

February 7, 1996

**REPORT &
RECOMMENDATIONS**

of the

**Task Force
on Neighborhood Involvement**

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ATTACHMENTS

List of Task Force Members

Budget

Reports from Minority Opinions of Task Force Members

I. TASK FORCE CHARGE

The Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement was appointed by Commissioner Charlie Hales in November 1994 and given its charge to:

Conduct an assessment which includes but is not limited to **"a thorough examination of the structure, effectiveness, funding needs, and distribution of the citizen involvement system; and the identification of options for enhancing citizen participation and citizen/government communication."**

Scope of the Task Force Charge

With guidance from Commissioner Hales, the Task Force determined that the scope of its charge included responsibility to:

1. Examine the Neighborhood Association (NA)/District Coalition (DC)/Office of Neighborhood Associations (ONA) structure in relation to citizen involvement with the City of Portland and other governmental entities;
2. Look beyond the current ONA structure to find opportunities to broaden citizen involvement and to encourage participation by the full diversity of our communities;
3. Look for opportunities to make significant improvement in citizen participation.

II. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION/NEIGHBORHOOD INVOLVEMENT: WORKING DEFINITION

The Task Force adopted the following working definition of the term citizen participation/neighborhood involvement as:

Citizen participation/neighborhood involvement includes efforts by residents, business owners, service providers, and others to improve the **quality of life** in their shared neighborhood. It includes, but is not limited to efforts to improve air and water quality, transportation, safety, appearance, and overall liveability of the neighborhood.

The Task Force agreed to use the term "citizen" to include all residents and other interested individuals in neighborhoods without regard to their legal status as citizens of the United States or any other country.

III. FRAMEWORK FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

The Task Force established the following overarching intentions for citizen involvement. These then served as the framework within which the Task Force's work was completed.

A. Promote Problem Solving in an Atmosphere of Mutual Respect

- Build trust
- Promote win/win, not win/lose resolutions to issues
- Reduce adversarial relationship between neighborhoods, City and others
- Provide opportunities for civil adversaries to deal effectively with differences
- Bring decision-makers face-to-face with citizens
- Encourage early participation in development planning
- Provide ways for neighborhoods to relate to other communities
- Provide base for developing long term solutions
- Encourage folks working for government to feel part of the community and vice versa

B. Be Responsive and Inclusive

- Provide a framework for involvement which is visible and understandable to the general public
- Be welcoming, nurturing, and allow participants to have a good time
- Promote active involvement of diverse communities
- Contribute to a greater sense of community
- Be representative of communities
- Overcome apathy
- Proactively reflect needs/concerns of communities

C. Be Effective

- Meet citizen needs quickly and effectively
- Result in improved livability
- Build community partnerships
- Involve minimal waste
- Be able to impact laws and challenge the status quo
- Be accountable

D. Develop Leadership Skills of Participants

E. Be Respected and Utilized by the City and Other Governmental Units

- Build and support government respect for the wishes/values of neighborhoods
- Be utilized by governments to involve neighborhoods in key decisions

IV. TASK FORCE STUDY PROCESS

The Task Force appointed by Commissioner Hales included 25 citizens drawn from all parts of the city. Some Task Force members had extensive experience working with Neighborhood Associations and District Coalitions. Others came to the Task Force with little or no previous contact with the current neighborhood involvement structures.

The Task Force determined that it needed information about neighborhood involvement issues from a wide variety of sources, including individuals and groups with substantial involvement in the current system and those with very little contact with it.

Task Force information gathering steps included:

- A written contact with each Neighborhood Association and District Coalition requesting an opportunity for Task Force members to attend a meeting and gather input, or inviting every group to complete a questionnaire in lieu of a face to face meeting.
- Task Force members attended and received input at 28 Neighborhood Association and seven District Coalition (including the North Portland Network of Neighborhood Association Chairs) meetings.
- Task Force members received written information from several additional Neighborhood Associations and individuals.
- The Task Force sponsored two public meetings, one on the east side, the other downtown.
- Task Force members were briefed on current citizen involvement structures by ONA staff, Police and Planning Bureau staff, and representatives from citizen involvement programs for Multnomah County, Metro, the Port of Portland, Portland Public Schools, and the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.
- Task Force members observed two focus groups: one of City Bureau Managers, and one with City Bureau outreach staff.
- Task Force members were briefed on performance measurement and collaborative approaches to accountability by City Auditor Barbara Clark.
- Task Force members reviewed all ordinances, guidelines, budgets, and contracts guiding the current system.
- Information was provided to the Task Force on citizen involvement models in several other cities.

- Task Force members interviewed representatives of nine organizations which involve residents and/or businesses in neighborhood and civic improvement efforts but are not part of the current City neighborhood involvement system.
- Several Task Force members conducted doorstep interviews with randomly selected residents in their own neighborhoods.

The Task Force circulated its November 1, 1995 Discussion Draft of possible recommendations to all NA's, DC's and individuals and organizations on its "interested persons" list. The Task Force held two community meetings in November and received both oral and written comments from individuals, NA's and DC's.

