a number of products since they began meeting in 2008. PIAC's major products are described below.

Public Involvement Principles (2010): One of the first tasks PIAC members worked on was to update the City's 1996 public involvement principles. PIAC members developed the updated principles after reviewing the 1996 principles, the principles

developed by the PITF, and a number of other sets of public involvement principles

developed by different organizations (e.g. National Coalition for Dialogue and

Deliberation (NCDD), the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), and

others). PIAC members intended that the updated principles would clarify the

fundamental elements of good public involvement and provide a strong foundation for

their subsequent work. In August 2010, PIAC members brought their updated set of

public involvement principles to the City Council for approval.

The updated principles included a preamble that established the value of a

governance partnership between city government and the community and identified

effective public involvement as "essential to achieve and sustain this partnership." The

preamble made the case that "effective public involvement" ensures "better City

decisions," leverages community energy and resources, engages the broad diversity of the

community, increases community understanding and support for "public policies and

programs," and increases "the legitimacy and accountability of government actions." The

preamble described the principles "as a road map to guide government officials and staff

in establishing consistent, effective and high quality public involvement across Portland's

city government," and stated that the principles were intended to clarify what community

members can expect from city government, "while retaining flexibility in the way

individual city bureaus carry out their work."

The principles presented general values and expectations for public involvement

under seven headings: "Partnership," "Early Involvement," "Building Relationships and

Community Capacity," "Inclusiveness and Equity," "Good Quality Process Design and

Implementation," "Transparency," and "Accountability." PIAC members recognized that many city staff people would be more likely to implement the principles if they had a better sense of what the principles looked like in operation and some of the positive outcomes of following the principles. To this end, PIAC members included with the principles a chart that identifies "indicators" for each principle that describes what would be happening if the principle were being followed and "outcomes" from following each principle.

The City Council adopted the new City of Portland Public Involvement Principles and the chart by resolution in August 2010 (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36807* 4 August 2010). The City Council resolution formally replaced the City's 1996 Public Involvement Principles with the new updated principles. (The full text of the Public Involvement Principles are inserted below.)

The City Council resolution also assigned to PIAC some follow up tasks. The City Council directed PIAC members to use the updated principles to develop a "a 'public involvement impact statement' modeled on the 'financial impact statement'" that bureaus were required to prepare and submit with any ordinances or resolutions they took to City Council. The City Council directed city bureaus to "complete and include this 'public involvement impact statement' with ordinances and resolutions proposed for Council action." The City Council also directed PIAC to "develop a 'public involvement baseline assessment' questionnaire." The City Council required city bureaus to complete

the questionnaire and return it to PIAC and required PIAC to review the information and

report back to the City Council. [125]

City of Portland Public Involvement Principles
Adopted by the City of Portland, Oregon on August 4, 2010

Preamble
Portland City government works best when community members and government work
as partners. Effective public involvement is essential to achieve and sustain this
partnership and the civic health of our city. This:
- Ensures better City decisions that more effectively respond to the needs and
  priorities of the community.
- Engages community members and community resources as part of the solution.
- Engages the broader diversity of the community–especially people who have not
  been engaged in the past.
- Increases public understanding of and support for public policies and programs.
- Increases the legitimacy and accountability of government actions.

The following principles represent a road map to guide government officials and staff in
establishing consistent, effective and high quality public involvement across Portland's
City government. These principles are intended to set out what the public can expect
from city government, while retaining flexibility in the way individual city bureaus carry
out their work.

City of Portland Public Involvement Principles
- **Partnership**: Community members have a right to be involved in decisions that
  affect them. Participants can influence decision - making and receive feedback on
  how their input was used. The public has the opportunity to recommend projects
  and issues for government consideration.
- **Early Involvement**: Public involvement is an early and integral part of issue and
  opportunity identification, concept development, design, and implementation of
  city policies, programs, and projects.

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[125] Ahmed-Shafi and other PIAC members had prepared draft language for the resolution. They included
language directing PIAC to create the public involvement impact form and baseline assessment in the draft
resolution to give PIAC clear authority and direction from City Council to move forward to implement
these two next steps and to ensure that city bureaus would be required to use the former and fill out and
return the later to PIAC. City Council members reviewed and agreed to include this language in the final
version of the resolution.

- **Building Relationships and Community Capacity**: Public involvement processes invest in and develop long - term, collaborative working relationships and learning opportunities with community partners and stakeholders.
- **Inclusiveness and Equity**: Public dialogue and decision - making processes identify, reach out to, and encourage participation of the community in its full diversity. Processes respect a range of values and interests and the knowledge of those involved. Historically excluded individuals and groups are included authentically in processes, activities, and decision and policy making. Impacts, including costs and benefits, are identified and distributed fairly.
- **Good Quality Process** Design and Implementation: Public involvement processes and techniques are well - designed to appropriately fit the scope, character, and impact of a policy or project. Processes adapt to changing needs and issues as they move forward.
- **Transparency**: Public decision - making processes are accessible, open, honest, and understandable. Members of the public receive the information they need, and with enough lead time, to participate effectively.
- **Accountability**: City leaders and staff are accountable for ensuring meaningful public involvement in the work of city government.

Financial Impact and Public Involvement Statement (FIPIS): City staff, for

many years, had been required to submit a "financial impact statement" as part of the

packet of information that accompanied any ordinances or resolutions they took to the

City Council for action. The PITF had recommended that city staff be required to fill out

a similar form that would describe any public involvement done related to the item of the

ordinance and any effect the public involvement had had on the subject of the ordinance.

PITF members clarified that the purpose of the form "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" (Portland. Office of

Neighborhood Involvement. *Public Involvement Task Force Report.* 2006 36).

PIAC members, supported by Ahmed-Shafi, carefully followed the new public

involvement principles and modeled best practices of public involvement in the way they

involved city staff—the affected "public" in this case—in the design and roll out of the new form. The 14 city bureau representatives on PIAC served as important early reviewers and offered very valuable feedback on the product and on PIAC's outreach to city bureaus, bureau directors, and city commissioners and their staffs. Some City Commissioners and city commissioner staff provided valuable input and said suggested additional questions for the form—they saw the proposed form as a valuable source of information that could give them a heads up on any potential conflicts with the community.

Early contacts with city staff had revealed that many city staff resisted the idea of having to fill out "another form." PIAC members listened and instead opted to add public involvement questions to the existing "financial impact form." Bureau staff already were used to filling out this form. PIAC members worked with the OMF financial analysts who used the existing form to develop a new, combined form. The OMF analysts saw this as an opportunity to update their part of the form. PIAC members and OMF staff tested out the form with a number of volunteer city staff to make sure the final version would be as understandable and easy for staff to fill out as possible.

PIAC members and OMF staff also worked together to provide extensive support to help city staff understand how to fill out the form. Some city staff members of PIAC volunteered to fill out the form for some of their projects to help create a set of real world examples other city staff could look to for guidance. Ahmed -Shafi and PIAC members also developed line-by-line guidance that walked city staff through the form. All this information was made available on the PIAC website. Ahmed-Shafi and other PIAC

members also presented a number of trainings for city staff on how to fill out the form. About 300 city staff participated in the trainings. Many of these city staff were individuals who regularly prepared ordinances for their bureaus but had had little experience with public involvement processes. (This expanded involvement met one of the goals of the project, which was to broaden the awareness of public involvement throughout city government.

The final version, of what became known as the Financial Impact and Public Involvement Statement (FIPIS), asked some fairly basic public involvement questions. One new addition to the old financial impact form was a question about which geographic area or areas of the city the item affected or whether the item just affected internal city government services. The public involvement questions asked whether public involvement was included in the development of the item going before City Council, and if not, why not. If public involvement was done, the form asked what impacts the item was expected to have in the community, which community groups had been involved and how, what impact community input had on the development of the item going before city council, who designed and implemented the community involvement, and who to contact for more information about the public involvement done for the item. The form also asked whether any future community involvement was anticipated for the item and "why or why not." (The full set of FIPIS community involvement questions is provided in Figure 6 below.) The form also required bureau directors to sign off on the form to raise their awareness of community involvement and to ensure that they were aware of the bureau's answers to the questions.

The FIPIS went into effect on July 1, 2011. The City Clerk had updated the City's instruction manual for submitting ordinances and resolutions to City Council with information about the FIPIS and a link to the form. Within a very short period of time, city staff began to fill out, not only the familiar financial impact questions, but also the public involvement questions.

Over the course of the year (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012) city staff submitted over a thousand FIPIS forms with items that went before the City Council. The forms provided interesting insights into scope of the work of city government and the different types of items that went before city council. The FIPIS responses also showed significant variation in responses across bureaus. Some answers were very brief, while other provided a lot of detail. Some bureaus assumed that no public involvement was needed for actions, for which other bureaus had chosen to involve the public.

Some of City Commissioners and their staff reviewed the FIPIS forms and asked city staff about their public involvement at public hearings. Some community members reviewed that forms, and, in some cases, challenged the city bureau's characterization of how their group had been involved and/or their level of support for the project.

In fall 2013, PIAC is considering updating the FIPIS questions and adding some "equity-focused" questions. At the same time, the city's Equity Office is considering seeking City Council approval to require bureaus to fill out a separate form with more in-depth equity questions. The Title VI Civil Rights Program coordinator also is interested in adding Title VI-related questions to the FIPIS.

The FIPIS form met its basic goals of raising awareness about public involvement across city government, generating a data stream of information about city bureau public involvement efforts, and providing increased transparency for the City's work. PIAC members found it challenging to enter and analyze all the data from the FIPIS forms. The full year's worth of data was finally entered into a spreadsheet with the help of a number of ONI interns and students from a Portland State University class. This highlighted for PIAC members that, as they implemented additional projects that would generate follow-up work assignments, PIAC would need additional capacity (e.g. staff or interns) to fulfill all the requirements of these projects.

Figure 6: City of Portland Financial Impact and Public Involvement Statement (FIPIS)—Public Involvement Questions

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

8) Was public involvement included in the development of this Council item (e.g. ordinance, resolution, or report)? Please check the appropriate box below:

☐ YES: Please proceed to Question #9.

☐ NO: Please, explain why below; and proceed to Question #10.

9) If "YES," please answer the following questions:

a) What impacts are anticipated in the community from this proposed Council item?

b) Which community and business groups, under-represented groups, organizations, external government entities, and other interested parties were involved in this effort, and when and how were they involved?

c) How did public involvement shape the outcome of this Council item?

d) Who designed and implemented the public involvement related to this Council item?

e) Primary contact for more information on this public involvement process (name, title, phone, email):

10) Is any future public involvement anticipated or necessary for this Council item? Please describe why or why not.

BUREAU DIRECTOR (Typed name and signature)

Bureau Public Involvement Baseline Assessment: The next PIAC project was

to develop a "baseline assessment" that would gather information on the public

involvement policies and capacity of all the city bureaus.[126] During the winter and spring

of 2012, PIAC members again worked closely with city bureau representatives on PIAC

to develop and field test the baseline assessment questionnaire. PIAC members also

reached out to city bureau directors and city commissioners and their staff to keep them

informed on the project and to ensure their buy-in and support. PIAC did not need to

implement the same level of broad outreach with city staff as had been done for the FIPIS

project, because only a few individuals in each bureau would be filling out the

questionnaire.

PIAC members again tried to make the questionnaire as understandable and

simple as possible to fill out. Most of the questions offered city staff a choice of possible

answers to check off in addition to inviting their comments. The questionnaire was

offered as a "fillable PDF" so staff could fill out and submit the completed questionnaire

on line. The basic instructions that accompanied the questionnaire emphasized that PIAC

was looking for "general information rather than a lot of detail." The instructions also

stressed that "THERE ARE NO 'RIGHT' OR 'WRONG' ANSWERS" and that PIAC

was simply gathering basic information about how different bureaus "manage and

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[126] PIAC members patterned this "baseline assessment" on a similar survey of city bureaus that had been done by the City's internal Customer Service Advisory Committee. The CSAC had chosen to "simply gather information" on customer service policies and practices across city government. For city bureau leaders and staff this was less threatening than having the CSAC identify and target the city bureaus with the worst customer service. By gathering and presenting their information to city bureaus directors and the city council over a few years, they got to see what other bureaus were doing and by the end of the three years, most city bureaus were following at least basic best practices. PIAC members decided to follow this same strategy, which was in keeping with their "We're not the public involvement police; we're here to help you be more effective" approach.

conduct their public involvement" to help PIAC identify "information, training and support that PIAC can provide to help bureaus involve the public more successfully." This was in response to fears expressed by some bureau directors and staff that PIAC and the City Council would be judging their bureaus based on their answers (Portland. Memorandum from Mayor Adams and City Commissioner to Bureau Directors & Senior Bureau Managers. *Announcing Implementation of the 'Bureau Public Involvement Baseline Assessment' Survey*. June 25, 2012).

Mayor Adams and the City Commissioners announced the implementation of the baseline assessment in a memo to bureau directors and senior bureau managers in June 2012. Bureaus were required to fill out and return the questionnaire to PIAC by the end of July 2012.

The Baseline Assessment questionnaire included the following nineteen questions:

Bureau Policies:
1. Does your bureau have a written, overall public involvement policy/strategy/manual?

2. How does your bureau identify when it is appropriate to do public involvement (e.g. for a specific project) and, if so, the appropriate level of public involvement? (check all that apply);

3. Does your bureau create written public involvement plans as part of the development of its projects, programs, and policies?

Staffing:

4. Does your bureau have a designated lead staff person or manager who oversees public involvement for your bureau?

5. How does your bureau conduct its public involvement efforts? (check all that apply)

6. Does your bureau have FTE positions dedicated specifically to "public involvement/community outreach" or "public information" services? (check all that apply)

7. Does the formal job description for your bureau director include language that refers to the need to ensure the public is appropriately involved in the work of the bureau?

Training/Professional Development:

8. What public involvement training and/or mentoring opportunities does your bureau offer to <u>regular bureau staff </u>(vs. trained public involvement staff) who are asked to involve the public in their work or projects? (check all that apply)

Evaluation:

9. How does your bureau evaluate your public involvement processes? (check all that apply)

10. If your bureau evaluates its public involvement processes, how does your bureau use the information? (check all that apply)

Outreach/Communication:

11. What information does your bureau's website offer to help community members learn about your programs and projects? (check all that apply)

12. Which avenues does your bureau offer to the public to comment on your bureau's activities and projects? (check all that apply)

13. What special strategies does your bureau use to involve historically under-represented groups in the community? (e.g. communities of color, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, youth, renters, people who are homeless, elders, LGBTQ, and faith-based communities) (check all that apply)

Advisory Committees:

14. Does your bureau have one central committee (that includes volunteers, community members, and stakeholders) that provides ongoing review and input to the bureau and helps set priorities for your bureau?

15. What other types of advisory committees--with community member participation—does your bureau use?

16. How does your bureau recruit people to serve on its advisory committees? (check all that apply)

Overall Assessment:

17. What are three things your bureau feels it is doing well in involving the public?

18. What are three things your bureau finds most challenging in involving the public?

19. What information, technical assistance, training or other resources would help staff in your bureau involve the public more effectively?

As of Fall 2013, PIAC committee members have compiled the bureau responses to the survey and are preparing a report on the baseline assessment for the City Council and discussing next steps to pursue. One next step being considering is to support an effort to get every city bureau to develop and adopt a bureau-wide community involvement policy and strategy.

Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Guidelines: Mayor Sam Adams, as soon as he took office, required all city bureaus to create Budget Advisory Committees (BACs) with community members to advise them on the development of their bureau budget proposals. In September 2009, the PIAC Process Workgroup members held a focus group with ONI BAC members to get input on what improvements they would like to see in community involvement in the city budget process. The ONI BAC members indicated that their highest priority was to improve the quality and consistency of community involvement early in the process when individual bureaus were developing their own budget proposals (Portland. Public Involvement Advisory Council. *Guidelines for public involvement in City of Portland Bureau Budget Advisory Committees (BACs)*, September 26, 2012 9).

