

**Small Group Discussion—Responses Grouped by Question and Group**

*(prepared by Paul Leistner)*

The 35 community forum participants gathered in four groups to discuss the following questions:

- What values, knowledge, and skills are most important for the ONI Director to have?
- What do you not want to see in the ONI Director?
- What do you think are the most important things ONI should be working on?
- What would “good” community involvement look like in the ONI Director’s decision-making practices?

The responses by question and by group (as captured by the facilitators on flip chart paper) are presented below.

**QUESTION 1: What values, knowledge, and skills are most important for the ONI Director to have?**

**Facilitator: Lori**

- Humility
- Ability to bring new ideas (not necessarily local)
- Sense of humor
- Work well with diversity
- Local person with history and knowledge of the area
- Can inspire
- Bring passion—not “just a job”
- Be a community organizer
- Compassionate
- Able to lead
- Can recognize change and work with it
- Synthesize
- Understanding of city/regional politics
- Understands systemic oppression—how to engage and interrupt it
- Can integrate New Portlanders and include immigrant/refugee families intentionally
- “Audit”—monitor contracts effectively
  - Able to assess and learn from the past

- Flexibility to adapt to changing community
- Clear strategic vision and plan
- Adequate budget or redefined purpose
- Bring community and neighborhood association members together to the table
- Get clear on what ONI is supposed to be doing and provide resources to do that
- Divisive effects of homelessness
- Need proactive—not reactive—leader
- Someone with realistic awareness of what can be done with the resources available
- Knows how to network and network with other leaders
- Experience in managing a big organization → budget, contracts
- Delegate with understanding, experience and knowledge
- See what doesn't work and be able to speak up effectively

**Facilitator: Donna**

Values:

- Community/governance partnership, ensure people have voice/decisions that affect them
- Commitment to equity/racial justice/social justice; will practice it
- Understands what underrepresented communities bring—knowing how to engage
- Informed decision making—360° view—seeing all communities
- Intergrity✓ —open—truthful—keeps their word
- Transparency/integrity/collaboration
- Visionary leader—capacity building—uplifting/elevating voices/providing strong leadership development for community
- Understand resources are needed in the community
- Understanding different approaches/flexible/innovative/cultural competency

Knowledge:

- Equity principles/practices/techniques
- Social Justice
- Understanding evolution of Portland's communities—using that knowledge to move forward
- Value the contributions already made/learn from the past/to move forward
- Effective management and supervisory skills/understand/knowledge of city government/budget advocacy/able to identify and champion resource needs

Skills:

- Excellent communication—effective with many audiences
- Able to recruit/retain diverse staff/provide opportunities for mobility

- Active listening
- Emotional intelligence
- Understand different perspectives

**Facilitator: Lolo**

Values:

- Comes to the table (grassroots)
- Dedication to vision
- Committed to Ethics (ethical barometer)
- Diversity
- Inclusion★ and Equity—authentic care
- Responsiveness
- Accountable to paid time

Knowledge:

- Consciousness of socio-political reality of people of color (POC)
- Equity
- History
- Diverse neighborhoods in Portland

Skills:

- Open to feedback
- Experience with community organizations
- Flexibility
- Communications—good at keeping people informed

**Facilitator: Sarah**

- Basics of public administration/Portland government
- Historical context of ONI and changing community landscape
- Principles of civic involvement—inclusive of historically under-represented and under-engaged groups--and able to advocate for this
- Ability to implement a strategic plan and organizational development
- Value opportunity to connect communities
- Collaborate on meaningful work
- Intercultural competency
- Knowledge of own privilege and bias:
  - Patience
  - Fundamental kindness
  - Strong leader

- Value opinions of others and incorporate them
- See ONI programs as interconnected
- Cross program collaboration
- Team-oriented → not top down
  - Clear structure and inclusivity

## QUESTION 2: What do you not want to see in the ONI Director?

### **Facilitator: Lori**

- Not someone who will leave soon
- Not a micromanager (can delegate)
- Not just a manager but a leader

### **Facilitator: Donna**

- Opposite of what was described on Page 1
- Someone who doesn't believe
- Needs proven track record—needs experience with success
- Uninformed—doesn't listen
- Doesn't bring stakeholders to the table

### **Facilitator: Lolo**

- Doesn't show up to meetings
- Complacency
- No response to messages
- Plan not stuck to

### **Facilitator: Sarah**

- NOT:
  - Someone who has all the answers
  - Someone who has poor listening skills
- Complacency in the face of systemic oppression (stops innovation)
- White male approach (good old boys club)
- What kind of support does system provide for leaders of color?
- Political sycophant

### QUESTION 3: What do you think are the most important things ONI should be working on?

**Facilitator: Lori**

- Lack of communication internally—need follow up; don't get responses—underfunded; remove from mission
- Need good systems to support the good people
- Are various enforcement issues distracting from community building mission?
- Ineffective strategies
- Revisit the mission
- Don't just add random tasks that don't build community
- Ask "are we doing it right?"; what, how, who → examine strategies—i.e. noise ordinance, education not tickets

**Facilitator: Donna**

- Bureau advisory committee—long list—pay attention to list
  - New initiatives were funded:
    - Portland United Against Hate—inform community/measure success/tell the story(ies)
    - Two new positions—homelessness—make sure what positions will do/how they will connect
- Continue to engage untapped/underrepresented communities
- Make City better/safer/more comfortable
- Don't be afraid to work on hard topics that may take time
- Presence and participation in advisory/steering committees
- Engaged in bureau evaluation/evaluation of people/events/"how are we doing?"—quarterly; how are we perceived; be prepared for answers
- Be our voice to share our stories
- Continuing participation in budgetary process
- Helpful if other bureaus take on community engagement
  - Hard to get information/how can we influence

**Facilitator: Lolo**

- Capacity:
  - Can ONI really oversee all neighborhood associations?
- Deep Community Engagement:
  - Support other groups
  - Find ways to support diverse methods of community engagement
- Neighborhood Coalition System:

- Should be eliminated
- Captures diverse community voice
- Make relevant to unique neighborhood association needs
- Undermine neighborhood associations
- Integrity of neighborhood association decisions
- Corruption/conflicts of interest
  - Pervasive
- Engaging houseless community
- Building permits
- Dissemination of public meeting decisions and notes

**Facilitator: Sarah**

- Shift ONI programs from regulatory focus (→noise control) to community capacity-building focus
- Expand roles and mandate—move away from regulation towards community building
- Move away from livability programs
- Allocate resources to fund equity
- ONI:
  - Capacity building
  - Trainings
  - Sharing knowledge of communication processes/working with community
  - Community summit
  - Convener
- Intercultural
  - Community building
  - Capacity building
  - Place-making
    - neighborhood associations perceived as anchors for communities→ need to emphasize intercultural place-making
- Diversify ONI leadership
- Advocacy to expand the standing of community groups

QUESTION 4: What would “good” community involvement look like in the ONI Director’s decision-making practices?

**Facilitator: Sarah**

- Early engagement
- Take action on input
- Build trust
- Collective decision making
- Coordinated community action
- Annual community summit and annual summit for the community

**Facilitator: SB**

- Revisit mission or [adequately] fund everything ONI is meant to be responsible for
- Give people a voice in decisions that affect them
- Understand what underrepresented communities bring and how to engage those communities
- No complacency in system change and support for someone willing
- Engaging related to Race and Inclusion and Equity
  - Diverse communities under ONI
- What systems for engagement do/don’t serve diverse communities?
- Allocate resources to implement better engagement for diverse/underrepresented communities
- Proactive, not reactive
- Annual community summit