The Task Force formed small groups to conduct more detailed discussion of issues highlighted in comments on the Discussion Draft. The small groups developed revised recommendations which, when approved by the Task Force, have been included in the revised recommendations.

V. TASK FORCE FINDINGS

Citizen Participation/neighborhood involvement is working very well for many people. Portland is famous nationwide as a model for encouraging citizens to work together to improve their neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Any changes recommended by the Task Force must build on the strengths of the current system.

Participants in neighborhood involvement activities within the current structure told us that many Neighborhood Associations are:

- Excellent at receiving and discussing information
- Getting results on issues neighbors identify
- Creating a sense of neighborhood and community
- Linking businesses and residents
- Supporting diversity in the community

Participants also noted that many District Coalitions are succeeding in efforts to:

- Provide strong support to meet neighborhood needs
- Provide effective advocacy with the City
- Make good use of limited resources
- Communicate information throughout their districts through newsletters
- Effectively support neighborhood efforts in crime prevention, growth, transportation, and planning issues

Despite the successes of the past twenty years, the evidence collected during the information gathering process indicates that elements of the functioning and structure of Neighborhood Associations, District Coalitions, and the Office of Neighborhood Associations are not entirely effective and could, of course, accomplish more.

Among the kinds of problems noted in the information gathering process:

Some Neighborhood Associations:

- Involve a very small portion of the people in their neighborhood
- Do not reflect the diversity of the residents of their community
- Experience conflict and interpersonal communication problems which discourage participation.

Concerns were voiced that some perceive some District Coalitions as:

- More focused on administrative and staff management issues than on NA concerns
- Limited in their effectiveness by difficulty dealing with conflicts
- Staff driven rather than neighborhood driven

Many suggested that the problems noted are at least partially the result of inadequate funding. NA's lack the resources to communicate with all residents in their neighborhoods. DC's don't have enough staff to perform the education and outreach which would be necessary to promote greater buy-in, and some have experienced high turnover rates due to low pay and benefits.

Most City Bureau Managers perceive the NA's and DC's to be very valuable resources through which the City can engage in dialogue with its citizens. While they acknowledge many of the same limitations noted by individuals and the NA's and DC's themselves, they emphasize the importance of maintaining ongoing structures which bring neighbors together to work on issues of mutual interest.

It was also recognized that as families struggle to make ends meet, many individuals lack the time and energy needed to develop a sense of community. Many neighbors work long hours and prefer to spend evenings and weekends with their families and friends. There are clearly many challenges to involving citizens on the neighborhood level. But the consensus of our informants is that the benefits of strong neighborhood involvement are worth the effort.

The Task Force analyzed all aspects of the system and determined that the present structure does not need major changes. Additional investment is required to produce a more effective system for neighborhood involvement. Additional investment should be directed to improving functioning and building structures which promote greater participation, of a wider diversity of neighbors, with increased citizen satisfaction and a higher success rate (measured by needs addressed, problems solved, community satisfaction, and cohesiveness).

VI. TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Value of Neighborhood Involvement

Citizen participation/neighborhood involvement plays a central role in improving the quality of life for all Portlanders and in promoting an effective and responsive government. Public funds invested in supporting neighborhood involvement produce substantial public benefit. Portland is a national model for neighborhood involvement, and neighborhood activists and City government both deserve credit for their substantial achievements working together to build a better community.

Our recommendations are intended to bring an already strong system to new levels of openness and effectiveness and to enhance an already strong City commitment to the value of citizen participation.

We want to build and support a participatory government that provides a direct link between neighbors and their government. The highest level of involvement is participation of the full diversity of neighbors sitting face to face with those planning and implementing public policy/action. Neighbors should be participating in decision making and allocating resources to implement public policy/action.

Our structures for neighborhood involvement should enable government to communicate with citizens in a systematic fashion, and likewise enable citizens to communicate with government in the same manner.

Our structures for neighborhood involvement should provide forums in which people who share common geographical areas and common interests can come together to discuss issues of concern, resolve conflicts, achieve consensus, and communicate with their government. Our structures should also provide opportunities for citizens to participate in governmental decisions which will affect their quality of life. However, the purpose of Neighborhood Associations is to promote community, not just to communicate with government.

Neighborhood Associations play a vital role in neighborhood involvement. They must be allowed to function with independence and freedom from constraints. Those NA's offering to follow basic guidelines that support active participation should be assisted with supportive service, if needed, to enhance their effectiveness as participatory groups.

District Coalitions have demonstrated their ability to help Neighborhood Associations link together in support of a common vision, sharing knowledge and experiences. District Coalitions provide a practical structure to support NA's with training and technical assistance.

B. Structure for Neighborhood Involvement

The Task Force recognizes that individuals and their needs and views lie at the heart of neighborhood involvement. To support individual community members' involvement with their community and their government, the Task Force asserts that NA's should remain and be revitalized as the cornerstone of Portland's structure for neighborhood involvement. It also affirms the proven value of the District Coalition as a structure for serving the NA's and for linking related NA's together to address common issues, and as entities with which the City may contract to provide funding for staff and other resources necessary to support the work of NA's. The DC structure provides a buffer between the NA's and the City, which helps preserve the essential independence of the NA's.