PIAC Process Workgroup members "conducted an in-depth evaluation and review of City bureaus' BAC" processes. Workgroup members observed BAC meetings over a few years. They interviewed bureau "staff and community members and evaluated budget materials…to create guidelines that would improve future processes." PIAC members met with "each of the City Commissioners and/or staff representatives…to review and get their feedback." In June 2012, Process Workgroup members hosted a

meeting with "21 BAC coordinators and City Council staff representing 16 City bureaus" to review the workgroup's proposals and get their feedback (10).

In September 2012, the City Council formally adopted the PIAC "Guidelines for public involvement in City of Portland Bureau Budget Advisory Committees" and directed the City's Office of Management and Finance to "include these seven guidelines as part of its directions to city bureaus for their annual budget process. The City Council also adopted PIAC recommendations to: direct PIAC to "develop a best practices checklist" for BAC staff coordinators, direct PIAC to work with OMF and ONI and bureau BAC staff coordinators to convene community stakeholders after the completion of the City's budget process to debrief the public involvement in the process; and direct PIAC to work with ONI to advocate for funding for "diverse community organizations to deliver culturally specific engagement of the City's historically underrepresented populations in the City's budget process" (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36960* 26 September 2012).

The BAC guidelines developed by PIAC and adopted by the City Council covered seven topics described below.

Community and labor representation: This guideline required bureau BACs to include a "minimum of 50% community representation (non-City employees)" that would represent a "broad spectrum reflective of the community served…." This guideline allowed a city commissioner in charge of bureau to authorize exemptions to the BAC membership requirement if necessary and allowed bureaus "four years from Council adoption to build the capacity to meet these expectations" (3).

Creation of bureau BAC budget process websites: This guideline required each bureau to make certain information available on its bureau budget website, including: "Information about BAC meetings, including dates, times, and locations;" "Meeting notices, agendas, and minutes" that are posted in a "timely manner;" "significant materials provided to BAC members in advance of meetings or within a reasonable period of time afterwards;" the list of BAC members, contact information for the BAC coordinator; information about how to become a BAC member, expectations for BACs members, and opportunities for public comment; links to significant budget documents, including the bureau's previous year budget and current requested budget, the Mayor's proposed budget, presentations to City Council, and any minority reports (3-4).

Maintenance of contact information list: This guideline required bureaus to "maintain a contact list where community members may sign-up to receive budget related information…." (4).

ADA and Limited English Proficiency accessibility: This guideline required bureaus to ensure adequate funding to comply with requirements to "reasonably modify policies and procedures and provide auxiliary aids/services" to enable people with disabilities to participate and to provide "reasonable interpretation and translation language services" to fully comply with "U.S. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act" (4).

Handouts and presentation materials available to public: This guideline emphasized that all BAC meetings are public meetings. The guideline asserted that members of the public have the right to view documents provided to BAC members at

the BAC meetings, and bureaus should have copies of "handouts and presentation materials" available for members of the public attending the meetings (4).

Public comment allowed at all meetings: This guideline required bureaus to provide an opportunity for public comment at every BAC meeting (5).

Minority budget reports: This guideline required bureaus to allow "two or more BAC members" to "write a minority report," which the bureau must include with the bureau's budget proposal (5).

The PIAC formal BAC guidelines document also described in more detail: the best practices checklist that PIAC was directed to develop; the recommendation that a minimum of $25,000 be provided in future budget processes to fund ONI's DCL Program partner organizations and other ONI underrepresented community partner organizations to design and implement "culturally-specific strategies for engaging their constituencies in the City's budget development process;" and the recommendation to convene a community stakeholder meeting to provide advice to PIAC, OMF, ONI, and BAC bureau staff liaisons on "improving equitable engagement of different communities in the budget process, the development of tools to evaluate the effectiveness of community involvement in the "citywide budget process and individual bureau BACs, and improving "equitable community engagement" in the budget processes of individual city bureaus (5-6).

As of fall 2013, PIAC continues to work on implementing these final three recommendations.

Comprehensive Plan—Community Involvement PEG: One of the PITF's high priority recommendations was to update the Portland Comprehensive Plan goals and policies on community involvement. The opportunity to implement this recommendation arose when BPS began to update the City's comprehensive plan in 2012 as the next step after the completion of visionPDX and the Portland Plan.[127]

BPS staff took a different approach to involving the community in the Comp Plan update than they had with the Portland Plan. BPS staff consulted with ONI staff on the process design. They went on to create a number of "policy experts groups" (PEGs) to work on different policy areas for the plan. The PEGs included, not only City staff, but also significant numbers of community members and stakeholders. BPS hired professional facilitators to facilitate the PEG meetings in the hope that this would improve the openness and functioning of these groups.

Some BPS staff acted as strong advocates for better process within the agency. Marty Stockton, who BPS originally hired to support public involvement in the Portland plan and who served on the Equity TAG, went on to support community involvement in the Comp Plan update. Stockton also was a PIAC member. Stockton and her supervisor Deborah Stein, who managed the BPS District Liaison Planning Program, acted as strong voices within BPS for opening up the process and applying lessons learned from the mistakes and successes of the Portland Plan. Senior management at BPS also appeared to be more open to community involvement after their experiences during the Portland Plan. The Portland Plan's major focus on equity helped raise awareness of disparities and the

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[127] The Comprehensive Plan update, which began in 2012, was the first time Portland has engaged in a full review and revision of the city's comprehensive plan since the plan was first adopted in 1980.

need to do a better job of involving historically under-represented communities in decision making. Mayor Adams also had required the BPS director and senior managers to participate in intensive equity trainings during the Portland Plan process.

One of the PEGs was dedicated to updating the "citizen participation" goal in the Portland Comprehensive Plan. This group—the Community Involvement PEG (CI PEG)—began meeting in June 2012. The majority of the CI PEG members were city staff and community members who also served on the PIAC Policy Workgroup. Stockton and an ONI staff person co-lead the group. (Both were PIAC members.) Stockton also recruited additional city staff, community members and a staff person with the Multnomah County Office of Citizen Involvement to serve on the group. The PIAC Policy Workgroup took on the Comp Plan update process as its primary function and changed its name to the "Comp Plan Workgroup." The members of this workgroup met in between the CI PEG meetings and served as a working committee to support the activities of the CI PEG.

The CI PEG members met monthly from June 2012 to June 2013. They reviewed many different documents that described community involvement principles and best practices. They developed a community survey that invited community members to share what they thought was working and not working about community involvement in land use planning and development review in Portland (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Community Involvement Policy Expert Group. *Survey of Community Involvement in Portland's Planning and Development* [fall 2012]).The CI PEG members also participated in community workshops hosted by BPS.

The responses to the CI PEG survey revealed many themes and recommendations similar to those community members had offered over the previous 40 years. The most common themes called for "authentic" or "genuine" involvement that was "not just for show" and had an impact; accessible processes through the provision of child care, transportation, and convenient meeting times and locations; improved quality, consistency and coordination of community involvement across city government; improved city staff capacity and skills to design and implement community involvement processes and work effectively with community members and organizations; improved understanding, valuing of, and commitment to quality community involvement by city elected leaders, broader involvement of the range of communities and perspectives in Portland; more effective and varied outreach methods that are culturally appropriate and relevant to the communities being engaged and more fun; involvement of all affected people; the building of trust, relationships, and partnerships between city staff and community groups; and better use of Internet and web-based tools.

Survey responses also called for improved community involvement process design, which included: ensuring that processes are design to fit the particular need; adequate time for people to get up to speed and participate in a meaningful way; and advisory committees that have broad representation, are well supported, and have an impact. Respondents also called for early involvement of community members to give people the opportunity to be constructive versus adversarial; a role for the community setting priorities for city government budget allocations and projects; greater transparency regarding what community members can and cannot affect, accurate

recording and reporting of community comments, clarity on who makes the decisions and how community input will be and is used; and education and support to strengthen community capacity to understand projects and the City's work and the needs and perspectives of other groups and interests in their community.[128]

CI PEG members used the information they gathered to begin to draft new goals and policies for community involvement. After BPS ended the work of the PEGs in June 2013, BPS agreed to let the PIAC Comp Plan Workgroup (which included a number of the most active CI PEG members) to continue to refine the goal and policy language during summer and fall 2013.

The CI PEG and PIAC Comp Plan Workgroup members developed a goal and policies intended formally to establish the "citizen participation program" required by Oregon State Planning Goal 1. They proposed that this language would be included in the Comprehensive Plan Chapter 8: Administration and Implementation. The group members also drafted new and expanded goals and policies for Chapter 1: Community Involvement. These goals and policies are described below.

Community Involvement Program: CI PEG and PIAC Comp Plan Workgroup members determined that goal and policy language was needed to ensure that the City of Portland implemented the "citizen involvement program" required by Oregon State Planning Goal 1: Citizen Participation" since 1974. Their reading of Goal 1 was that the "program" needed to include: creation of a "community involvement committee," adoption of goals and policies related to community involvement, and the development

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[128] The survey responses summarized above come from the responses to the CI PEG Survey, "Question 26: Changes needed: What could the city do to improve its community engagement approach?" compiled by CI PEG members in winter 2013.

and maintenance of a community involvement manual to assist city staff in correctly

complying with the community involvement goals and policies.

Stockton and other planning staff saw a strategic opportunity to place the goal and

policy language related to the "community involvement program" in the Comprehensive

Plan Chapter 8: Administration and Implementation, rather than the community

involvement chapter. They felt that placing the language in this chapter would recast the

creation of the "community involvement program" as an administrative requirement of

the Comprehensive Plan and increase the likelihood that it would be implemented.

The workgroup members proposed the following draft goal to be included in

Chapter 8:

> "**Community involvement program**. Require and implement a
> Community Involvement Program to provide an active, ongoing, and
> systematic process for community participation throughout planning and
> decision making. Enable community members to identify, consider, and
> act upon a broad range of issues within land use, transportation, parks,
> sewer and water systems, natural resources, and implementing measures."

Draft policies that accompanied this goal required the establishment and support

of a "'committee for community involvement' [CIC] to: oversee the community

involvement program;"[129] develop and regularly review and update a "Community

Involvement Manual;" review and provide "feedback to City staff on community

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[129]PIAC Comp Plan Workgroup members strongly advocated for the CIC to be a separate committee. Oregon State Planning Goal 1 recommended that jurisdictions create a separate CIC but allowed jurisdictions to designate their planning commission or city or county council as the CIC. In the past, the Portland Planning Commission had played this role. Workgroup members argued that the Planning Commission had a conflict of interest in being able to fairly evaluate community involvement in planning activities because the commission was one of the decision-making bodies in the process. Planning Commission members also had many other duties and would be unlikely to have the capacity or expertise to carry out all the responsibilities of the "community involvement program." Workgroup members also argued that, if any jurisdiction in Oregon should have the capacity to create and sustain a separate CIC, it was Portland, the largest jurisdiction in the state.

involvement processes for individual projects, before, during, and at the conclusion of a project;" and to periodically evaluate the "effectiveness of the Community Involvement Program."

Another draft policy required the City to "Ensure adequate funding and humans resources" that would be "sufficient to make community involvement an integral part of the planning process." This language reproduced similar language in Oregon State Planning Goal 1.

If this goal and these policies are adopted and implemented they significantly will increase the capacity of City government to involve the community in planning processes and decision making in many areas of city government. The creation of an ongoing CIC would provide another body within city government, in addition to PIAC, that would have the focus and expertise to review and advocate for improvements in community involvement.

Comp Plan Workgroup members also developed a number of goals and policies that were proposed as the content of a new Chapter 1: Community Involvement. CI PEG and Comp Plan Workgroup members had advocated for BPS to make the community involvement c chapter, "Chapter 1," to mirror the position of community involvement as Goal 1 among the state planning goals, and to symbolically raise the visibility and status of community involvement in the Comprehensive Plan. The CI PEG and Comp Plan Workgroup members decided to prepare a set of community involvement goals and then divide the policies into two groups: "on-going policies" and "project-specific policies." These are described below.

Community Involvement Goals: The community involvement goals were intended to establish formal expectations for the values that would guide community involvement in planning and decision making related to the Comp Plan and the basic characteristics of community involvement processes. Some of the goals were familiar, such as: "Community involvement as a partnership;" "Value of community wisdom and participation;" Transparency and Accountability;" Ongoing and diverse participation; and "Accessible and effective participation."

One of the goals focused on "Social justice and equity," inspired in part by the social justice elements of the AICP Code of Ethics[130] and the Portland Plan overarching "equity" theme. The draft goal stated that "The City seeks social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all Portlanders, recognizing a special responsibility to involve underserved and historically underrepresented communities in planning. The City actively works to improve its policies, institutional practices, and decisions to achieve more equitable distribution of burdens and benefits."

A final goal focused on "Building strong civic infrastructure" and reinforced long-standing recommendations of the important of building the capacity of community members and organizations to participate. The draft goal stated that, "The City recognizes that it is essential to develop and support civic structures and processes that encourage active and meaningful community involvement and strengthens the capacity of individuals and communities to participate in planning processes and civic life in

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[130] American Institute of Certified Planners. Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. Revised October 3, 2009: A**:** Principles to Which We Aspire, 1. Our Overall Responsibility to the Public, f) "We shall seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs."

Portland." This goal harkens back to the original creation of Portland's formal

neighborhood system partly as an important means to help achieve orderly and effective

land use planning.

In addition to these draft goals, the Comp Plan Workgroup members developed a

number of more specific community involvement policies. They approached the

development of these policies in a new way. In the past, most policies related to

community involvement had focused on the characteristics of good community

involvement for individual involvement projects. The Comp Plan Workgroup members

determined that policies also were needed to ensure that a city bureau—especially BPS—

developed and maintained ongoing organizational capacity and a culture that supported

high quality community involvement across all individual community involvement

projects. The workgroup members thus developed both "ongoing" policies and "project-

specific" policies. These are described below.

Community Involvement Policies—Ongoing: The workgroup members' six draft

"ongoing" policies focused on: "Partners in decision making," "Early involvement,"

"Accountability, "Process assessment," "Community capacity building," and

"Professional Development."

The partnership policy required city staff to "Enhance partnerships, coordination,

and engagement of organizations, institutions, and agency partners." Sub-policies under

this policy required city staff to "Continuously build and maintain partnerships" and

coordinate with neighborhood and business associations, "underserved and historically

underrepresented communities," and other governmental jurisdictions.

The "early involvement" policy made a point of requiring improved "opportunities for interested and affected community members to participate early in planning and decision making." The policy language went on to specific that this included involving community members in process design and the identification of issues and opportunities, as well providing opportunities for community member to propose projects and helping prioritize which projects the City works on, and project implementation.

The "accountability" policy emphasized that city staff must "ensure" that community-contributed "ideas, preferences, and recommendations" shape "planning and decision making" in a meaningful way. Sub-policies also required that city staff "Document and conscientiously consider" community input and "Ensure that community members receive feedback from decision makers, including the rationale for decisions." A sub-policy also required the strengthening of communication "among City Council, the Planning and Sustainability Commission, City staff, and community members."

The "process assessment" policy required the City to continually assess and strive to improve the effectiveness of community involvement processes. This policy recognized that BPS staff often include some form of evaluation of their individual processes, but that no mechanism existed to look at all of evaluations to identify and share best practices or to identify areas in need of improvement.

