

Communities Beyond Neighborhood Boundaries

Summary of proposed changes in ONI Standards affecting CBNB's

Below are significant changes of importance to Communities Beyond Neighborhood Boundaries proposed in the draft ONI Standards. This is a good-faith effort to summarize differences between the existing ONI Guidelines with the proposed ONI Standards.

- ❑ See pages 13 and 24 in draft Standards for “Inclusion and Participation” sections for District Coalitions and ONI.
<http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=23242>
- ❑ See page 12 and 26 in side-by-side comparison of existing and proposed Standards.
<http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=42501>

Communities Beyond Neighborhood Boundaries (CBNB's) was a policy concept implemented with the last update of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) Guidelines in 1997. The proposed Standards would drop this policy.

In its place the Guidelines committee proposes naming specific action steps that ONI and District Coalitions would take to build the internal capacity of Neighborhood Associations to reach out to and build working relationships with existing diverse community-based organizations.

The intent of the CBNB policy was to, “address the need for inclusiveness in Neighborhood Associations and increasing diversity in citizen involvement.” CBNB's, or ethnic organizations, can seek acknowledgement by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and be eligible for support services when available.

The assistance to be provided would include ONI including the organization in their directory and encouraging City bureaus to disseminate mailings to them related to neighborhood livability, decision-making processes, and policy development. In exchange, CBNB organizations would agree to be State recognized non-profit corporations and not require dues payment as a condition of membership.

ONI has recently taken the initiative to expand its database listing of some 250 ethnic community-based organizations and share that information with other City bureaus and neighborhood groups. In effect, ONI is beginning to meet the intent of this policy independent of any organization's request to be acknowledged.

In addition to the action steps ONI and the District Coalitions would take, (listed below), there are several other initiatives underway that will continue to challenge the City to address the issue of diverse participation in Portland's public involvement efforts.

The Public Involvement Task Force, a committee requested by Council to recommend improvements to the City's public involvement efforts, is examining numerous proposals that would strengthen the City's capacity to engage diverse constituencies in City policy efforts. The Diversity and Civic Leadership Committee, a broad-based citizen committee initiated by SE Uplift Neighborhood Program, has won a commitment from Council to consider a diversity pilot project for increasing the organizational and leadership training capacity of Neighborhood Associations and diverse community-based organizations to engage more Portlanders in civic issues.

Efforts to expand "Inclusion and Participation" in Neighborhood Associations (District Coalitions: Section IV,B,2,b and ONI: Section V, D)

- ❑ Identifies specific under-represented constituency groups that District Coalitions and ONI should work to encourage participation in Neighborhood Associations. These include people of color, renters and low-income individuals, working families with children, immigrants and refugees, seniors, young adults, people with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bi and trans people.
- ❑ ONI to provide technical assistance; such as neighborhood demographic data, database of diverse community groups, and leadership trainings, to assist Coalitions to be strategic in what neighborhoods need targeted outreach and where there are opportunities for building partnerships.
- ❑ ONI provides technical assistance and resources to make neighborhood meetings more accessible. Some examples of this might be help with language translation or interpretation, identifying childcare options, transportation solutions for people with disabilities.
- ❑ District Coalitions expand their efforts to build partnerships and outreach efforts between diverse community organizations and Neighborhood Associations and work with ONI on leadership training and resources for making neighborhood meetings more accessible.
- ❑ District Coalitions encourage the participation of Business District Associations representatives in Neighborhood Association activities and meetings in their area.