However, the Task Force also recommends recognition of an alternative structure for linking and supporting NA's similar to the structure developed by the NA's in the North District. This option would provide for a group of NA's to receive the support and technical assistance otherwise provided through a DC through a Neighborhood Office staffed by City employees. This structure substitutes a City-staffed office for one operated by an independent nonprofit DC. After approval of a formal request to use this option, the NA's would request that the City hire staff for the positions for the neighborhood office. The staff provides services to the neighborhoods based on mutually agreed upon procedures. Staff would be City employees supervised by ONA staff and the NA's. The NA's would send their Chair or designee to regular meetings to discuss common problems and issues and to express needs and priorities for staff assistance. The NA's would participate in the hiring, evaluation, and firing of staff including developing the job descriptions for each position. ONA would be held accountable for the effectiveness and responsiveness of the neighborhood office staff.

In addition to these two current structures, the Task Force recommends that ONA consider other reasonable proposals submitted by groups of adjacent NA's for structures which will provide the support needed by those NA's.

Changes to the ONA *Guidelines* should be made to clarify these options (Note: a public involvement process would be put in place for the consideration of any and all change to the Guidelines.) More detailed provisions for requesting and evaluating these alternate structures should be developed during implementation planning after adoption of Task Force Recommendations.

ONA should devise a clear process through which such proposals for alternative structures can be examined and should avoid rapid transitions among structures. The process for consideration of alternative structure proposals should include consultation with all NA's and DC's affected by the proposed change and opportunities for community members not affiliated with NA's or DC's to present their views. ONA should recognize an alternative

structure for support of NA's only in cases in which there is substantial consensus within the affected communities in favor of a structural change.

This recommendation of allowing NA's to choose among several acceptable structures for obtaining staff support and resources for NA activities is based on our belief that citizens are best able to determine the ways of working together which are most effective for their own communities.

This recommendation is based on several key assumptions:

- NA's must continue to fulfill the central role in neighborhood involvement by providing community members (residents, business owners, civic organizations, and others involved in the neighborhood) opportunities to work together to improve the quality of life in their neighborhood.
- NA's should continue to provide a structure for groups and individuals to communicate the views of the neighborhood to the City and other governmental bodies.
- NA's should also provide a structure for the City and other governmental units to communicate with community members, including providing information, seeking input or feedback, or seeking a sense of the opinion of the neighborhood within the limits of available human and fiscal resources.
- It is extremely important that the City be responsive to needs and views expressed by the NA's, and be respectful of the volunteer time and energy of the NA participants.
- It is essential that the NA's remain independent, free to voice the opinions of their members and set their own priorities for the use of members' time and energy.
- Citizens/neighbors always have the right to communicate directly with the City. The NA's should provide an opportunity for citizens/neighbors to work together to develop a stronger position, but are not authorized to close off opportunities of citizens/neighbors to speak directly with the City when they choose to do so.

C. The Role of the Current Office of Neighborhood Associations

The role of the current Office of Neighborhood Associations should be expanded to include not only its current responsibilities as specified in the *ONA Guidelines* and the ordinance establishing the office, but also responsibility and authority for coordinating the efforts of the Bureaus to reach out to citizens/neighbors to involve them in key planning and implementation efforts.

We affirm the current role of ONA, which includes:

- Recognition and support of NA's;
- Provision of funding to support NA efforts both through contracting with DC's and through operation of District Offices (when requested and approved through the process to adopt an alternative structure);
- Provision of training for NA and DC participants;
- Operation of a telephone Information and Referral line to link citizens to City Bureaus and to their NA's and DC's;
- Coordination and support for the Crime Prevention efforts carried out by the DC's;
- Coordination of Immigrant/Refugee Services;
- Coordination of City Bureau outreach activities involving NA's and neighborhood involvement;
- Promotion of communication and collaboration among NA's, neighborhood Business District Associations, ethnic and civic organizations, major employers, and institutions; and
- Provision of mediation and facilitation services through the Neighborhood Mediation Center.

The Task Force recommends that ONA's role be expanded to function as an Office of Neighborhood Involvement:

- While the NA's will continue to be the primary City-supported structures for neighborhood involvement, the Office should assist neighborhood Business District Associations and other civic organizations in their efforts to work effectively with neighbors and with the City.
- ONA should also assume a clearinghouse role to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of the City Bureaus to engage neighbors and neighborhoods in discussion and feedback of Bureau issues.

The name of the office should be changed to clearly convey the City's role of promoting and supporting neighborhood involvement. The present name—the Office of Neighborhood Associations—has led in some cases to the misperception that the NA's are part of City government, reporting through ONA. Both the current and the recommended structures for neighborhood involvement emphasize the need for totally independent NA's. The name change will also be needed to adequately convey the broader role for the

office contained in these recommendations, encompassing coordination of City Bureau efforts, and work with Business District Associations and neighborhood focused civic organizations. Neighborhood participants should be involved in choosing a new name for ONA.