The "community capacity building" policy sought to recognize that every time city staff involve the community in a project, they have the opportunity to build the skills and willingness of community members to participate in future community involvement

processes. Conversely, poorly designed and implemented community involvement processes can discourage community members from participating other City processes in the future.

The "professional development" policy required the City to "Provide professional development opportunities to ensure staff have the tools, attitudes, skills, and experience needed to design and implement processes" that involve the full diversity of the community "in ways that are meaningful and appropriate to them." Workgroup members also discussed including policy language that would require the City to provide staff people with the time to meet with and develop longer-term understanding of and relationships and trust with different community groups.

Community Involvement Policies—Project Specific: The workgroup members developed ten draft policies focused on individual community involvement projects. These included: "Representation," "Roles and responsibilities," "Transparency," "Process design," "Adaptability," "Accessibility," "Information for effective participation," "Data collection and analysis," "Process evaluation," and "Best practices and innovation."

Many of these policies repeated similar guidance from the past, with some exceptions. The "Representation" policy included language that requires city staff to research and identify the demographics, needs and priorities of, and trends affecting, the affected community. The "Data collection" policy required staff to "Actively involve community members in inventorying, mapping, data analysis, and the development of alternatives." The "Process evaluation" policy required city staff to evaluate each

community involvement process "from both the City and participants' perspectives" and to "consider collected feedback and lessons learned in future involvement efforts."

The PIAC Comp Plan Workgroup members will continue to refine the language—with input from the full PIAC group—and will plan to submit their final proposed draft language to BPS in December 2013. BPS management and staff will edit this work and incorporate a final version into the public draft of the full Comp Plan update that will be shared with the community, most likely in winter 2014. Workgroup members will work with the full PIAC to develop PIAC's formal comments on the public draft to share with the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission. A further revised version of the Comp Plan update then will be submitted to and reviewed by City Council.

Future PIAC activities: PIAC Comp Plan Workgroup members and other interested PIAC members have offered to help BPS and the members of whatever body is created or designated as the CIC to develop the community involvement manual. The manual is intended to provide guidance for city staff in how to meet the Comp Plan community involvement goals and policies. PIAC members anticipate that this manual could evolve into a manual that could serve all city bureaus. Comp Plan Workgroup members also have prioritized working with BPS to engage in a broad review of the City of Portland's formal public notification policies and practices—something community members have been asking for since the 1970s.

Other future PIAC projects are likely to include: a strong focus on developing best practices materials and organizing ongoing community involvement trainings for

city staff; support for each city bureau to develop a bureau-specific community involvement policy and overall strategy that fits the particular work, needs, and culture of their bureau; an update of the FIPIS form with additional "equity" questions; a follow-up survey to the Baseline Assessment to measure progress; and, possibly, a review of the City of Portland's boards and commissions system. PIAC members also have discussed developing the capacity to provide some consulting services to city bureaus on the design of their community involvement projects and to review and evaluate individual community involvement projects, after they are completed, to identify important "lessons learned," when requested to by city bureaus or community members.

The untimely and tragic passing of Ahmed-Shafi in late July 2013 has been a painful and significant setback for PIAC and the PIAC members. PIAC members quickly began to realize the full scope of how important Ahmed-Shafi's efforts were to ensure strong and compelling recruitment of new PIAC members. She spent a lot of time meeting with potential PIAC members—especially people from communities of color and other historically under-represented groups—to learn about their skills and interests and to help them feel listened to and respected. This extensive upfront work was crucial to convincing people that it would be worth their time to volunteer to serve on PIAC. She also ensured that PIAC meetings always were well designed, welcoming and productive. Ahmed-Shafi's wise and subtle strategic guidance helped the group sift through and move forward on good ideas. She also was very skilled at steering the group away from ideas and proposals that were not as constructive and less likely to help move PIAC

toward achieving its greater long-term goals. She is deeply missed by PIAC members and ONI staff and many other people in City government and the community.

Lessons of PIAC: The PIAC has proved to be a very effective vehicle for implementing the recommendations of the PITF (2003-04) and for beginning to shift the City's community involvement, policies, structures, practices.

Ongoing, Formal Body: The PIAC has proved the PITF correct in its identification of the strong strategic value of an ongoing formal city board/commission with a clear mandate from the City Council. Whereas previous reviews of city government (ASR, PITF, BIP 9, and Community Connect) all were temporary committees that did their work, issued reports and then disbanded, PIAC's ongoing status allows PIAC members to devote the significant energy and time it takes to design, implement, and sustain the many different elements of the comprehensive PITF strategic plan. PIAC's ongoing status also allows PIAC members the time needed to develop the relationships, shared understanding, and trust needed to move ahead together. Past efforts have shown that making recommendations for change is not enough—somebody has to work on implementing the recommendations.

Strategic Approach: PIAC also has benefited greatly from the fact that the PITF and other studies already had laid out a comprehensive strategic plan and action steps for improving city government community involvement. PIAC has been able to focus most of its energy on designing, advocating for, and implementing policies and programs.

Broad and sustained change requires many different actions. PIAC members saw the public involvement principles as an important foundation for their work but

recognized that much more needed to be done. The PITF recommended many different action items, some focused on changing policies and structures in city government, others on raising awareness and increased the willingness and capacity of city staff to work with the community, others focused on communication, accountability, and evaluation. PIAC's approach encompasses developing new policies and guidelines, best practices identification and development, training, data gathering, and evaluation.

Membership: PIAC's membership model of including half city staff and half community members also has proven to be very effective in allowing PIAC to serve as a forum for city staff and community members to build understanding, trust, and relationships over time. PIAC members have developed a shared understanding of each other's perspectives, hopes, values and aspirations related to community involvement and the work of individual city bureaus. PIAC serves as an important sounding board for ideas and an early testing ground for proposed policies and programs. PIAC's dual community and city government membership also gives the group's recommendations much greater credibility with City Council members, bureau directors, and community leaders—each can feel that someone who understands their interests has been part of the conversation.

PIAC membership also includes a number of individuals—both community members and city staff—who have served on past system reviews and bring valuable institutional memory to PIAC's work.

PIAC is unusual, for a city committee or body, in that participation by community members and representatives of historically under-represented communities has remained

strong and consistent. This significantly contrasts with the more usual pattern in other city processes in which community members, especially from diverse communities, tend to drop off and stop participating over time.

Think Tank: PIAC also has provided, for the first time in Portland, a body that can act as the community involvement "think tank" recommended by Community Connect and supported by city bureau directors. PIAC members look for best practices from what Portland city bureaus already are doing and seek out additional good ideas from other jurisdictions in the region and around the country.

Staff Support: The PIAC experience again shows the importance of highly skilled and effective staff support. Ahmed-Shafi worked very effectively and strategically behind the scenes to recruit and support the ongoing participation PIAC's very diverse members. She guided and supporting the work of the PIAC steering committee, helped design and implement PIAC outreach and advocacy efforts around different PIAC products and initiatives, and generally empowered PIAC members so that they felt listened to and that their participation was making a difference.

Governance and Process Design: Ahmed-Shafi helped ensure that PIAC meetings always were open, inclusive, welcoming, and respectful, and modeled community involvement and process design best practices. PIAC members took the lead—with Ahmed-Shafi's support—in setting priorities for the group and in developing the group's products. The group's collaborative leadership model reinforced the sense of ownership PIAC members feel for the process. PIAC has no chair or co-chairs. Ahmed-Shafi worked with the PIAC steering committee and the leads of the different PIAC

workgroups to develop the PIAC meeting agendas. She facilitated the meetings in a very low-key style that emphasized workgroup reports, announcements, and leadership of group discussions by the PIAC members themselves and honored the energy and choices of the group. PIAC is not staff driven, but rather is group member driven and staff supported.

Helping vs. Judging: PIAC members have been careful and deliberate about framing their work as "helping" city staff and leaders learn the value of community involvement and how to work effectively with community members, rather than judging how well city bureaus are involving the community. PIAC members often say "We're not the public involvement police." "We're here to help city staff be more successful in doing their work." To the extent possible, PIAC members want city staff to see them as a resource rather than a threat.

PIAC members have chosen to leave the "judging" and enforcement to others, such as the Ombudsman and Auditor, individual community members and community organizations, city leaders, and peer pressure. PIAC has focused on identifying and advocating for best practices and increasing the transparency of city government community involvement.

Challenges: PIAC members always attempt to be sensitive to resistance from city staff and not to push hard enough to trigger a backlash. PIAC members listen to concerns expressed by city staff and make adjustments, while still moving forward on PIAC's overall strategic agenda. PIAC members also look for opportunities to collaborate with other efforts, such as the update of the Comprehensive Plan, the development of the City

of Portland Title VI policy and program (which incorporated the PIAC public involvement principles and many other PIAC identified best practices) and the work of the city's Office of Equity and Human Rights, which also is advocating for city bureaus to develop equity policies and strategies and report on their equity efforts—which include better community involvement.

PIAC has identified as a major challenge the limited capacity of the group to expand its work without additional staff support. PIAC members all have other responsibilities either as community members or city staff. PIACs experience with the FIPIS and Baseline Assessment showed the need for people to enter data, analyze it, and develop reports that present out findings and recommendations. The development of a wide range of best practices materials and training also will require additional support.

The tragic and unexpected passing of Ahmed-Shafi in July 2013 poses a significant challenge for PIAC. Ahmed-Shafi played a major role in the creation and effective functioning of the group. In fall 2013, ONI is in the process of hiring someone to fill the Ahmed-Shafi's position. ONI did extensive outreach to PIAC members and others to get their feedback to better understand the particular skills Ahmed-Shafi brought to her work that helped maintain the group's high and very diverse participation and supported PIAC's strong productivity and effectiveness.

Office of Equity and Human Rights

The Portland City Council created the City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights in September 2011. The City of Seattle had created its "Race and Social Justice Initiative" in 2009. During the Portland Plan process, Equity TAG members and

city staff from Commissioner Fritz's office, ONI, and other city bureaus, joined with representatives of the DCL Program organizations and other communities of color organizations and invited RSJI representatives to come to Portland to describe their program and work, and a number of Portlanders travelled to Seattle to participation in RSJI's annual conference. Many hoped that Portland could implement a similar program.

The RSJI website describes the initiative as follows:

"The Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in City government. RSJI builds on the work of the civil rights movement and the ongoing efforts of individuals and groups in Seattle to confront racism. The Initiative's long term goal is to change the underlying system that creates race-based disparities in our community and to achieve racial equity" (Seattle. Race and Social Justice Initiative. *About RSJI*. Web. <http://www.seattle.gov/rsji/about.htm> .Downloaded October 24, 2013).

In January 2011, Mayor Adams proposed the creation of an Office of Equity in his annual State of the City address. Adams and Fritz convened a committee of community members and city staff to help develop a vision and overall workplan for the new office. The City Council formally created the Office of Equity and Human Rights in September 2011. The new office incorporated and staff of the Office of Human Relations created by Potter in 2008. The *Oregonian* reported that Adams and Fritz would "launch a search for a director for the office, which will have a $1.1 million annual budget and seven to 10 staff members."

Not all the City Council members were enthusiastic about this new office. The *Oregonian* reported that "Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who had expressed reservations about the office, said he wants to see tangible results—not just 'brown bag lunches and film series.' 'Money does matter, Saltzman said. 'I'll be watching closely.'"

Commissioner Randy Leonard, during the city budget process the previous spring, had made light of Adams proposal to create an Office of Equity and had suggested that he might create an "Office of Awesomeness" (Schmidt. *Oregonian* 4 May 2011). An Oregonian editorial during the budget process recognized that over $600,000 of the proposed $1.1 million in funding proposed for the new Equity Office was already budgeted for the Office of Human Relations, which would merge with the new Equity Office. The *Oregonian* wondered whether, instead of creating a new office, the City could team up with Multnomah that already had a similar equity office ("Watching each other's back." *Oregonian.* 9 May 2011).

Some ONI staff transferred to the new office, including Judith Mowry—along with her dispute resolution and high stakes meeting facilitation work, and Patrick Philpott—who staffed the Portland Commission on Disabilities. The new office also housed the Human Rights Commission, established under Potter. The director of the new office was hired in the in winter 2012, and a workplan for the new office was unveiled in July 2012.

The overall mission of the Office of Equity and Human Rights is to provide "education and technical support to City staff and elected officials, leading to recognition and removal of systemic barriers to fair and just distribution of resources, access and opportunity, starting with issues of race and disability." The Office of Equity and Human Rights reports that its objectives is to:

1. Promote equity and reduce disparities within City government;

2. Provide guidance, education and technical assistance to all bureaus as they develop sustainable methods to build capacity in achieving equitable outcomes and service;

3. Work with community partners to promote equity and inclusion within Portland and throughout the region, producing measurable improvements and disparity reductions;

4. Support human rights and opportunities for everyone to achieve their full potential;

5. Work to resolve issues rooted in bias and discrimination, through research, education, and interventions (Portland. Office of Equity and Human Rights. *About OEHR*. Web. <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/62229> . Downloaded November 1, 2013).

Some community activists remained concerned about whether the Office of Equity and Human Rights would fulfill the full vision of what community activists hoped it would accomplish. The Urban League of Portland (which developed the very influential "State of Black Oregon" report) convened a "working group of city staff and community partners, including organizations of color, health advocates, and academics" in January 2011—the "Partnership for Racial Equity"—which developed an independent "Racial Equity Strategy Guide." The group intended this document as an "initial overview" for city bureaus and staff on "how to begin implementing a racial equity strategy." The guide included information on "What equity means in day-to-day practice;" "How to develop an equity lens and strategy;" "When to use important

resources, such as the Office of Equity and Human Rights, Public Invovlement Advisory council and the Civil Rights Title VI program for technical assistance;" and "Examples of local and national model equity work" (Urban League of Portland. *Racial Equity Strategy Guide*. Web. <http://ulpdx.org/racialequitystrategyguide/> . Downloaded November 1, 2013).

In fall 2013, the Urban League is preparing to reconvene the Partnership for Racial Equity members and invite city leaders and staff from the Office of Equity and Human Rights, ONI, and the OMF Title VI program to report on how they are working together to achieve the goals of the Racial Equity Strategy.

<u>Title II ADA and Title VI Civil Rights Program</u>

The City of Portland's Title II and Title VI programs both are managed by the City's Office of Management and Finance. The City of Portland also took another important step toward improving equity and the involvement of under-represented communities in decision making when it adopted the City of Portland Title VI Civil Rights Plan in June 2013. The Title VI Plan incorporated the City of Portland Public Involvement Principles (developed by PIAC) and emphasized that "It is the policy of the City of Portland to involve the public in important decisions by providing for early, open and continuous public participation in and access to key planning and project decision-making processes." The Plan also stresses that city decision making processes need to be designed to "prevent disproportionate adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, as a result of any City project or activity on

minority and low-income populations" (Portland. Office of Management and Finance. *2013 City of Portland Civil Rights Title VI Plan*. May 2013 3-4).

The City of Portland Title II ADA Program supports the City of Portland's efforts to "ensure that every program, service, benefit, activity and facility operated or funded by the City of Portland is accessible to people with disabilities" and "eliminate barriers that may prevent persons with disabilities from accessing our facilities or participating in City programs, services and activities (Portland. Office of Management and Finance. *Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Program*. Web. <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bibs/62112> . Downloaded November 1, 2013).

Both programs are backed up by strong legal requirements that provide added leverage to ensure that particular affected communities are considered and have a voice in decision making processes and that these processes are accessible.

East Portland Action Plan

The East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) offers a compelling example of how to create an inclusive process that involves a wide spectrum of community groups and interests in developing a district plan and then involve the community in advocating for and helping implement the plan. The EPAP models many of the principles and best practices of public involvement learned over many years in Portland.

The work of the EPAP Implementation Committee offers is an interesting model that is informing the discussion about the future form of district-level structures in Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system.

The EPAP included two phases. In the first phase, City planners worked with a diverse committee of community members to create the plan, which included strategies and action items. In the second phase, these same community members decided to keep their group together to advocate for and assist with the implementation of the plan in their community.

Origin: East Portland encompasses a large area of land that the City of Portland annexed in 1980s and 1990s. East Portland has experienced rapid population grow and significant increases in racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. The area also is transitioning from its previous "suburban and semi-rural form into an increasingly urban community" (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. *East Portland Action Plan*. Adopted February 18, 2009 1). Community members in east Portland have long complained that the City of Portland and other government entities have not paid attention to their community's needs and challenges.

The EPAP project "was initiated following a meeting between staff from [the City of] Portland, Multnomah County and (then) State Speaker of the House Jeff Merkley." (Speaker Merkley's legislative district included the east Portland area.)[131] Merkley "identified several livability issues that he believe were moving the [east Portland] community toward a 'tipping point' and warranted attention. Some of these issues included a shifting of poverty to the area, the quality and design of new housing, missed opportunities for economic development, a lack of investment, and concerns about public safety." At the time, the Portland Bureau of Planning was completing the East Portland Review, a study of the "area's demographic change, development trends, and community

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[131] Oregonians elected Jeff Merkley to the U.S. Senate in 2008.

issues." The review validated many of Speaker Merkley's concerns and those expressed by east Portland community for many years (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Memo from Susan Anderson to Mayor Adams and City Council. *East Portland Action Plan Annual Report*. April 2, 2010 1).

The East Portland Review found:

- "Population growth is increasing faster than the rest of Portland, with larger households than Portland on average but declining median incomes compared with Portland overall."

- "The area is becoming more ethnically and racially diverse compared to Portland overall and is expected to continue this trend."

- "The scale and appearance of new development is out of character with existing development."

- "The transportation network lacks connectivity as well as amenities for walking and biking, and is becoming congested in areas."

- "David Douglas School District, the largest of five school districts serving the area, is seriously over capacity and concerned about the strain on programs and facility capacity attributable to the continued influx of families to the area" (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Memo from Susan Anderson to Mayor Adams and City Council. *East Portland Action Plan Annual Report*. April 2, 2010 1).

EPAP process and plan: The EPAP process formally started in started in December 2007, when Portland Mayor Tom Potter, Multnomah County Chair Ted

Wheeler and Speaker Merkley convened the first meeting of the EPAP Committee. The committee included a diverse group of 18 neighborhood association, community, and business representatives. The committee also included "elected officials and representatives from the City of Portland, Multnomah County, TriMet, the State of Oregon and Metro as well as school districts and key non-profit agencies working in East Portland." The committee was staffed by individuals from the City's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and a consultant team. The committee met monthly from December 2007 to July 2008 (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. *East Portland Action Plan.* 2009 7).

The EPAP Committee focused on identifying "gaps in policies, services and improvements in the area" and identified opportunities to bridge these gaps and improve the livability of east Portland (EPAP Feb 2009 2). The final EPAP document hundreds of "strategies and actions" intended to guide and direct "public agencies, non-profit organizations, and businesses and individuals" to address problems and move forward on opportunities in East Portland (Portland. Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Memo from Susan Anderson to Mayor Adams and City Council. *East Portland Action Plan Annual Report.* April 2, 2010 1). The EPAP identified strategies and action steps in the following policy areas: Housing and Development Policy; Commercial and Mixed-Use Development; Transportation; Public Infrastructure and Utilities; Parks and Open Space, Natural Areas and Environmental; Economic Development and Workforce Training; Education Infrastructure and Programs; Public Safety; Safety Net Services and Housing

Assistance; Community Building; and Equity (Portland. Bureau of Planning and
Sustainability. *East Portland Action Plan.* 2009 12).

The Portland City Council adopted the final EPAP document in February 2009.
The City Council also had "appropriated $500,000 in its fiscal year 2008-09 budget" to
support the implementation of the EPAP (Portland. City Council. *Resolution 36682*. 18
February 2009).[132]

East Portland Plan Implementation Committee: After the Portland City
Council adopted the EPAP, community members who had served on the EPAP
Committee agreed to keep working together to advocate for and assist in the
implementation of the EPAP strategies and action steps.

One of the group's first actions was to support the hiring of Lore Wintergreen as
the EPAP Advocate to support the work of the implementation committee. Wintergreen
was an experienced community organizer and had worked extensively with under-
represented communities in Portland. She also brought to the position a strong passion for
social justice and equity and strong skills in group process and policy advocacy.
Wintergreen works out of the East Portland Neighborhood Office. Her official duties
including convening and supporting the monthly general EPAP meetings; working with
the EPAP Co-Chairs to "develop and distribute" monthly EPAP meeting agendas,
reports, and background materials; preparing notes of the meetings; and developing
"documents for review and comment" (East Portland Action Plan. *Structure*. [no date] 5).

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[132] The Multnomah County Commission adopted the EPAP in July 2010 (Multnomah County Resolution
2010-211, July 22, 2010).

EPAP Committee members established a structure for their work that included a general committee and many other committees focused on different elements of the EPAP. Committee members adopted guiding principles intended to ensure that the work of the EPAP Implementation Committee would be open and welcoming to the full diversity of people, groups, and communities in east Portland and would provide the structure and support needed to move the EPAP agenda forward.

The EPAP Implementation Committee adopted "guiding principles" that stated: "The EPAP is dedicated to:"

- "Value the past and consider the future in making decisions that contribute to improved livability in East Portland."

- "Build lasting community leadership and relationships as a means to laying the groundwork for successful implementation of the Action Plan."

- "Develop avenues for partnering by creating opportunities to bridge the work being done amongst EPAP commi8ttees and representatives, communities, and neighborhoods, thus building upon common values with respectful collaboration."

- "Openness of input and ideas and to respect and value differences of opinion, ideals, and time commitments with civility."

- "Ensure opportunities to participate are equitably provided across the spectrum of all interest groups and geographic areas, which may include the provision of translation, interpretation, and childcare."

- "Provide a hospitable and welcoming environment to all attendees."

- "Prioritize the involvement of underrepresented communities."

- "Work towards the furtherance of actions and strategies as specifically described in the Action Plan" (East Portland Action Plan. *Structure* 1).

Participation on the EPAP General Committee and the other topic-related committees is "open to residents, Neighborhood Association members, business people, Business Association members, businesses, nonprofit organizations, special districts and service providers in the [EPNO] area." The EPAP General Committee meets monthly. An orientation session is offered at the end of each general monthly EPAP meeting to new participants learn about EPAP and the many committees working on difference aspects of implementing the strategies and action steps in the plan (East Portland Action Plan. *Structure* 1-2).

All meetings, including those of the General Committee and other committees are open to the public. "Committee and Subcommittee chairs are responsible for the scheduling of their respective…meetings and for keeping the EPAP Advocate informed of any schedule changes in a oversee and guide the process (East Portland Action Plan. *Structure* 2).

Anyone in the community can join one of the EPAP committees. Participants also have the opportunity to apply to sign a "Participant Agreement," after attending two EPAP meetings, which designates them as a "PA member." By signing the participant agreement, an individual commits to "make every effort to be present at meetings," and to participate actively in the EPAP work. PA members are expected to:

- "Encourage broad and inclusive participation. Current PA members will consciously welcome and orient new people and ideas."

- "Interact with community members and partners to develop and promote interest and participation in implementing the Action Plan."

- "Share information with local organizations in which you are involved, and gather, synthesize, and convey information and perspective from those organizations."

- "Review background materials and monthly reports, so as to understand the issues and to gain familiarity with the array of actions and initiatives currently underway that may intersect with the work you are doing."

- "Provide a sounding board to ensure that a variety of data and viewpoints have been considered in the formulation of recommendations.

- "Advocate with agencies and service providers as determined by the group."

- "Voice concerns directly, promptly, and constructively with respect and civility."

- "Become familiar with EPAP guiding documents, such as the 'East Portland Action Plan',' Structure', 'Committees & Representatives', and 'Principles for Improved Livability'" (East Portland Action Plan. *Structure* 3).

The EPAP group members elect "two PA members to act as general EPAP Co-Chairs." The Co-Chairs "facilitate and regularly attend EPAP meetings" and keep up to date on EPAP activities. The Co-Chairs are charged with establishing "a healthy and sustainable culture by keeping energy devoted to **Relationships**, **Process**, and **Results** in

balance—understanding that each of the three contribute to the health of the other two"
(East Portland Action Plan. *Structure* 3) [emphasis in original].

The EPAP carries out it work through the General Committee, committees and
subcommittees, and "representatives." All of these must serve "the operational
functionality of the EPAP and implementation of the Action Plan" (East Portland Action
Plan. *Structure* 3). Committees provide broader support for an EPAP topic area.
Subcommittees "carry out specific [EPAP] strategies and action items." All committees
and subcommittees are "established by consensus" by the general EPAP group and must
have at least one active member who is a "PA member." Meetings must be open to the
public and held in "mobility-device accessible locations" in east Portland. EPAP funds
"childcare and interpretation as needed. Committees and subcommittees are required to
submit "monthly reports to the EPAP Advocate one week prior to the monthly meetings"
that identify the EPAP item the committee or subcommittee is working on, the group's
goal, group participants, a statement of "relevant issues addressed and decisions made,"
and any request for "input or action from the EPAP" (East Portland Action Plan.
Structure 4). If a committee or subcommittee does not provide a "written and/or verbal
report" for two "successive general [EPAP] meetings, the EPAP leadership and staff
contact the group's chair or co-chairs to talk with them about "the viability of the" group
and to let them know that if the group fails to submit a report at another EPAP general
monthly meeting, EPAP may withdraw support to the group for getting out meeting
notices as well as funding childcare and interpretation and can choose to dissolve the
group (East Portland Action Plan. *Structure* 4).

"Representatives" support EPAP advocacy by serving as a spokesperson and liaison on a particular aspect of the EPAP until "enough EPAP capacity" exists "to establish a Subcommittee." A "representative" must be a "PA member," must following the EPAP principles and work to further EPAP actions, and report "on significant activities and position statements on behalf of the EPAP at the general EPAP meetings" (East Portland Action Plan. *Structure* 4).

In 2013, the EPAP website listed sixteen EPAP committees and subcommittees. Committees that focused on EPAP organization and support include: EPAP General meeting, Co-Chairs, Communications, Grants Review, Operations, Representative Support Group, Structures, and the Technical Advisory Committee. Topic-focused subcommittees include: Bike, Brownfields, Civic Engagement, Economic Development, Education, Housing, Multi-Cultural Center, and Transit Rider. EPAP relies on the existing East Portland Parks Coalition to engage on parks issues and the EPNO Land Use and Transportation Committee on land use and transportation issues. The EPAP website also listed 25 individuals who represent EPAP to a wide range of community organizations, advisory committees, and projects (East Portland Action Plan. *Committees and Representatives*. [no date]).

EPAP Grant Program: Another very successful element of the EPAP implementation process has been the EPAP Grant Program. The City Council has approved funding for EPAP community grants every year since the beginning of the EPAP implementation phase (i.e. FY 2009-10, FY 2010-11, FY 2011-12, and FY 2012-13).

The EPAP Grants Review Committee reviews grant proposals against the "Prioritization Criteria" EPAP established for the grant program in 2008. The criteria give special consideration to "Community building projects leading to more community involvement;"projects with low cost and high impact, that leverage "resources and partners involved in the EPAP process," broad visibility, and that are distributed throughout the geographic area of east Portland (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 183410*, December 16, 2009; *Ordinance 183748*, May 5, 2010; and *Ordinance 184430*, February 23, 2011). In FY 2011-12, another criterion was added: the demonstration of an "ability to serve underrepresented populations" (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 185366* 30 May 2012).

EPAP staff extensively advertised the grant opportunity in the community. EPAP leaders and staff also designed the application requirements to try to make the applications as easy as possible to complete and submit to make the opportunity available to a wide diversity of east Portland community members. EPAP advertized the program through "web-site advertisement and email distribution lists." EPAP staff also [two] pre-submittal workshops to help community members learn about the grant program and how to apply. The workshops were "located at a mobility devise accessible location" and "held on different days – one in the morning and one in the evening." Language interpretation was available at the workshops on request. Applicants were allowed to submit their grant applications in their first language (applications submitted in languages other than English were translated for the grant review committee members). EPAP staff

provided applicants with access to a computer. They also accepted hand-written applications.

The City Council has consistently funded the grant program as part its broader funding of EPAP. The grant program was authorized to give out $50,000 in FY 2009-10; $50,000 in FY 2010-11; $64,500 in FY 2011-12, and $150,000 in FY 2012-13—divided into $52,600 for the EPAP "Civic Engagement Grant Program" and $47,400 for the EPAP " "General Grants Program." In FY 2012-13 the EPAP General Committee decided focus particular on giving out grants to support civfic engagement. The EPAP "Civic Engagement Grant Program" was intended to "allow community members, neighborhoods, business associations, non-profits and other groups to implement [EPAP] Action Item 'Community Building.2.3. Develop and hold leadership and civic engagement classes/programs for East Portland citizens to build capacity for participating in lobbying, advocacy, board participation, partnership, etc.' with a focus on culturally specific communities in language appropriate ways." The "General Grants Program" was intended to allow the same types of groups to implement other EPAP Action items (Portland. City Council. *Ordinance 186107* 19 June 2013).

During the first year (FY 2009-10), the EPAP grant program administered by ONI and overseen by BPS. ONI took over complete administration and oversight of the grant program in subsequent years.

Comments from Arlene Kimura, EPAP Co-Chair: EPAP Co-chair Arlene Kimura, a long-time and highly-respected neighborhood activist and chair of the Hazelwood Neighborhood Association, shared some of her thoughts about the EPAP

Implementation Committee. Kimura had served on the committee that had developed the original East Portland Action Plan.

Kimura said the people who developed the original EPAP worked well together. She reported that the people involved in creating the original EPAP included government officials and bureau representatives, non-profit agencies, citizens, neighborhood groups, including representatives of non-geographic communities, mostly ethnic communities including communities of color and immigrant community mutual assistance associations (MAAs).

When the initial EPAP was completed, group members said "let's keep going" to make sure that the plan would be implemented. Kimura said people recognized that plans from the past often just sat on a shelf if resources were not provided to implement them (Kimura. Conversation with Leistner. October 22, 2013).

The City Council provided $500,000 in FY 08-09 to support EPAP implementation. The asked the EPAP Implementation Committee "If you had money what part of the plan would you do first? One of the group's first actions was to hire hired Lore Wintergreen to serve as the EPAP Advocate and to staff the group.

Kimura noted that it was significant that the City allotted resources to implement the EPAP. Community members had seen many other plans they had worked on with the City sit on a shelf because no resources were available to implement them.

Kimura characterized EPAP as a special list of things people agreed needed to be done. Kimura said "You had something concrete to go for." She said "It's as though we all wanted to buy a car. We'd decided what kind of car. Now, how do you go about

buying the car?" She said people who worked together on the plan also wanted to continue to foster the relationships that started with original EPAP group.

Some City elected officials and staff and some community members have looked at the broad participation in and energy and accomplishments of EPAP and have asked whether EPAP might be a better model for a district-level body than the more traditional East Portland Neighborhood Office. Kimura noted that EPAP and EPNO do different things. She asserted that the two organizations are complementary and have been very careful not to compete with each other. A number of neighborhood leaders serve on EPAP. The EPAP advocate is housed in and works out of the EPNO office.