D. Key Neighborhood Involvement Initiatives

The Task Force recommends the following initiatives to enhance current neighborhood involvement efforts and overcome challenges identified through the study process:

Initiative #1. Intensive and Inclusive Study of NA and DC Boundaries

More than 30 overlapping boundary situations currently exist. The Task Force has heard from several NA's involved in overlapping boundary disputes that the current policy does not facilitate resolution of their problems. In some cases, NA's have agreed to overlapping boundaries in the past but one of the NA's involved in the overlap area no longer agrees. On the other hand, the Task Force also heard from NA's which reported that they are satisfied with sharing overlapping boundaries.

The Task Force also heard from residents and business people concerned that current NA boundaries divide the natural communities which form around shopping areas or major institutions.

Permit overlapping boundaries when mutually acceptable to the NA's involved. When conflicts arise relating to continuing an overlapping boundary, ONA should provide assistance in conflict resolution/mediation to assist the NA's with resolution. If the conflict is not resolved within 6 months, ONA may withdraw funding. Each NA may continue to assert its own boundary definition. For administrative/statistic purposes, City bureaus may define neighborhoods without overlapping boundaries. The City should involve citizens in a community planning process to define non-overlapping boundaries for administrative/statistical purposes. However, City notices on land use matters should continue to be distributed based on all Neighborhood Associations' self-defined boundaries.

Initiative #2. NA and DC Self-Evaluations

All NA's and DC's should be asked to consider conducting a complete self-evaluation assessing their strengths and weaknesses in meeting the needs of their communities within the criteria described in the Framework for Citizen Involvement included in this report. The self-assessment process should include concerted outreach efforts which include the views and preferences of residents, businesses, ethnic, and civic groups within the NA or DC boundaries. NA's should be encouraged to identify the natural focal points of their areas, i.e. schools, shopping areas, parks, employers, etc. and consider boundaries which reflect the common interests of the residents and other

stakeholders relating to those focal points. When the Planning Bureau does Community Plans, ONA should facilitate Neighborhood Association self-evaluations of Neighborhood Association boundaries if requested.

As part of the study process, all DC's shall involve their affiliated NA's in discussion about the degree to which the DC is meeting the needs of each NA. DC's will include the views of all their affiliated NA's in their DC self-evaluation.

ONA should provide funding and support to assist NA's and DC's to complete this study process.

Initiative #3. Increased Linkage Between NA's, DC's, ONA, and Neighborhood Business District Associations and Other Civic Groups

All NA's and DC's shall be encouraged to invite participation by and communication with community civic groups (including ethnic organizations) and the Neighborhood Business District Associations serving their communities.

Guidelines should be modified to include language encouraging connections and communication between Neighborhood Business District Associations and Coalitions.

ONA should function as a clearinghouse providing information about NA's and DC's to business and civic groups and assisting NA's and DC's to form effective relationships with such groups.

Initiative #4. New Recognition and Support for Neighborhood Business District Associations in NA's and DC's.

ONA should facilitate the establishment of criteria and procedures to recognize Neighborhood Business District Associations (NBDA's) which will involve the Alliance of Portland Neighborhood Business Associations Inc. and neighborhood activists. It is intended that those NBDA's recognized by ONA should be entitled to the same notifications as recognized Neighborhood Associations.

ONA should provide funding to the District Coalitions to provide support for communications costs (printing, mailing, etc.) to NBDA's recognized by ONA. The distribution of ONA funding for support to NBDA's by DC's should be based proportionally on the number of recognized NBDA's in each coalition's district.

NBDA's recognized by ONA should be entitled to standing as a recognized organization for businesses in their neighborhood.

Initiative #5. Increased Outreach and Inclusiveness

As stated in the Framework for Citizen Involvement, NA's and DC's should reflect the full diversity of their communities. Achieving inclusiveness represents a very great challenge. As volunteers, NA leaders confront numerous demands with little time.

ONA should request from the City additional resources to assist NA's to increase and enhance their efforts to reach all members of their communities, particularly those segments of their communities which are presently under-represented in their activities. Resources may include: mailings to all households offering an opportunity for involvement; training in effective outreach and building multicultural organizations; funding for newsletter production and distribution; and support for other initiatives designed and proposed by NA's for approaches specifically appropriate for their communities. ONA should facilitate the development of or acknowledge a process for neighborhoods without boundaries.

Initiative #6. Increased Support for Conflict Resolution within the Neighborhood Involvement System

The neighborhood involvement system offers important opportunities for community members to resolve conflicts at the local level—among neighbors and businesses at the neighbor level and among neighborhoods at the district level. By working together, community members can craft solutions to perceived conflicts more effectively than City Bureaus or City Council.

However, conflict resolution often requires mediation and facilitation skills. The goal should be to facilitate dialogue and issues resolution by dealing effectively with personality and communication difficulties.

Consequently, the City and ONA should invest new resources to assist NA's and DC's to develop conflict resolution skills and provide conflict resolution assistance when needed (as described in the attached December 19, 1995 memo to the Task Force).

Initiative #7. Increased Quality and Stability of Staff Resources for Neighborhood Involvement by Reducing Salary Disparities among District Coalitions and District Offices

The Task Force found that differences in salary and benefits levels among the DC's and between the DC's and the District Office (staffed by City employees) have resulted in some instability in staffing. Staff have moved from district to district in order to obtain better compensation for essentially the same levels of responsibility.