Kimura described the different focuses and functions of EPAP versus the traditional neighborhood associations in east Portland. Kimura said neighborhood associations play an ongoing role, while EPAP is a very focused, short-term process. Kimura also noted that neighborhood associations have no specific charge. What they work on depends on the people involved in the neighborhood association. Neighborhood association members can work on some issues for years. EPAP has a clear charge and action items," and she said "EPAP has a beginning and an end." Kimura also noted that EPAP serves as an advocacy group for very specific actions. Neighborhood associations are more generalist. Kimura said that neighborhood associations "often respond to land use and plan revisions. EPAP doesn't do that."

Kimura suggested that a "transportation" issue offers a good example of the different roles. She noted that community members and city leaders have recognized for years that many areas in east Portland need sidewalks and safer streets. Kimura reported

that getting sidewalks and safer pedestrian crossings is a part of the EPAP action plan. She said that neighborhood associations usually just say "we need sidewalks and better streets," but not every neighborhood association has a land use and transportation expert or committee that can advocate for the needed improvements. In contrast, EPAP representatives talked with PBOT and asked "What's your long-term plan" to increase the number of sidewalks over time?" EPAP also lobbied Metro, PBOT, and ODOT for funding. Kimura said neighborhood coalitions often do not have the "manpower" to do that. EPAP has a strong volunteer base of people who are passionate about transportation. Neighborhood coalitions rely more on paid staff. EPAP has no paid staff (other than the one position of EPAP Advocate), but it does have passionate volunteers who are able to send a more powerful message than paid staff. Kimura noted that some EPAP volunteers are focused on getting a sidewalk built in a specific location, while others focus on changing broader sidewalk and pedestrian safety policies.

Kimura also responded to the question: "Why is EPAP seen as much more inclusive than the neighborhood system?" She noted that neighborhood coalition committees tend to be "representative." For instance, neighborhood coalition land use committees tend to have one spot for each neighborhood association in the district. Kimura noted that "If you are a representative of the Tongan community, you have no representation on the neighborhood coalition land use committee." She said that, in contrast, the East Portland Parks Coalition operates differently—anyone who is interested in park issues can participate.

Kimura described EPAP committees as being more informal. She said EPAP committee membership is self-selected. "If you are interested, you can participate. There's not a feeling of 'Who are you'" and who do you represent?" EPAP committees "set their own meeting schedule—it's not imposed on them." Committees are expected to get things done and help implement the EPAP action steps. The committees have to report back to the EPAP monthly general meetings at least once every three meetings of this larger group. They need to answer: "What did you do? Who are you engaged with?" Kimura reported that if a committee does not report back and meet the basic requirements of an EPAP committee, the general committee can withdraw the group's status as a recognized EPAP committee. It also can stop helping the group send out their meeting notices and stop paying for child care and interpretation at their meetings.

Kimura reported that community members new to EPAP often have an intense learning curve to figure out how EPAP works and how they can be involved. EPAP recognizes this and offers an orientation session at the end of every monthly general EPAP meeting. Kimura said the group has lots of young leadership. Some people, when they find out what is involved "say it's too much and leave—others stay."

EPAP also sets clear expectations for active participation on the general EPAP committee. Community members self-select to get involved. To become a formal member of the group (PA membership), they need to come to two meetings, commit to participating actively, and sign a membership agreement. Most EPAP general committee members also serve on one or more EPAP subcommittees. Kimura reported about 65 people currently are formal members of the EPAP General Committee. Arlene said that

45 to 65 people regularly attend the EPAP General Committee meetings. Some meetings that focus on a particular issue of interest draw more people.

Kimura noted that "no one single system works for everybody." Arlene said that EPAP and the neighborhood system have some overlap, but they try never to be competitive. A number of neighborhood chairs serve on the EPAP committee. They work on issues that are near and dear to their hearts. She recommended maintaining EPNO and EPAP as separate organizations.

She emphasized that EPAP is "time limited" and specifically focused on implementing the EPAP action items. Kimura recognized that the original EPAP effort was "enormous and expensive." She suggested that EPAP, rather than being ongoing, should be revisited and updated periodically, e.g. every ten to fifteen years.

Kimura also recognized that different neighborhoods in east Portland have different circumstances and needs. She said many east Portland neighborhoods are not primarily residential and have recognized that they need to do things differently to involve their diverse community members. However, traditional volunteer neighborhood associations are not geared to do the kind of things that EPAP does—'they do not have enough people involved." Many people in east Portland may work two or three jobs and feel they are too busy to come to neighborhood association board meetings. Kimura explained that EPAP committees meet during the day and on Saturdays to meet the needs of the participants. In some cases, a person may have a relative come in their place, even if the relative is not from the neighborhood. Kimura said a lot of people stay in touch by calling her. She has a distribution list that she uses to send out information. She said that

attendance at meetings is only a small part of how effective participation should be measured.

Kimura says neighborhood associations and other community organizations need to tailor their processes to their communities. They need to understand who is in their community. Kimura stated that the traditional neighborhood structure needs to evolve somewhat. The more standard neighborhood association and neighborhood coalition approach works for some east Portland neighborhoods that are mostly residential, where the people all speak English, and where most are not the "working poor." She cited the example of the Glenfair Neighborhood Association, which produces flyers in Russian, Spanish and English to publicize its National Night Out event. Kimura stated that translating outreach materials "costs more" and neighborhood associations need funding to do this. She said the Glenfair Neighborhood Association applied for and received a Neighborhood Small Grant to help pay to have the flyers translated.

Kimura shared that her neighborhood includes a large number of non-English-speaking, Spanish speakers. Kimura said she makes a point of tabling at community events to share information about the neighborhood because "That's what people in my community come to." Kimura knows her neighborhood association has done a good job of outreach when these people come to neighborhood events. She said participation at her neighborhood association events is a good test of "who's heard us."

Kimura reported that EPAP will provide interpreters for a meeting or event, if a community members calls ahead. She stated that "Neighborhood associations don't have the resources to do this." EPAP builds funding for translation and children care into its

budget. Kimura offered the example of the EPAP Brownfields Subcommittee, which includes a couple of group members who are from the Iraqi immigrant community. EPAP provides interpreters for them at each meeting. This costs around $300 per meeting. Kimura said it is not clear that the City would fund this level of support for neighborhood associations and other community groups. Kimura reported that EPAP has some meetings where the participants mostly are Spanish speakers. These meetings are conducted in Spanish. Non-Spanish speakers use headsets to hear an English interpretation.

In response to a question about how the EPAP General Committee maintains its very diverse membership, Kimura said the EPAP Operating Committee regularly assesses the balance of people on the general committee. Rather than reserving designated spots for different communities, if certain groups are not well represented, the Operating Group will go out and actively recruit people from those groups or communities. For instance, Kimura said the group spent two years recruiting people from the African American community. Many African American people moved to east Portland when northeast Portland gentrified. Kimura said that now four or five people who are African American serve on the general committee. Some work on domestic violence issues. One focuses on youth employment. Kimura reported that EPAP also encourages public agencies to send representatives who are themselves from diverse communities and have the skills to work with different groups.

Kimura reported that EPAP developed this inclusive approach and process over time. The EPAP Operations Committee members recognized that their goal was to engage people in east Portland. She said they looked at "How do we do that?" and what

creates a welcoming experience for people and what does not. Also, she noted that people can serve on one of the EPAP committees without becoming a formal member of the EPAP general committee. Each EPAP committee needs to have at least one EPAP general committee member. Anyone else can participate. They do not need to sign the participation agreement.

Kimura cited the flexibility in the EPAP Grant program application process as another example of how to reduce barriers to participation. Grant applicants are allowed to submit their applications in their first language, but they still need to provide all the required information. EPAP will have the application translated. Kimura also noted that EPAP subcommittees often provide a forum for non-English speaking community members to talk directly to City staff 'without a filter." She said you need to help people feel comfortable enough to engage—"and not worry that they will be deported."

Kimura emphasized that some of the key lessons from the EPAP experience are that doing good work often takes time and requires that people build relationships and trust to work together effectively. She noted that some EPAP results took two, three, or four years to achieve. She stressed that relationships evolved over that entire period of time. Kimura asserted that City leaders and staff need to understand that "Involvement is not a 'check list.'" The City and community members need to invest in building long-term capacity to work together. While this is "very time consuming" the "rewards, long-term, are very substantial." She advised City bureaus to "give it time," and said that "Bureaus should not just translate a flyer and think they are done." She recognized that

long-time City staff who have worked in the community over many years have more of an opportunity to develop relationships with community groups.

Kimura recognized that "Portland cares a lot about being a livability city." But, she cautioned, that if we just focus on a particular group—such as "young creative people"—"we're missing the boat." She asserted that "We need to put out the same effort to involve non-English speakers and people with low incomes—the same effort for all groups."

Some Lessons from EPAP: EPAP offers Portlanders a very powerful example of what good public involvement could look like and insights into what it takes to achieve it.

A large part of success of EPAP is that it involved a broad diversity of the people, groups, and interests in east Portland in defining what they believed needed to change in their community and action steps to achieve this change, and then provided the resources and support to allow community members to join together to advocate for and implement those changes. EPAP also benefits from having a clear purpose and scope for its work— the action items already are defined. Community members also have a strong sense that the process has a beginning and an end—unlike some processes which seem like open-ended commitments in which the ability to have an effect is unclear.

As shown in other processes—e.g. Interwoven Tapestry, the Southeast Uplift DRC and DCLC, visionPDX, and the Public Involvement Task Force—skilled staff support is a major element in EPAP's success. EPAP's one paid staff person, Wintergreen, like the people who staffed these other processes, has very strong social justice and inclusion values and very strong strategic and group process skills. She is very

skilled at empowering community members and helping them be successful while guiding and supporting the process behind the scenes.

EPAP also focuses very much on the quality and inclusiveness of the "process" and building trust and strong relationships between people, not just focusing on the final product. EPAP has strong guiding principles that formally establish that inclusion, relationship building, trust and respect, are central elements of the process. One of the great achievements of EPAP is the strong relationships that have developed between individual EPAP participants, neighborhood and community organizations, different cultural and ethnic communities, non-profit agencies, and City staff and representatives of other jurisdictions.

The structure and operating culture of EPAP offers community members a lot of flexibility and is welcoming and accommodating to different needs, while still maintaining a strong focus on the purpose of the group to implement the EPAP action items and setting basic clear expectations for people's participation. The EPAP process models many of the welcoming behaviors and approaches that system reviews over many years have said are needed to reduce barriers to broad and diverse participation. These include flexible meeting times, accessible meeting locations, food, childcare, interpretation, and a strong commitment to treating people with respect and including them in ways in which they can have an impact.

EPAP leaders, in addition to having created an open and welcoming environment, make a point of assessing who is in the community and who should be involved and then actively reaching out and making sure they are involved. This is in contrast to the more

traditional approach of many public involvement processes in Portland that are designed to meet the needs of certain interests and people (often pejoratively referred to as "the usual suspects"). When more diverse community members start dropping out of these processes, the standard response is to bemoan their departure but not to radically rethink the process to reengage them and make the process welcoming and relevant to them.

Mayor's Budget Messages – Sam Adams – 2009-10 to 2012-13

Adams opened his budget messages with references to the hard economic times during his four years in office. In 2005 and 2006, he reported that Portlanders were living "through the worst global recession in more than an generation." In 2007 and 2008, Adams reported that the City was beginning to recover. Unlike the extra city revenue available during Potter's administration, Adams required city bureaus to propose budget cuts every year during his four years as mayor.

Adams stated that his priorities were to "invest in a return to full prosperity;" the protection of "core City services essential to every resident of Portland; and to focus on "basic needs" to "keep all Portlanders safe and secure in their jobs, homes, and neighborhoods" (FY 2009-10 5), especially "the most vulnerable in our community" (FY 2010-11 5). Adams targeted "investments in housing, homelessness prevention, mental health, and addiction services" particularly to help these most vulnerable Portlanders (FY 2010-11 5).

In 2011-12, Adams referred to the City's increased "focus on equity to ensure that every Portlander has access to the most equal of opportunities." "Equity" had become the

overarching theme for Portland's new strategic plan—The Portland Plan. Also in FY 2011-12, Adams identified "neighborhood nuisances and livability issues" as a major priority. He asserted that that he would hold city bureaus accountable for tracking these issues by geographic areas of the city and for addressing them (FY 2011-12 7).

In FY 2012-13, Adams again emphasized his priorities of "preserving front-line services," investing in "economic development," and continuing to provide services to support "the most vulnerable in our community." He also reported his continued "focus on equity." He summed up the focus of the City budget by stating that "Taken as a whole, this budget will make Portland's economy stronger and more resilient, our streets safer, our communities more equitable, and our government more responsive" (FY 2012-13 7).

Community Involvement in the Budget Process: Adams continued to expand the involvement of community members in the City's budget process. In his first year in office, Adams required each city bureau to rank each of its programs and services based on "its relationship to the bureau's mission and its support from the community" (FY 2009-10 6). Adams also directed every city bureau to form a Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) (for the first time since Mayor Katz had ended the previous BAC program). Adams directed bureaus to include on their BACs "management, labor, customers, as well as internal and external experts and stakeholders." Adams charged the BACS with reviewing " the bureau's draft budget request," weighing "in on the program and service rankings," and providing input on proposed budget cuts.

Adams also created a "citywide Budget Process Advisory Committee" that included "bureau management, labor, Council staff, employees, and citizens." He

reported that this committee "met multiple times to provide direction on the City's approach" to the budget and suggested "ways to improve and rationalize the budget process." Adams held "three community forums, where we gathered specific input from Portland residents," which helped the city council members, "prioritize services," identify areas for improvement and areas to cut. Adams also reported that "We conducted an extensive public information and survey process…to validate the input…received at the community forums" (FY 2009-10 6)

Adams also required city bureaus to "put together a Bureau Baseline and Program Summary Template" to increase the transparency of bureau budgets to City Council and also to community members. He stated that "This is a first step to increasing transparency for our citizens of exactly what they are buying with their tax dollars and holding bureaus accountable for meting their goals" (FY 2009-10 8).

In 2010, Adams reported that, in addition to all the activities above, "Small groups, such as neighborhood coalitions and advocacy groups, were also given an opportunity to host Budget 101 sessions with their members, where members could both learn about the City budgeting process as well as provide feedback and input about the program that are most important to them" (FY 2010-11 6).

Although, Adams does not mention community involvement in the budget process in his FY 2011-12 or FY 2012-13 budget messages, he did continue to use the same processes during all four years of his mayoral administration.

Budget Focus: In 2009-2010, Adams identified "four key goals" that he used to build the city budget. These included: "Keep the city on a sound financial footing…,"

"Protect core services such as public safety and increase funding to human services programs…," "Make strategic investments in youth and local businesses…," and "Increase bureau accountability for service and performance improvement." Adams also announced that he would stop funding programs with "one-time" money that really were intended to continue from year to year. These programs would become part of a bureau's basic budget and would have funding priority, in the future, over one-time programs or projects. He mentioned in particular, that this would affect programs at "ONI and the Office of Human Relations" (FY 2009-10 6-7). In his FY 2010-11 budget message, Adams added an "equity" element to the same "four key goals" by stating that the "strategic investments" were to "fuel a more equitable economic recovery" (FY 2010-11 6).

In his FY 2011-12 budget message, Adams identified "five key goals," which included returning the "City to full prosperity" and investing in a stronger, more resilient City;" helping "those hit hardest by the recession" and providing "support to the most vulnerable in our community;" protecting "public safety services;" increasing "the City's focus on equity to ensure that every Portlander has access to the most equal of opportunities;" and identifying "neighborhood nuisances" and ensuring "more responsive City services" (FY 2011-12 8). In his FY 2012-13 budget message, Adams reported that he focused on "four interlocking goals for the City taken from the Portland Plan: Prosperous, Healthy, Educated, Equitable" (FY 2012-13 8).

Budget Highlights: Adams highlighted a number of community-involvement-related programs and expenditures in his budget messages.

In FY 2009-10, Adams included funding for community gardens as part of core services that supported vulnerable populations (FY 2009-10 7-8). Under "strategic investments" he reported budgeting $137,000 to continue the Youth Planning Program. He also reported $290,495 in funding for the Association of Neighborhood Business Districts (APNBA) as a continued investment in "small and local businesses" (8). (This continued support for business district associations that had shifted from ONI to PDC.)

Adams also reported his decision to consolidate the Bureau of Planning and the Office of Sustainable Development into one agency—the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) (FY 2009-10 9). (This consolidation allowed Adams to remove Portland Planning Director Gil Kelley, which created an opportunity to open up and increase community in the Portland Plan process.)

In FY 2011-12, under the category "Creating a Fair and Equitable Portland" (one of Adams' five key goals for that year), Adams recognized that "In Portland, inequities exist across racial, geographic, and socio-economic lines." Adams asserted that "We need to address this, and ensure that all Portlanders have access to equal opportunity." Adams reported that "This budget addresses these inequities by providing over $1 million to create an Office of Equity, and continuing funding for programs that support education and academic achievement." Adams also highlighted "$279,692 in funding for the East Portland Action Plan" (FY 2011-12 10). (The East Portland Action Plan, in part, was intended to help remedy long-standing complaints from east Portlanders that city government paid little attention to their needs and those of their growing and increasingly diverse communities.)

In FY 2011-12, Adams reported that he had directed staff to "create a survey asking Portlanders to report specific nuisances, irritations, or infrastructure issues in their neighborhoods and throughout the City. More than 5,000 responded." He noted that the city budget directed one-time resources to "some of these high priority annoyances" (FY 2011-12 10). Adams also reported that the "City conducted a separate phone survey, where over 16 percent of respondents cited "more or better community gardens" as a high priority. Adams reported that his budget that year invested "in the construction of up to 10 additional Community Gardens…." (11).

In 2012-13, in the "Prosperous" goal area, Adams emphasized that increased economic development would generate "resources to increase our outreach to vulnerable communities." Adams highlighted that the budget included $4.8 million of one-time funding for "shelter services, rent assistance, and housing access services" to "protect our city's most vulnerable citizens" and keep "our safety net" (FY 2012-13 8-9). Under the "Healthy" category, Adams noted that one of the City focuses had "been on healthy, connected, complete communities" where "Portlanders have access to what they want and need to thrive." Adams highlighted that, while "$99,318 in on-going funds" had been cut from ONI's Neighborhood Small Grants Program, he had budgeted "$93,855 in one-time funds" for the grant program. He also reported that "The East Portland Action Plan is again receiving a one-time infusion of $279,692 for an advocate position and grants to the community. This budget action will help the residents of East Portland to be more actively engaged in the City's affairs, helping to fulfill the Portland Plan's goal to improve involvement" (FY 2012-13 10)

In 2012-13, in the "Equitable" focus area, Adams stated that "For the city to succeed, all Portlanders—regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, neighborhood, age, income of where they were born—must have access to opportunities to advance their well-being and achieve their full potential. Equity not only makes individual lives better, it lifts up the whole city. Despite a tough budget year, I have kept equity at the forefront." Adams went on to highlight some specific budget decisions, including: "The Office of Equity budget was spared reductions, which reflects the City's commitment to moving a meaningful equity agenda forward in FY 2012-13 and beyond." Adams noted that the funding supported "the Portland Plan's equity framework and the action items related to closing gaps, engagement, partnering, racial issues, disability issues, and City accountability" (FY 2012-13 11).

Closing Statements: Adams closed his budget messages with very similar statements each year. Adams consistently commended "all the hardworking Portlanders—citizens and City employees alike" who participated community budget forums, employee budget forums, on bureau and the citywide budget advisory committees, and other outreach efforts, and who filled out "a Curbsider survey." Adams stated that this input enabled the City Council to focus the city budget "on the programs and services that matter most to you."

Adams stressed that, while Portland was positioned to "lead the nation in the green revolution and reap the economic rewards…of our sustainability leadership," "we will only be able to lead if we continue to support all our citizens in their individual efforts to make a better life for themselves" He asserted that "sustainability is about the

environment and the economy, but it is also about equity." He wrote that each of his city budgets go "to the heart of equity" and were guided by both "empathy and common sense." He noted that "By investing in programs that most serve those with the greatest need, we are looking out for our most vulnerable neighbors-resident, business owner, or student. These basic needs are at the core of this budget."

Adams closed his final budget message, in 2012, by thanking the other city council members for helping him "adopt a final budget that makes Portland "a more prosperous, healthy, educated, and equitable place" (FY 2012-13 12).

Observations: Adams' four budget messages provide some interesting insights into his priorities and values as Portland's mayor. "Equity" is a dominant theme in Adams' four mayor's budget messages. He makes a point of recognizing the inequities that exist in Portland "across racial, geographic, and socio-economic lines." He also repeatedly emphasized the need to make a special effort to support the most community's most "vulnerable" members.

He also makes a point of highlighting the creation of the City's new Equity Office and his decision to hold the office harmless from budget cuts to support its ongoing development. He also highlights his funding of the East Portland Action Plan implementation efforts which included hiring an advocate to support a committee of individuals represented diverse community interests responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan. The funding also included resources to fund projects that implement elements of the plan and to give out community grants to encourage community involvement and build community capacity.

Adams' budgets generally protected most of the expanded community involvement capacity that Potter had created at ONI and its community partner organizations—especially the DCL Program organizations—from debilitating budget cuts. He also supported moving many of ONI's new positions and programs from "one-time" funding status to "ongoing," which automatically made them part of ONI's base budget each . This shift was especially symbolic for DCL Program, because it signified that the DCL Program was an ongoing part of the ONI system and served as another indication of the system's shift from a solely geographic-based structure.

Adams continued to build on the expansion of community involvement in the city budget process initiated by Potter. For the first time in over 15 years, Adams required all city bureaus to create a BAC. He also expanded the citywide budget advisory committee. This was a major step toward recapturing and building on the valuable community involvement BACs brought to the city budget process under Goldschmidt. This time the BACs were supported by the Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC), which monitored the BAC process and supported the process by identifying ways to improve the process and by helping the city staff that coordinated the BACs to share information and best practices. Many hope these "budget advisory committees" will evolve into year-round "bureau advisory committees" for many bureaus. Year-round committees would allow community members to become more familiar with a bureau's programs, opportunities, and constraints, and to provide deeper guidance on the bureau's priorities and major policy decisions.

Adams also provided the opportunity for community groups to design and hold their own Budget 101 workshops. This was a valuable strategy that implemented past recommendations that processes are most effective when they are relevant and accessible to the communities they seek to involve and when they are developed and presented in partnership with organizations those community members know and trust. (The City's Office of Management and Finance provided $300 mini-grants to the organizations to help pay for their expenses related to the workshops.)

Adams also required city bureaus to begin to track the delivery of city services by neighborhoods and neighborhood districts in Portland. Adams initiated processes by which community members could contact the city and identify particular infrastructure and service needs in their neighborhoods. While this was not as comprehensive as the more formal Neighborhood Needs process of the past, it did provide a vehicle for community members to share their needs and priorities with city bureaus.

Mayor Charlie Hales (2013)

Where will Portland's new mayor, Charlie Hales, take Portland's community and neighborhood engagement system in the coming years? Charlie Hales began serving as Portland mayor in January 2009. He brought to the role of mayor his past experience with city government as a Portland City Council member (1993 to 2002).[133] While a city commissioner, Hales had been known for his efforts to reorganize Portland's planning

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[133] Hales served as a Portland city commissioner from January 1993 until he resigned in May 2002, a little over a year into his third term (City of Portland, City Auditor website, "Directory of Current and Past Elected Officials," http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=27134&a=4937, downloaded October 15, 2013). Hales left the City Council and joined the engineering and consulting firm HDR, Inc. He spent the next "10 years traveling the country to promote streetcars and light rail as a project manager" (*Oregonian*, October 7, 2012).

and development system to focus more on permitting and less on long-range planning

and for having championed the development of Portland's streetcar system. Hales also

served as the Commissioner-in-Charge of ONA for nearly six years (May 1993 through

Dec. 1998).

During his time on the city council, Hales became familiar with Portland's

neighborhood system in place at that time. Hales had a reputation among neighborhood

activists as not being a strong supporter of public process who preferred instead to make

a decision and move forward to implement it. Hales also was the commissioner-in-charge

of ONA during the 1995-96 TFNI. He had directed the TFNI to thoroughly examine ONI

and the neighborhood system and to look for "opportunities to make significant

improvement in citizen participation." Hales also directed the TFNI to "Look beyond the

current ONA structure to find opportunities to broaden citizen involvement and to

encourage participation by the full diversity of our communities" (TFNI Report 1996 1).

After Hales' election as mayor in 2012, some community and neighborhood

activists were a little leery that Hales would come into office still thinking about the

neighborhood system at is was in the 1990s and not recognizing the many changes made

since that time. Others thought that Hales' familiarity with the neighborhood system and

his past interest in improving community involvement could be an advantage.

One of Hales early actions as mayor was to take all city bureaus into his portfolio

during the first six months of his administration and to develop the city budget for FY

2013-14. During this time neighborhood and community activists and ONI staff

wondered (and fretted over) which city commissioner Hales would assign to be the

commissioner-in-charge of ONI and what this decision would portend for the future of ONI and the community and neighborhood involvement system.

Hales 2013 Budget Message: Hales' first mayor's budget message, unlike those of his predecessors, made no mention of community involvement in the budget process. His message also did not mention community involvement in general or say anything about the role of community members in city decision making.

Hales opened his budget message by noting that, when he entered office in January 2013, the city faced a "deficit for 2013-14 at $25 million." He stressed that his budget attempted to recognize the "human cost" of budget reductions and that he "tried to cut with as little harm as possible." Hales also reported that he was pleased that the City Council members "came together" in the budget process and "looked at the city as a whole" rather than a "bureau-by-bureau approach" (7).

Hales listed a number of "programs that remain fully or partially funded under my budget." Community members and community organizations had advocated for many of these programs during city community budget meetings. Hales included in the list continued implementation of the East Portland Action Plan and City support for the Multnomah County Youth Commission.

Hales also indicated some of his priorities by stating that one of his goals in cutting staff at the Police Bureau had been "to make sure the bureau did not simply lay off the youngest, least experienced officers" many of whom had been hired to improve diversity within the bureau and to reinvigorate a the community policing focus of the

agency.[134] Hales also noted the budget's continued support for the VOZ Day Labor Center, which first had been funded under Mayor Potter.

Hales' concluding remarks did not mention community members or community involvement. Hales emphasized his hope that the budget "reflects the reality of our times," is "transparent and easily readable," and "shares difficult decisions evenly across bureaus." The final comment in his message noted that the budget vastly reduced "increases for water and sewer." (Portland. "Mayor's Message." *City Budget*, FY 2013-14 3-10).

ONI 2013-2014 Budget: As Hales indicated in his budget message, the City of Portland faced a $21 million shortfall at the beginning of the FY 2013-14 budget development process. Hales initially asked ONI and other city bureaus to identify 10 percent cuts for FY 2013-14 to make up the shortfall. The ONI BAC members, as they had in past years, joined together to comply with the mayor's request and develop alternative proposals. They determined that, after "several years of deep cuts to the [ONI's] programs," "there was no room to make additional cuts without impacting services in every program area." The ONI BAC members sent the mayor a proposal for across the board cuts to all ONI General Fund programs and for ONI's community partner organizations. The proposed cuts also provided no funding for the Neighborhood Small Grants Program in FY 2013-14 (Portland. *City Budget*. FY 2013-14 420). ONI BAC members and community partners then organized their constituents to lobby the

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[134] In 2012, a U.S. Department of Justice investigation had found that the Portland Police Bureau had "engaged in an unconstitutional pattern or practice of excessive force against people with mental illness." The US DOJ and the City of Portland had entered into a formal agreement filed with the court to "make changes to Portland Police Bureau policies, practices, training and supervision" to remedy the problem (U.S. Department of Justice, Press Release, September 13, 2012).

Mayor and City Council to restore some funding to ONI and not to accept the proposed full 10 percent cuts.

Mayor Hales partially restored about two-thirds of the proposed ONI budget cuts in the final budget adopted by City Council. The restoration of funding allowed Elders in Action to retain volunteer engagement staff, retained funding for neighborhood coalition communication and outreach staff, and funded continued outreach capacity for the Disability Program. The final budget also funded continued implementation of the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) and retained the EPAP coordinator/advocate position and funded EPAP operating expenses, community grants and priority projects" (Portland. *City Budget*, FY 2013-14 420).

In the ONI section of the FY 2013-14 City Budget, ONI continued to assert that its mission and budget were grounded in the Community Connect goals and sought to implement the Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement. ONI continued to focus on promoting "a culture of civic engagement by connecting and supporting all Portlanders working together and with government to build inclusive, safe, and livable neighborhoods and communities." (417) ONI emphasized its continued commitment to supporting and strengthening Portland's neighborhood system and to building, supporting and expanding civic engagement among under-represented groups (418).

Hales, at the very end of the city budget process, announced some surprise program changes at ONI. He moved the Noise Control Program from BDS to ONI. He also shifted responsibility for supporting the Multnomah County Youth Commission from BPS to ONI. Mayor Hales saw the Noise Control Program as a good fit with ONI's

other livability programs (i.e., Liquor Licensing and Graffiti Abatement).[135] The Youth

Commission originally was intended to be supported by both Multnomah County and the

City of Portland. Multnomah County had funded a full-time position that provided nearly

all of the commission's coordination and support. On the City side, some past mayors had

designated one of their staff people as a liaison to the commission. In more recent years,

the Youth Planning Program at BPS had become the City's main connection to the

commission, but then the Youth Planning Program was defunded. Multnomah County

had complained for some time that the City was not fulfilling its responsibility to support

the Youth Commission. The Youth Commission mission of empowering youth and

giving them a voice in decision making is a good fit with ONI's overall mission and

ONI's goal of serving under-represented groups in the community. The City of Portland

City Budget for FY 2013-14 did not provide ONI with additional funding to take on this

new role. ONI chose to shift funding within its budget to free up resources to hire a youth

program coordinator. The position is scheduled to be filled in late 2013.

Hales takes ONI: In June 2013, when he was assigning city bureaus to the city

commissioners, Hales decided to take ONI and the Equity Office away from

Commissioner Fritz and include them in his own portfolio. The *Oregonian* reported that

Hales hoped that ONI and the Equity Office would "fit well with the Police Bureau"

(which Hales also retained). "Blending those efforts strengthens each…It creates a nexus

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[135] This move of the Noise Control Program to ONI harkens back to Goldschmidt's original recognition of the need to support both community empowerment (ONA) and to address livability issues in Portland's neighborhoods (Bureau of Neighborhood Environment). Hale's move also brings to mind Leonard's more recent, although short-lived, shift of neighborhood nuisance inspections and noise control from BDS to ONI. Leonard's action was part of his bigger strategy to transform ONI into a Bureau of Neighborhood Services. Hales' goals for moving noise control to ONI appear much more limited. Neither ONI staff or community members have expressed concern that Hales' decision will undermine or detract from ONI's overall mission of community empowerment.

of community empowerment. Plus, it elevates their profile" (Kost. *Oregonian*, June 4, 2013).

Neighborhood and community activists and ONI staff wondered whether Hales had any particular ideas or strategies he wanted to pursue (as had many other city commission in the past), or whether he would try to learn about the current system and work collaboratively with community members to pursue opportunities to improve and strengthen the system.