Set and fund salary levels for District Coalition positions funded through ONA contracts at levels equivalent to City of Portland comparable positions.

Provide funding to equalize benefit levels for these positions among the District Coalitions, but do not require benefit levels equivalent to City of Portland levels.

The Task Force members were evenly divided on a proposal to recommend that benefit levels as well as salary levels be made comparable with City levels. While this proposal would support the objective of reducing disparity among the districts, Task Force members were concerned that this benefit level may not be appropriate in nonprofit organizations and that the funding would not be available to implement such a recommendation.

Initiative #8. Increase Resources Available to Neighborhood Associations and Strengthen DC Support for NA Efforts.

- a. Establish a new Neighborhood Grants Program to make additional funds available to the Neighborhood Associations. Encourage NA's to submit applications for neighborhood grants to directly assist them in carrying out their efforts. ONA or the DC's could assist NA's to prepare applications if needed.
- b. Involve NA's in review of each DC's proposed annual workplan, proposed performance measurements, and annual review of achievements. In this approach, DC's would need to formally consult with the NA's they serve. In the event that NA's did not support the proposed or actual activities of the DC's, ONA would provide problem solving assistance.
- c. Base some portion of the allocation to each DC on the number of NA's and citizens served. Allow NA's which are not satisfied with the support received from their DC to affiliate with another DC, and move the allocation associated with the NA to the new DC through the procedures currently specified. The amount currently allocated per NA is very low. This recommendation would include increasing the total ONA allocation and then increasing the amount associated with each NA served by each DC.

This recommendation is based on the assumption that each DC will receive a core allocation which is sufficient to provide basic services and that the portion allocated based on the number of NA's and citizens served would be in addition to this core allocation.

The issue of allocation of funding among the districts is complex. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that the portion of the Task Force which continues after acceptance of these recommendations (see Section VI. H.) work with the ONA BAC to develop an equity funding strategy which considers but is not limited to factors such as population, number of NA's served, and area; and indicators of need such as rate of development, crime, poverty, and education and income levels.

The continuing Task Force should set standards for funding for items directly related to numbers of residents, such as newsletters and mailings. The continuing Task Force should make its recommendation within 90 days.

E. Collaborative Approach to Accountability

Throughout the information gathering process, the Task Force heard concerns about accountability within the structure for neighborhood involvement. NA's should be accountable for being inclusive and representing fairly the views of all participants. NA's should hold DC's accountable for and DC's should hold themselves accountable for providing support for NA activities as described in DC contracts with ONA. ONA should enforce the terms of its contracts with DC's without interfering with each Coalition's right to set priorities and address community needs. The City should measure the public benefit being achieved through the investment of public dollars in neighborhood involvement.

The independence of the NA's and the DC's from City control is an essential element in an effective system of neighborhood involvement. The Task Force recommends an approach to accountability which respects and preserves that independence while providing tools to address problems and dissatisfactions with NA's, DC's, and ONA. Both NA's and citizens need effective ways to deal with problems and dissatisfactions with the City's responsiveness to neighborhood concerns.

To address these needs for mutual accountability, the Task Force recommends commitment to a collaborative rather than adversarial approach to accountability. In this approach, all parts of the neighborhood involvement system would agree to an approach to accountability which encourages participants at all levels to:

1. Ask for what they want
2. Explain how they would know if they got it
3. Not tell each other what not to do
4. Address problems in the context of larger goals

To this end, all parties would approach holding themselves and one another accountable by:

- Focusing on goals
- Rewarding desired behavior
- Training
- Modeling desired behavior
- Using mediation to resolve conflict
- Planning for improvement rather than blaming for past outcomes
- Agreeing upon principles rather than developing rules

In order for this approach for accountability to work, the Task Force recommends that ONA work collaboratively with the NA's and DC's in developing contractual agreements and facilitate inclusive evaluation of progress toward agreed-upon goals. When conflict arises or dissatisfaction is expressed within the system, ONA should provide leadership to encourage discussion of what all parties want and facilitate resolution satisfactory to all parties.

Some of the approaches which may be considered are:

- Development by NA's and DC's of written expectations for NA and DC board members
- Development of guidelines for action plans and performance evaluations, including reference to City, County and State benchmarks, and measurable as well as subjective outcomes
- Increased public disclosure of performance indicators
- Reassessment of options for enforcement of the *Guidelines*, including a clearer definition of the role of ONA and the establishment of the Citizen Advisory Committee
- Reassessment of the Grievance procedure

F. Operational Recommendations

The Task Force recommends adoption of seven key goals for a strong, inclusive neighborhood involvement system. The strategies presented under each goal are representative of steps which should be taken in support of achievement of each goal. Additional strategies and revisions to those listed here should be developed through the ongoing discussions of the Task Force described in Section H.

GOAL #1: Citizens/neighbors should be aware of and understand the work of the NA's, DC's, and ONA. They should be aware of the resources available through the neighborhood involvement structure.