Initially, in the absence of any concrete information about Hales' intentions, rumors began to circulate. Some community activists reported that they had heard Hales say at different public functions that he wanted to "revitalize" the neighborhood system and "tweak" the DCL program. Some neighborhood and community activists became concerned that Hales would try to impose "fixes" to the system without consulting with neighborhood and community groups (similar to efforts by previous city commissioners in charge of ONI—Kafoury, Saltzman, and Leonard).

Alarcón de Morris later met with the mayor to talk about his plans for ONI. Alarcón de Morris reported back to ONI staff and ONI's community partners that Hales had said he had no fixed ideas he wanted to implement. He told Alarcón de Morris that he wanted to hear from neighborhood and community activists and ONI about opportunities to make Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system work better.

October 2013—Hales meeting with Neigh Coalition Dir and Chairs:
Neighborhood coalition leaders got their first chance to meet face-to-face with Hales when Hales attended one of the monthly meetings of the neighborhood coalition directors

and board chairs in October 2013 at the East Portland Neighborhood Office. The discussion at the meeting offered interesting insights into Hales' priorities and interests and the system improvements neighborhood coalition directors hoped he would support (Leistner. Personal meeting notes. October 10, 2013).

A few days prior to the meeting, the City Council received some good budget news, in the form of $11 million in unanticipated revenue. City bureaus had the opportunity to proposal ways to spend portions of the money. Alarcón de Morris shared with neighborhood coalition leaders at the meeting that ONI considering asking for $14,000 for to provide community members with scholarships to attend the Neighborhoods USA conference in Eugene in Spring 2014. She also reported that ONI would request $140,000 to restore the Neighborhood Small Grants Program.

Alarcón de Morris also had let neighborhood district coalition directors know that the Mayor wanted to start holding his monthly check-in meetings with Alarcón de Morris regarding ONI out in the community. (Hales and Alarcón de Morris met regularly because ONI was in the mayor's portfolio of city bureaus.) Hales said he wanted to hold the meetings at different neighborhood district coalition office each time (as well as DCL Program and other ONI partner organizations) and invite the organization director and one or two organization staff people to participate.

In October 2013, Hales met with the directors of all seven neighborhood coalitions and three coalition board chairs and a number of community members and ONI staff. Hales told the group he wanted to keep getting out "in the field" and asked them to let him know about community events and meeting he could consider attending. He also said

he was looking forward coming out to the different neighborhood coalition offices for his monthly check-ins with Alarcón de Morris and the individual coalition directors.

Hales shared that his priorities during the first part of the year had been working with the Police Bureau on a return to community policing and improving how the police interact with people with mental illness. Hales notes that it takes awhile to "turn the ship" and emphasized actions he had already taken to increase diversity on the Police Bureau's command level. Hales identified school funding and the city budget as other important priorities for the earlier part of the year. Hales reported that his priorities in the coming months would be the future of the Portland Development Commission (which had experienced significant loss of tax increment financing revenues), homelessness in Portland, and the Willamette River Superfund site. Hales reported that he was working with Commissioner Steve Novick (commissioner in charge of the Portland Bureau of Transportation) to find new revenue for street maintenance—which could help the City respond to requests from neighborhoods for street paving and traffic and pedestrian safety improvements.

Alarcón de Morris asked Hales what he wanted to hear during the monthly check-ins at the coalition offices. Hales replied that he wanted to hear about "what's working and what isn't" in the community involvement system. He said he also wanted to know "How are city bureaus working the neighborhood system and the DCL organizations?" Hales said the economy was improving, and the City likely would have more funding available in the future. He said he wanted to know what coalition leaders thought about how to use these additional resources. Hales told the group that he is an "iterative

learner" and that his understanding evolves through multiple conversations. He said he believes in the Socratic process of asking questions and encouraged the group members to argue with him—"that's how I learn."

One of the neighborhood coalition directors asked Hales what differences he sees in the neighborhood system from when he was the ONA Commissioner in the 1990s. Hales told the group that "it's a different Portland." He noted that many young creative people are moving to Portland. He asked "How do we involve them in civic life in Portland?" Hales also emphasized his belief in the need to balance "innovation" versus "restoration." "Sometimes we need to go back and restore what's been lost versus pressing forward." Hales noted that sometimes the City had "drifted away" from doing things that worked in the past. For example, he stated that he needed to tell bureaus, "No, city bureaus, you actually have to listen to the community." He also stated that the City had drifted away from community policing and said "We need to get back to it." Hales also said that if we want community members to get involved "They need to have some influence and power"—their involvement should not just be a "box [for city bureaus] to check." Hales said part of his task as ONI Commissioner will be to "try to sort out what drifted. Where do we need fundamental change versus where did we drift away from something we were doing right? Where do we need to go back to it?"

Hales asked group members to share their thoughts on what was working and what was not. Group members asked about his hopes for the update of Portland's Comprehensive Plan. Hales said he wanted to see zoning changed where it needed to be—he wanted results that would make a difference in the community. A number of

group members complained that city bureaus often did not do a good job of coordinating

their work. One East Portland neighborhood activist noted a "fundamental disconnect

between BPS and PBOT" on the update to the Comprehensive Plan. While BPS had done

significant outreach to the community on the Comp Plan project, PBOT, which was in

charge of developing the City's Transportation Services Plan (TSP, a part of the Comp

Plan) had only one staff person assigned to community outreach and that PBOT had done

little to involve the community in the development of the TSP. Hales said that

Commissioner Novick (commissioner in charge of PBOT) is interested and engaged and

noted that PBOT has a new director, from Chicago, who still needs to learn about

Portland's neighborhood system and how it works.

Another neighborhood coalition director noted a disconnect between BPS and

neighborhood associations over recent years because of the loss of the neighborhood

planning program. "Now BPS [only] comes out when they want to do a plan for a

specific site." The coalition director reported that neighborhood associations, in some

cases, are bypassing BPS and building relationships and working directly, usually with

larger and more sophisticated developers who see the value of building relationships and

learning to work with the communities in which they pursue their projects. This

individual asserted that city bureaus also need to build long-term relationships with

community groups.

An ONI staff person reported that the updated Comp Plan chapter on community

involvement included policies that directed city bureaus to gather information about local

communities and to allow city staff to devote time to building relationships with the

communities they work in. He urged Hales to support relationship building by bureau staff.

A long-time and very involved north Portland neighborhood activist said PBOT needs to create a common community outreach office in the agency to improve its collaboration with ONI and community organizations. She also stressed that city staff need to reach out to and collaborate with community members early in process "before arguments develop." For instance, she urged city bureaus to invite community members to participate in "pre-application" meetings for projects. Hales noted that the commission form of government makes it difficult to coordinate public outreach and information efforts across city bureaus. He reported that Alarcón de Morris had been a good resource to other bureau directors. He also noted that his "PIO" (public information officer) in the mayor's office is attempting to increase cross-bureau coordination and show bureaus that "he's more of a resource than a threat." The north Portland activist emphasized that better coordination also is needed between bureau public information officers and other bureau staff and decision makers working on projects to ensure that community input gets to the right people and has an impact.

Another neighborhood coalition director urged Mayor Hales to remind city bureaus leaders and staff that Portland has invested millions of dollars over 40 years to develop and support Portland's neighborhood system. He asked Hales to tell bureaus, We've invested in the neighborhood system—use it!" A different neighborhood coalition director noted that neighborhood coalition offices often act as valuable liaisons between city bureaus and community members.

Another neighborhood coalition director identified the Neighborhood Small Grants program as "as the most exciting program ever developed in the system." "It fulfills all of the goals of the [Community Connect] Five-year Strategic Plan." She said that community grantees have been very effective at leveraging additional business and city bureau contributions and resources. She asked the Mayor to restore funding to the grant program "if at all possible." Another neighborhood coalition director added the grant program helped her coalition build relationships with other community organizations. She said coalition office and the organizations continue to collaborate on events and projects.

Hales noted that New York City has lots of businesses who contribute to civic projects, while Minneapolis has a lot of foundation funding. He recognized that in Portland "We don't do a good job on philanthropy." He asked the group whether the Neighborhood Small Grants program should be funded out of the City's General Fund or by local foundations. Alarcón de Morris said both should be involved. One of the neighborhood coalition directors stated that foundations often are not familiar with "community activism" and are unaware of its nature and value. He asked Hales to help raise the visibility of community activism with foundations as something worthy of their support.

An ONI staff person reported that, since the 1970s, people have been calling for the development of a strong, citywide leadership training program for community members, and suggested that this would be valuable ongoing addition to Portland's community involvement system. Hales said leadership development was something he

wanted to do "on this tour of duty." Alarcón de Morris emphasized that a similar ongoing community involvement training program was needed for city staff as well.

A number of group members said that too often city bureaus are disconnected from each other, and identified this as an ongoing problem for community members. One said bureaus need to talk to each other, not just say "It's not our responsibility" and send community members to a different agency. She said that city bureaus need to improve their communications and take responsibility to make things work, not force community members to chase down all the entities involved in a project or problem and figure out themselves how to get them to work together. Hales said "I want to work on this." Alarcón de Morris noted that disconnects between bureaus also occur when city commissioners in charge of bureaus do not work well together.

A neighborhood activist from east Portland asked Hales for his thoughts on the future of the three entities serving the community in east Portland: the East Portland Neighborhood Office (EPNO), the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) implementation committee, and East Portland Neighbors (EPN), the non-profit partner organization to the city-run EPNO office. Hales said one of his goals, for whatever structure is developed in the future to serve east Portland, was to retain EPAP's formal involvement of non-geographic communities and issue-based groups. Hales also recognized that EPAP had shown that more people will choose to be involved If incentives exist, "like grants" and "real power" to accomplish things.

After Hales left the meeting, the neighborhood coalition directors agreed to note down and share with each other what was discussed at the monthly check-in meetings

with the mayor. One director noted that they had forgotten to bring up with the mayor

their concerns about inadequate notice by city bureaus and the need for a comprehensive

review of City government public policies.

The group members generally found that the meeting with the mayor had gone

well and many were hopeful that the mayor would listen to and work with them to

continue to improve community involvement in Portland.

<u>Looking to the Future—What Comes Next?</u>

What's next for Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system?

How will the system continue to evolve and move Portland toward greater participatory

democracy? In 2013, five years have elapsed since the release of the Community Connect

report and the "Five-year Plan to Increase Community Involvement." Many Five-year

Plan recommendations have been implemented—others still remain to be implemented.

ONI and its neighborhood and community organization partners have identified their own

highest priority "next steps." This section describes current priorities for the overall ONI

community and neighborhood involvement system and some of the individual programs

within the system.

ONI—Broader System Approaches: Major priorities for nearly everyone in the

system are to maintain the advances achieved in recent years, restore funding lost during

the recent recession (for instance, restored funding for the Neighborhood Small Grants

Program), and continue expansion of system funding and resources.

A major strategy being discussed by ONI and its neighborhood and community

organization partners is the further expansion of the number and types of community

organizations formally recognized as part of the system. The system has moved away from its long-time focus on geographic neighborhood associations as the primary vehicles for community involvement with city government, toward a sense of the community as a "fabric" of many different neighborhood and other community organizations.

Geographic organizations—i.e., neighborhood associations and business district associations—continue to be major parts of the larger system, with ONI supporting the neighborhood system and PDC supporting business district associations. In the early 2010s, an owner of a floating home marina approached ONI and Commissioner Fritz in an effort to organize new entity that would represent people who live in floating home communities and work on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. The river community fits within a defined geographic boundary, could meet the requirements of a traditional neighborhood association, and easily could be served through the City's existing land use notification system. The river community organizer wanted her community to be visible to city leaders and staff and included in decision making. ONI staff considered proposing an amendment to city code and to the ONI Standards to allow the creation of a new category of "special geographic communities." Questions arose of how to negotiate the boundaries of this new entity with the twenty-six neighborhood associations whose boundaries include segments of Portland's rivers. ONI has deferred further discussion of creating a new category for "special geographic communities" until the next review and update of the ONI Standards.

Non-geographic communities are the most promising and compelling area for expansion of the system. The DCL Program started the process by funding and supporting five community organizations that serve different communities of color and immigrant and refugees. ONI also has formal programs that serve the communities of elders and people with disabilities (i.e., Elders in Action and the Disability Program). Mayor Hales in 2013, also establish a formal role for ONI in working with youth, by establishing ONI as the city agency responsible for fulfilling the City's obligation to support the Multnomah Youth Commission. ONI's role with the Youth Commission easily could expand to encompass broader strategies related to involving youth in civic life and decision making.

ONI staff have begun considering what other communities might be added to the formal system. The most obvious place to start would be with the list of "under-represented communities" referred to in many different ONI and City government documents. ONI's overall mission directs ONI to support people in these communities to get involved in civic life, build capacity among their leaders and organizations and network with other groups, and help them have a voice and impact in local decision making that affects them.

ONI, in the past, had offered "communities beyond neighborhood boundaries" and "business district associations" the opportunity to meet certain requirements and then be recognized formally by the City, be listed in the ONI directory, and receive land use and other city government formal notices—basically viewing them through a "neighborhood association lens." None of these organizations ever applied to ONI for

formal recognition. The DCL Program was developed by ONI staff working with representatives of communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities to make sure that the program both served ONI's mission and goals while offering something that these organizations wanted and valued.

In 2012, ONI staff reached out to a number of individuals and organizations from different under-represented communities to find out what kind of support they most needed and wanted. These groups represented: renters, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, youth, the river/water community, and a number of different community organizing and advocacy groups. Nearly all the groups said what they needed and wanted most was leadership training, organizational funding, technical support, and some form of formal status with city government that would give their organizations and community greater visibility and clout with city government leaders and staff. A number of groups said their top priority was to get funding to allow them to provide direct services (e.g., housing, health care, food, etc.). ONI's mission encompasses the former training and capacity building support, but does not include funding direct services (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Communities Beyond Neighborhood Boundaries: Themes emerging from community interviews*, October 23, 2012).

ONI staff also looked at different levels of relationship and support ONI could offer community organizations. ONI staff developed the following list of possible options:

- • "**Acknowledgement**:" ONI would include the organization in the list of community organizations it shares with city agencies, the media and other community organizations.

- • "**Formal Notification**:" ONI would include the organization's contact information in the ONI Directory, which city bureaus use to send out formal notices regarding land and other policy issues as required by City Code.

- • "**Community Project Partner**:" ONI would fund organizations to implement short-term, smaller-scale community projects through small grant programs, such as the Neighborhood Small Grants Program. Funding levels could range from $0 to $20,000.

- • "**Community Program Partner**:" ONI would negotiate formal grant agreements that would fund (e.g., $20,000 to $100,000) organizations to provide specific services to specific, target, identity-based communities—similar to the funding ONI provides to its DCL Program partner organizations to provide leadership training and organizing support to their communities. Program partner organizations would participate on the ONI BAC and would be encouraged to partner with other ONI partner organizations. ONI funding likely only would be a portion of the partner organization's overall funding and activities.

- • "**Community Association Partner**:" This category would allow ONI to formally recognize organizations that work to help some segment of the community engage in civic issues, often as part of a larger coalition of organizations. Association partners would receive formal standing with ONI and the City and formal notices from

city agencies, and technical assistance and possibly some minimal funding ($0 to $2000)

through ONI coalition partner organizations. Association partners would be required to

meet certain minimum requirements related to openness, transparency, accountability,

and outreach to and representation of their particular community. (This model is based on

the current status and role in the system of a traditional neighborhood association.)