Strategies:

1. ONA should include in its annual workplan efforts to build visibility and understanding of the overall neighborhood involvement structure.
2. ONA should continue to develop and distribute more understandable brochures and materials explaining the neighborhood involvement structure, ways to become involved in NA's, and services available from ONA and the DC's:

3. ONA should pursue other methods to reach neighbors including but not limited to:
 - a. A map showing the NA boundaries and explaining the resources available (District Offices, ONA) in phone books
 - b. Advertisements for NA's on buses
 - c. Utilization of school, local, and ethnic newspapers
 - d. Conduct a pilot project to increase the use of computer, cable, fax, and other electronic communication between the City and residents
4. ONA's outreach efforts should clarify that the neighborhood involvement structure is designed to help neighbors work together effectively but in no way limits the access of individuals to City officials.
5. ONA should provide funding to assist NA's and DC's to communicate effectively with neighbors within their boundaries.

GOAL #2: Greater involvement by low income residents, renters, ethnic minorities, younger people with young children, and other under-represented groups in NA's and DC's will strengthen the neighborhood involvement process, benefitting both the individual neighborhoods and the City as a whole.

Strategies:

1. ONA should facilitate a process for acknowledging neighborhoods/communities without boundaries (see Attachment: Charles Shi Recommendations).
2. Recognized NA's should be strongly encouraged to make proactive efforts to assure participation by the full diversity of their community.
3. ONA should offer ongoing training on effective strategies for NA leaders to use to encourage diverse participation.
4. ONA should assist the NA's and DC's to overcome language barriers by providing translation and interpretation services.
5. ONA should continue encouragement toward reaching compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
6. ONA should encourage NA's and DC's to work with civic groups, ethnic groups, schools, businesses, churches, and other community stakeholders.
7. ONA should encourage NA's and DC's to provide child care at meetings and events whenever possible.
8. The City should follow the requirement to ask during decision making if there is a minority report, and how many members were involved in the

decision making process. At City Council hearings, there should be an opportunity for people to comment without identifying as either for or against the item, i.e. ask for supporters of the appellant, those wishing to comment in a neutral capacity, then supporters of the opponent.

9. ONA should encourage the City to provide a quiet room with an audio broadcast of the proceedings near Council chambers for citizens to use to care for their children while attending hearings or other Council meetings.

GOAL #3: NA's and DC's should be welcoming to all members of the community.

Strategies:

1. NA's and DC's should be strongly encouraged to use a welcoming process at each meeting.
2. ONA should offer ongoing training in meeting facilitation and effective meeting techniques. The training should emphasize techniques which promote expression of views by all participants and prevent domination of meeting time by more vocal participants.
3. NA's and DC's should be encouraged to hold meetings at times and locations convenient to as many neighbors as possible. Whenever feasible, meetings shall be held in accessible locations.
4. NA's and DC's should be encouraged to provide fun and social opportunities as well as standard meeting formats.
5. ONA should provide funding for assistance with conflict resolution and dealing with difficult people for NA's and DC's.
6. NA's and DC's should be encouraged to identify and welcome new neighbors to the NA and DC (i.e. Welcome Wagon).

GOAL #4: Opportunities for participation in neighborhood involvement should be available to those who have difficulty with or dislike attending meetings.

Strategies:

1. ONA should work to build awareness of its telephone information and referral services.
2. ONA should explore use of the Internet, the library data system, and other electronic communication to post information on City plans and provide opportunities for input and NA activities.
3. NA's should be encouraged to offer opportunities to work on projects and

activities as well as attend meetings.

GOAL #5: The neighborhood involvement structure should support the development of new and continuing leadership at all levels of NA's and DC's.

Strategies:

1. ONA should provide training and support for continuous leadership development.
2. ONA trainings should be conducted at multiple levels, meeting the needs of both more and less experienced activists.
3. NA/DC leaders should be strongly encouraged to attend trainings at least once a year.

GOAL #6: District Coalitions and District Offices should provide experienced, knowledgeable staff support for citizens and NA's.

Strategy:

ONA should facilitate regular networking meetings for DC and District Office staff to promote exchange of strategies and information.

GOAL #7: Bureaus should continue to involve neighbors and NA's in productive participation in developing and implementing policy through more effective, sincere coordinated efforts.

Strategies:

1. The City should require Bureaus to educate and utilize NA's for real issues with real choices in addition to information sharing outreach efforts they may choose to do outside the NA network. Every Bureau should be required to allocate staff time to neighborhood education, and then to utilize educated citizens effectively. Bureaus should ask NA's for information only when it will be used in a meaningful way.
2. The City should require Bureaus to use neighborhood volunteers to assist in the City's work whenever possible.
3. Bureaus should contact NA's for input early in project planning especially when infrastructure improvements are involved.
4. City Bureaus should locate meetings where the fewest number of people have to travel, at times convenient to the maximum number of people. Schedule Public Hearings (i.e. land use, Planning Commission) when the public doesn't have to miss work to attend.