- "**Community Coalition Partner**:" A coalition partner would be an

umbrella organization for a group of community organizations (similar to the role of a

neighborhood coalition to its member neighborhood associations). A coalition partner

would have a long-term grant relationship with ONI ($100,000 and up) and would

provide a wide range of technical assistance and support to its member organizations and

their communities, including training, communications, community organizing, fiscal

sponsorships, insurance, etc. Coalition partners would need to comply with ONI reporting

requirements and formal ONI standards.

- "**Limited Duration Action Committee**:" This category represents

committees or groups that include representation from a wide range of community

organizations and interests and are focused on the implementation of a clear set of action

goals—similar to the role of the East Portland Action Plan Implementation Committee.

Annual funding might range from $200,000 to $350,000, and would be used to pay for

staff support and a community small grants program.

- "**ONI/City Program**:" ONI, or other bureaus in city government, could

establish programs to support community involvement in particular communities.

Examples of these types of programs include: ONI's Neighborhood Program, DCL

Program, Disability Program, and BPS's Youth Planner Program. City staff would provide a range of support and coordination services to organizations and individuals in the target communities.

- "**City Board or Commission**:" The City Council would create a formal, ongoing board or commission that would advocate for the needs and priorities of a particular community. Examples include, the Portland Commission on Disability, the Human Rights Commission, the Multnomah Youth Commission (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Draft—Overview of Types of Partnerships available with ONI.* October 18, 2012).

Other major, system-wide priorities include:

- *Funding Equity Across ONI Partners*: The City of Portland has been funding the neighborhood coalitions for forty years. ONI's DCL Program organizations have advocated for increased funding to their organizations to help achieve more equitable funding across different communities in the system.

- *City Wide Leadership Academy*: Systems reviews back to the 1970s have called for an ongoing, robust, citywide leadership training program. All of ONI's neighborhood and community partner organizations, as well as other community groups ONI has interviewed, support the development of such a leadership training system as an important element in ONI's overall strategy of building capacity for involvement and action in the community.

- *More Inclusive District Bodies*: Different efforts have been made over time to expand participation on neighborhood coalition boards to include representation

of business and other community organizations, usually with only temporary success. In 2013, east Portland neighborhood and community activists, ONI staff, and Mayor Hales all are interested in exploring lessons learned from recent collaboration between the East Portland Neighborhood Office, East Portland Neighbors (the EPNO non-profit organization partner) and the East Portland Action Plan. EPAP is a short-term focused process that has involved a wide spectrum of the community. EPNO is an ongoing support structure that focuses primarily on serving east Portland's neighborhood associations. An opportunity exists in east Portland to develop and try out a new district governance and involvement model that could inform the next generation of district bodies for Portland's other six neighborhood district coalitions.

- *Increased cooperation between ONI and Office of Equity and Human Rights*: ONI and the Office of Equity and Human Rights both have an interest in increasing equity and ensuring under-represented communities are involved in civic life and have voice in local decision making. In late October 2013, staff from the two offices met to begin to develop a shared vision for the City's equity work and the roles each agency will play in this work. Other entities that also have a stake in equity work within City government include: the OMF Title II ADA and Title VI Civil Rights programs, PIAC, the Portland Commission on Disabilities, and the Human Rights Commission.

Program-Specific Next Steps: Starting in 2011, ONI partner organizations began to discuss and identify their own priorities for the next five years under Community Connect.

- *Neighborhood System*: The most immediate priorities for the neighborhood coalitions is to preserve recent additional funding for the neighborhood system and to restore recent cuts in funding—especially for the Neighborhood Small Grants Program. Other priorities include: updating the process and formula for allotting available ONI funding across the neighborhood district coalitions, with a greater emphasis on population and need; development of the city-wide, ongoing leadership training program, mentioned above; preparation of a wide range of "best practices" guides for neighborhood associations—on topics including organizational governance, communications, community outreach, dispute resolution, neighborhood visioning, fundraising, land use, issues advocacy, etc.; and negotiation of the next five-year ONI-neighborhood coalition grant agreement to reflect new thinking about broader community involvement and include requirements more clearly tied to an updated performance measurement system (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *Overview of Neighborhood District Coalition 5-year Strategic Budget Proposal and Priorities* Revised September 13, 2011).

- *DCL Program*: DCL Program partner organizations are seeking increased funding from ONI for each DCL Program partner organization (i.e., $100,000 to $250,000 each). This funding would allow each DCL Program partner organization to hire two to three staff to support training, organizing, and technical assistance to people and organizations in their communities. ONI and its DCL partners also want to expand the number of community organizations in the program and build and expand relationships with specific ethnic/multiethnic communities in Portland. (ONI staff have

long considered included the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) as the sixth DCL Program partner organization). The DCL Program partners also would like funding for their own small grants program (Portland. Office of Neighborhood Involvement. *DCL Partners—5-Year Strategic Priorities Discussion,* August 22, 2011).

- *Disability Program*: ONI Disability Program Coordinator Nickole Cheron hopes to help the "Connecting Communities Coalition" of people with disabilities develop its capacity and evolve into a "coalition-level" ONI partner and to improve leadership training opportunities for people with disabilities in Portland (Cheron. Conversation with Leistner October 31, 2013).

- *Public Involve Advisory Council*: The PIAC members hope to receive funding to hire more staff to support PIAC members in their work.

Lessons of the Potter and Post Potter era – 2005 to 2013

The period from 2005 to 2013 represented the greatest expansion of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system since the system was founded in the 1970s. This section identifies lessons learned related to the three primary research questions of this study:

4.   What structures, program elements, policies, and practices did Portlanders find over time are necessary to encourage and support greater community involvement in local decision making and civic life?

5.   What dynamics helped or hindered the evolution of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system?

6.   What does the Portland experience tell us about what it takes to sustain and preserve the advances toward greater participatory democracy?

System Elements: During the period described in this chapter, Potter and Adams restored a number of the system elements that had been lost, and implemented many other long-standing recommendations for the first time.

Community Connect's three goals asserted that any successful neighborhood and community involvement system needs to work to achieve three primary purposes: getting more people involved and connected with each other and the civic life of the community, building capacity in the community in leaders and organizations and helping organization network with each other; and increasing the willingness and capacity of city government to work with community members to ensure that they will have a voice and be able to affect issues and decisions they care about.

Community Connect found that not everyone finds their strongest sense of community through shared geography. Community Connect argued that Portland's system needed to move away from its traditional focus on geographic neighborhood associations as the primary vehicle for community involvement with city government and embrace the concept that many people are more likely to become involved through participation in groups and organizations of people who share their identity, life circumstances, or interest. Community Connect asserted that ONI and the City should support capacity building in and work with all of these different organizations. Traditional neighborhood associations are still very important community organizing

vehicles but they need to be viewed as elements within a broader and more diverse "fabric" of communities and community organizations.

The importance of ONI's original mission of community empowerment was reaffirmed and reestablished. ONI's capacity to support its mission was greatly enhanced through the hiring of a number of new staff people to support involvement by different groups in the community and by significant additional resources to support ONI's neighborhood and community partner organizations.

Effective community involvement requires adequate funding and support. During the 1990s and early 2000s, neighborhood leaders complained that, city leaders and staff were criticizing neighborhood associations for not involving a greater diversity of their community members, they also were not providing the additional funding and support these volunteer-run organizations needed do this.

A number of system reviews had recommended pushing resources out into the community to help fund community-identified priorities and projects and had recommended that the City fund some sort of neighborhood grant program. Potter funded the establishment of ONI's Neighborhood Small Grants program, which catalyzed tremendous creativity in the community and leveraged substantial community energy and resources. The City also funded community grant programs through Vision into Action and the East Portland Action Plan, which also were very effective tools for involving community members, building capacity and relationships in the community, and achieving community goals.

Many system reviews also called for formal processes to involve community members in key decision making processes including: the development of the city budget, priority setting for capital improvement projects, and the development of long-range land use plans for the community. Mayor Adams reinstated the bureau budget advisory committees (BACs) and, through OMF, invited community groups to design their own processes to inform and involve their community members in the city budget process. Despite, repeated recommendations for reinstatement of some sort of Neighborhood Needs process, no process has been created to give community members a voice in helping the city identify its priorities for capital improvement spending and projects. Neighborhood planning did not make a comeback, but BPS established the District Liaison Planner Program, which assigned planners to work with communities in different parts of Portland. These district planners have become familiar with the cultures, needs, and priorities of different communities and have helped BPS follow through with planning projects that respond to some community-determined needs. In lieu of a formal neighborhood planning program supported by BPS staff, staff at some of the neighborhood coalition offices have been assisting neighborhood associations and their community members to implement their own visioning processes and to develop actions plans for their own neighborhoods.

Neighborhood and community activists continue to see value in having citywide bodies or mechanisms that allow them to gather, share information, and work together on policies and projects with a citywide focus. The Citywide Land Use Group (CWLU) is the only body that has been able to sustain involvement over a long period of time. The

monthly meetings of the neighborhood coalition directors and chairs provide some

opportunity for neighborhood coalitions to share information and work together but do

not provide an opportunity for in-depth policy research and advocacy. The ONA BAC

monthly meetings similarly provide an opportunity for representatives of neighborhood

coalitions and associations and other ONI community partner organizations to get to

know each other and identify issues they might want to work on, but the ONI BAC

focuses primarily on policy issues that affect ONI's programs or budget. The monthly

meetings of the ONI DCL Program partners have helped them strengthen their

relationships and plan some strategic initiatives. Representatives of the DCL Program

organizations also participate in the Coalition for Communities of Color, which has been

very effective as researching policy issues and advocating for change with the City of

Portland and Multnomah County. Community Connect and other system reviews also

have recommended holding annual citywide neighborhood and community summits or

gatherings to help people connect and identify needs and opportunities to work together.

ONI has not organized a citywide neighborhood or community summit since 2004.

The experiences of the later 2000s and early 2010s also emphasized the

importance for effective community involvement of skilled staff and good process

design. Processes that are very successful at involving community members usually have

staff people with strong community involvement values and skills supporting them.

Community involvement successes and failures also support the importance of good

process design, in all its many aspects. Although, Community Connect produced an

important and influential product by the end, the poor process design and implementation

repeatedly undermined and nearly ended the project. Other processes—such as, visionPDX, PIAC, and the East Portland Action Plan—show how well-designed processes—that are open, accessible, well-funded, and that treat people with respect, and use approaches and methods tailored to meet the cultures and needs of different communities—are much more likely to be satisfying and productive and encourage community members and city staff to work together in the future. As Mayor Hales noted, EPAP had shown that more people will choose to be involved If incentives exist, "like grants" and "real power" to accomplish things.

Since the founding of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system, neighborhood and community activists have called on the City to provide timely and relevant notification to affected neighborhood and community members and organizations regarding proposed city government decisions, policies, and programs. They have asserted repeatedly that this "early warning" system is crucial to the ability of individuals and organizations to get involved early when they can have the most impact. Many of the complaints about the City's notification system echo the same complaints made by neighborhood activists in the 1970s. The PIAC Comp Plan Workgroup has identified the need for a major review and update of the City's formal notification system as an important implementation step to follow the adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

The importance of effective leadership training, similarly, has been identified by system reviews throughout the history of the system and was repeated by Community

Connect and other processes. It appears that Mayor Hales may support the development and implementation of a citywide ongoing community leadership program.

Community Connect, the PITF, and many other system reviews emphasized the need to ensure that city leaders and staff are willing and able to work effectively and constructively with community members and organizations. The PITF recommendations provided a valuable, comprehensive, strategic plan for achieving this goal. The creation of PIAC has provided an strong ongoing body that is developing and advocating for the implement of these recommendations.

Reform Process: Mayor Potter presided over the most significant reform and expansion of Portland's community and neighborhood involvement system since its founding in the 1970s. These changes stand in stark contrast to the neglect and decline of the system under Mayor Katz. The Potter/Adams/Hales period offers interesting insights into factors that set the stage for and allowed these important changes to move forward.

Mayor Potter showed the significant effect a strong political champion, especially a mayor, can have on a City's progress toward greater participatory democracy and a "community governance" culture. Potter used his power as mayor and his influence over the city budget (and the availability of lots of discretionary one-time city revenue) to initiate and support many review processes (e.g. visionPDX, Community Connect, the Charter Review Commission, etc.) that raised attention to and provided important credibility and support for the implementation of many different program and policy initiatives. Potter steered millions of dollars of funding to community involvement projects and programs. He also strengthened the system for the future by establishing

formal bodies—the Portland Commission on Disabilities, the Human Rights

Commission, PIAC, and the Human Relations Office—to carry on this important work

after he left office.

Mayors Adams and Hales have continued to support the system and both have

played important roles in ensuring that the ONI Commissioner in Charge understands and

supports community involvement and have helped soften the negative impact of required

budget cuts on ONI programs and ONI's community partner organizations.

"Policy entrepreneurs" within city government and in the community continued to

play an important role, both in re-introducing good ideas from the past and developing

new ideas as processes moved forward. Many of them served as the work horses behind

the many processes during this time period that helped map out needed reforms. Most of

the reforms instituted by Mayor Potter had been developed by policy entrepreneurs

during earlier processes. One of Potter's primary contributions was to "open the policy

window" that allowed these reforms to be implemented.

The role of key studies in shifting public priorities and reframing issues also was

very evident during this time period. The Urban League "State of Black Oregon" report

and similar reports developed by the Coalition for Communities of Color and PSU served

as a strong "wake-up call" for progressive Portland leaders and community members and

illustrated the severe disparities many communities of color faced in Portland. The

release of these studies during the development of the Portland Plan allowed the Equity

TAG members and Mayor Adams to make "equity" the overarching theme and

framework of this broad strategic planning process. These studies, as well as reports like

Community Connect, also were valuable because they helped define problems and mapped out what it would take to solve them. These studies and reports served as valuable resources for policy entrepreneurs who wanted to push these agendas forward.

Embedding: The decline of Portland's community and neighborhood system under Mayor Katz, and City Commissioner Randy Leonard's unilateral attempt to refocus the system on "neighborhood services," were "wake-up calls" for many community members who realized they needed to embed the system's values, structures, and programs more deeply into city government and in the community to protect them in the future.

ONI attempted to "embed" its core mission of community empowerment by revising its mission and goals to reflect the Community Connect goals and values. While Potter funded many of the new programs at ONI through "one-time" funds, ONI staff, ONI BAC members and Commissioner Fritz worked hard to shift many of these programs to "on-going" status so they would become a more permanent feature of ONI's budgets.

As mentioned earlier, Potter helped embed many of his values more deeply into city government's structure by establishing new city commissions and the new Office of Human Relations. Mayor Adams and the Equity TAG members helped embed "equity" as a important policy goal in the Portland Plan policy document adopted by City Council. City staff and community members have worked hard to ensure that equity continues to be a driving force in the development of additional city policies, such as the city's Comprehensive Plan and the city's new Title VI Civil Rights Plan. The creation, by

Mayor Adams and Commissioner Fritz, of the Office of Equity and Human Rights, the mission of which is to promote equity in city government and the community, established important capacity within city government to keep advocating for and assisting in the implementation of change in city government policies, practices and culture.

PIAC has been the source of some of the most comprehensive and effective efforts to embed community involvement values, policies, and practices in city government. The PITF recommendations provided a valuable strategic plan for this effort. PIAC successfully advocated for the City Council's adoption of the Public Involvement Principles and then moved strategically to incorporate these principles into other policy documents like the Comprehensive Plan and Title VI Civil Rights Plan. PIAC's work on the community involvement chapter of the Comprehensive Plan also will, for the first time in Portland's history, ensure the development of ongoing capacity in BPS to support, review and evaluate community involvement processes and will establish legally-binding requirements that city staff follow basic best practices for community involvement.

Portland's path to participatory democracy has never been more firmly rooted in Portland's city government—and the roots are still growing.