5. Sign-in sheets should be made part of the record at all public hearings with columns for people to comment and/or indicate whether for or against a proposal. Neighbors should be counted if they attend, even if they don't wish to speak.
6. Bureaus should make sure that the most relevant person does the public outreach. They should avoid assigning someone to listen to neighbors and someone else to do the project. If design personnel need help facilitating public meetings, both the outreach coordinator and the designer should attend the discussion.
7. High level Bureau staff should participate in NA's/DC's more often. If more important discussion occur in the system, more people will attend and the NA's will be more useful to the decision-makers.
8. ONA should re-evaluate the Bureau Advisory Committee (BAC) process and implement changes to involve citizens in the City budget process.
9. Bureau outreach efforts should be scheduled and advertised at least six weeks in advance as much as possible to allow for dissemination to the public by inclusion in newsletters.
10. Bureaus should be encouraged to use postcards for mailed information. They're easier to read, recycle, or post.
11. The City should increase use of phone/e-mail notification of meetings for efficiency and to eliminate waste.
12. The guiding principles and handbook developed by the District Chairs, Bureau outreach staff, and ONA should be utilized as part of a process to improve City/citizen communication.

G. Budget Recommendations

The Task Force has asked the ONA staff to develop budget projections which reflect the costs of implementing the recommendations contained in this report. The Task Force supports the provision of additional funds by the City to implement these recommendations.

The Task Force recommends that funding for a four-position core staff be provided for each DC or District Office. At least one of the four positions should be designated for crime prevention activities.

The Task Force supports the provision of additional funds by the City to implement these recommendations.

H. Policies and Procedures Needed to Implement Initiatives and Recommendations

After the Task Force has adopted its final recommendations and they have been accepted by City Council, the Task Force should draft specific recommendations for development and revision of current policies and procedures to provide consistent support for the structures, concepts, and initiatives included in the Task Force Recommendations.

Again, a thorough citizen involvement process will be employed as changes to City policy, *ONA Guidelines*, etc. are considered.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

The following is a list of task force members who completed the process.

Alice Blatt: Wilkes Neighborhood Association, East Portland District Coalition.

Jane Braaten: Communications Unit Program Manager for the Planning & Support Division of the Police Bureau.

Bruce Crest: Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association, Central Northeast Neighbors.

Amanda Fritz: West Portland Park Neighborhood Association, Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.

Sheila Holden: Northeast Business Association, Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods.

Ky Holland: Richmond Neighborhood Association, Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program.

Bob Holmstrom: Forest Park Neighborhood Association, Neighbors West/Northwest

John Welch Jenkins: Hayden Island Neighborhood Network, North Portland Chairs Network.

Moshe Lenske: Woodstock Neighborhood Association, Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program.

Diane Linn: Director, Office of Neighborhood Associations

Ned Look: Formerly of the Oregon Community Foundation, Metro Charter Committee and the Portland Development Commission.

Jim Losk: 82nd Avenue Business Association, Alliance of Portland Neighborhood Business Associations delegate.

Louisa McCleary: Hillside Neighborhood Association, Neighbors West/Northwest

Tom Markgraf: Piedmont Neighborhood Association

Cathi Millar: Director of Public Affairs at AT&T Wireless, Business Committee for the Arts Board, State 9-1-1 Advisory Council

Marjorie Newhouse: Northwest District Association, ONA Bureau Advisory Committee

Marsha Palmer: Crime prevention coordinator with Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods.

Maria Rojo de Steffey: Staff assistant for Beverly Stein, Multnomah County Chair, active in community and public affairs.

Larry Scruggs: Arbor Lodge Neighborhood Association, Alliance of Portland Neighborhood Business Associations delegate.

Mr. Charles Shi: Asian Pacific American Alliance of Oregon, American Burmese Association of Oregon.

Marc Smiley: REACH Community Development, organizational development consultant.

Regena Warren: Chief's Forum, Oregon Teen Pregnancy Task Force, Big Sister program.

Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement
BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS (Revised)

	<u>FY 1996-97 BUDGET IMPACT</u>
<i>Summary Budget:</i>	
Determined recommendations:	
A. Neighborhood Association Small Grant Program	\$200,000
B. Increased Linkages and Outreach	142,499
C. Neighborhood Association Mediation and Facilitation	50,000
D. Business District Association Recognition and Support	50,000
E. Establishment of Salary Ranges	137,005
F. Core Staff of 4--With Crime Prevention Designation	98,305
G. Working Toward Equity in the Future	0
TOTAL	<u>\$677,809</u>

	<u>FY 1996-97 BUDGET IMPACT</u>
<i>Budget Detail:</i>	
Determined recommendations:	
A. Neighborhood Association Small Grant Program	\$200,000
B. Increased Linkages and Outreach	142,499
1. Increased printing and distribution for NAs/DCBs	72,000
2. Neighborhood-based training	10,000
3. City-wide awareness & recruitment campaign	27,699
4. City-wide staff assistance	27,800
5. NA self-evaluation/boundary study	5,000
C. Neighborhood Association Mediation and Facilitation	50,000
1. Staff assistance with mediation and facilitation	27,800
2. Contracted assistance	12,200
3. Mediation training	5,000
4. Volunteer training and assistance	5,000
D. Business District Association Recognition and Support	50,000
<i>This includes the development of a system for formal recognition by the City and support from the coalitions/offices for printing and distribution. Waiving fees for appeals is not being recommended.</i>	
E. Establishment of Salary Ranges	137,005
<i>Establishes salary ranges for coalition positions comparable to City salary ranges. Pegs coalition benefits to comparable City levels less PERS. (Allows a 10% increase for APP as a compensating adjustment; omits NPNO and NECN City employees.)</i>	

NOTE: These dollars would be phased into the coalition contracts over a period of years as the contractors granted allowable salary increases within the established ranges.)

- F. Core Staff of 4—With Crime Prevention Designation 98,305
Establishes a floor for staffing at which each district or neighborhood office would be maintained. Specifies that each office would be staffed by the following positions: director/coordinator; office manager/staff assistant; community organizer (duties to be assigned at the discretion of the individual office); and a minimum of one crime prevention specialist.

(Maintains current staffing levels if already above established core and includes an 18% materials & services adjustment and adjustment for APP.)

NOTE: These dollars would be phased into the coalition contracts over a period of years as the contractors granted allowable salary increases within the established ranges.)

- G Working Toward Equity Funding Among Districts in the Future 0
Allocations of future funds (in addition to core and current funding) will be determined with reference to population, # of neighborhood associations served, area, and need through a process in which each district/office submits proposals to ONA. Indicators of need would include rate of development, crime, poverty, and education and income levels.

TOTAL \$677,809

Minority Opinion #1

February 1, 1996

TO: Commissioner Charlie Hales, Commissioner-in-charge of ONA
Mayor Vera Katz
Commissioner Earl Blumenauer
Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury
Commissioner Mike Lindberg

RE: Neighborhood Crime Prevention Services -- Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement

As members of ONA's Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement and as practitioners in the public safety field in the City of Portland, we urge City Council to:

- **Accept the recommendation to designate crime prevention staff in each coalition office.** The requirement to designate staff positions for crime prevention was lifted two years ago; the assessments from crime prevention and police practitioners is that this has resulted in an inconsistent delivery of crime prevention services. Designating these positions provides better, more coordinated service delivery.
- **Continue to consider the recommendation to consolidate the management of crime prevention personnel.** The proposal to the task force to make crime prevention practitioners city employees under city management -- while still providing neighborhood based service delivery -- was narrowly defeated by the task force. The proposal to create a proficiency network among crime prevention practitioners to share areas of expertise citywide received a split vote. We urge City Council to recognize that roughly half of the task force was ready to recommend this proposal, and to give the proposal future consideration.
- **Consider the North Portland model of service delivery as a viable alternative to the coalition model of service delivery.** These service providers, who are city employees providing neighborhood based services, report that they have been able to generate more citizen participation in public safety projects than they had before under the coalition model. Working with a system that has the city keeping track of employee management issues while citizens set priorities for issues has clearly worked for the people in North Portland. We urge City Council to recognize this as a model other neighborhood groups may want to build.



Jane Braaten
Portland Police Bureau
Member for City of Portland outreach



Marsha Palmer
Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods
Member for coalition staff

Minority Opinion #2

This response to the Task Force charge absolutely concurs with the Task Force statements on pages 6, 7, and 8 describing the importance of Neighborhood Associations and their essential characteristic: complete independence and autonomy. Their presence and existence contributes a long list of proven great benefits to the City and its Citizens, past, present and future. This recognition in Portland, and our willingness and decision to invest public support to assist local organizing, leadership training, etc. --- under self direction --- without strings --- have resulted in earned national notice and praise. Task Force recommendations should avoid harming the integrity of this historic principle.

RECOMMENDATION I SUPPORT

In many cases the Task Force ascribed the difference between the expectations of Neighborhood Associations and the achievements of Neighborhood Associations to the amount of support provided. Shall we advise to apply the right amount of support -- or to lower expectations?

Task Force analysis revealed that $\frac{1}{2}$ of Portland's citizenry receive twice the Neighborhood Association funding as the other half. Since this covers "crime prevention" service, communication and technical assistance, clearly Recommendation #1 should be incremental remedy of such an inequity, as well as evaluation of any other monetary recommendation within this context!

(One might add here that community improvement and community development must also be considered "crime prevention.")

RECOMMENDATION II BAD PRACTICES

Teaching Democratic process, civility and respect, and making meetings worthwhile, purposeful and pleasant require the assistance of teaching, training, example, organizing, vision, goals and regular renewal. Task Force estimates show a two million dollar current shortfall to provide the bare bones skeleton to nurture this tradition of good habits and practice. (including mediation as necessary.) This is the pathway to results.

RECOMMENDATION III MANAGEMENT

An evaluation of DCs' successful performance in relation to size -- are there advantages to critical mass? -- may be a more important focus than attention to minimum "core" staffing.

RECOMMENDATION IV CONNECTING -- PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Public policy and public programs are born and administered from bureaus, and sections of bureaus, which are sometimes barely semi-connected. In so far as a downtown ONA can be a coordinator, all parties will gain.

In order to be better prepared, participatory players, citizens need a

