

An Outreach and Involvement Handbook

for

City of Portland Bureaus

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3rd Edition Draft

A joint effort of citizens and bureau staff

THIRD EDITION

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City of Portland Citizen Involvement Principles

As elected officials and staff of the City of Portland, we believe that effective citizen involvement is essential to good governance. We believe a respectful and informed exchange of ideas between the City and citizens will result in the best policies and decisions for all of Portland. To this end, the City of Portland commits to promote and sustain an environment that creates and responds to citizen involvement.

We hold that the success of citizen involvement depends on:

- Mutual respect of all parties;
- Broad-based outreach to inform and involve citizens;
- Commitment and skills to effectively facilitate, receive, and respond to citizen input and involvement;
- Coordination of outreach and involvement efforts of all City bureaus.

To carry out our commitment, we adopt these guiding principles of citizen involvement:

1. Value civic involvement as essential to the health of the city.
2. Promote on-going dialogue with citizens by maintaining relationships with neighborhood and community groups.
3. Respect and encourage citizen participation by ensuring that City communications and processes are understandable.
4. Reach out to all our communities to encourage participation which reflects Portland's rich diversity.
5. Think creatively and plan wisely, using citizen involvement processes and techniques to best fit the goals of the particular project.
6. Seek early involvement of citizens in planning, projects, and policy development.
7. Consider and respond to citizen input in a timely manner, respecting all perspectives and insights.
8. Promote the coordination of City bureaus' outreach and involvement activities to make the best use of citizens' time and efforts.
9. Promote ongoing education of citizens in neighborhood and community groups, and City officials and staff in community organizing, networking, and collaboration.
10. Provide financial and technical support to Portland's neighborhood association network as the primary channel for citizen input and involvement.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Citizen Involvement: What It Is.....	1
Citizen Involvement: Why It’s Important.	1
MANAGING OUTREACH AND PARTICIANTION	
Starting Out Right: a Six-Question Checklist.....	3
Tips for Managing Outreach and Participation.....	3
How ONI Can Help.....	6
Finding Your Targeted Citizens.....	11
Outreach through Neighborhood Associations.....	12
Selecting the Best Approach.....	15
Committees: Some Important Considerations.....	21
Process Flowchart.....	24
DAILY CONTACT	
Telephone Interactions.....	25
Walk-ins.....	25
Field Work: High Profile City Employee.....	27
Advocacy, Anger & Apathy.....	28
Profile of Effective Staff.....	29
APPENDIX	
Coalitions & Other Neighborhood District Offices.....	33
Contact Available from ONI.....	33
Did You Consider...?.....	36
Getting Started: How ONI Can Help.....	37

Why a Handbook?

This handbook is designed to help shape how City staff think about, plan and carry out citizen involvement efforts. It is intended for the City employee new to citizen involvement and outreach, but seasoned veterans will also find useful information and suggestions. This is not a “cookbook” with hard-and-fast rules. Rather, it is a resource both to begin thinking about citizen involvement and to refer to for suggestions along the way. You do not need to reinvent the wheel. This handbook is a distillation of the collective wisdom of many citizens and City staff with years of experience in citizen involvement.

This handbook can help City staff think about, plan, and carry out citizen involvement efforts

This *Outreach and Involvement Handbook* is intended to be a companion piece to the *Citizens Handbook*, also published by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. The *Citizens Handbook* is designed for citizens interested in developing and maintaining effective neighborhood associations, working to impact City policy, and improving the livability of their neighborhoods and city.

Collaboration in Action

This handbook is a good example of staff-citizen collaboration. The idea first arose from a group of district coalition board chairs in 1995. Interested City bureau staff, along with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement staff produced a draft document. *John Campbell* of Campbell DeLong Resources provided additional writing and editing skills to finalize the document. Additional editorial work was conducted by *Celia Heron* at the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and *Laurel Butman* of the District Coalition Chairs Work group. The result is a document we all believe can be useful in furthering effective City outreach and involvement. Participants who developed the original *Handbook* in 1995 included:

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Jane Braaten	Police Planning and Support
Katie Bretsch	Bureau of Environmental Services
Laurel Butman	Coalition Chairs Network
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INTRODUCTION

Citizen Involvement: What It Is

Citizen involvement includes *every* opportunity we have as citizens and city staff to work together toward mutual goals. The form that involvement takes varies with the situation – it ranges from a phone call with a citizen to complex advisory committee work. All forms should be respected as effective ways for citizens and City staff to interact to produce a better Portland.

Citizen Involvement: Why It's Important

The work performed by the staff of the City of Portland must be consistent with the concerns of the people we serve. Providing effective means for citizen input and involvement is the way we make sure that we understand those concerns and ensure they are reflected in City policies and practices. Broadly, there are three reasons why citizen involvement is so important:

1. **It helps maintain the vitality of democracy.** One of the “self-evident” truths described in the Declaration of Independence is that governments derive “their just powers from the consent of the governed.” Within that phrase is the foundation of good government anywhere: governments that work closely with the concerns of the governed in mind represent the best model of democracy and greatest chance for a just society. As staff of the government of the city, that is our job and it is why the City of Portland is committed to citizen involvement.

Governments that work for the concerns of the governed represent the best model of democracy and greatest chance for a just society.

2. **It leads to better solutions.** Whether the issue is policy development, planning, public safety problem solving, traffic management, or any of the other tasks we take on, the more that the needs and desires of all impacted parties are articulated and considered, the better we will be able to implement effective policies and programs for Portland.

3. **It's the law.** Recognizing the high importance of citizen involvement, the City of Portland has expressed its commitment to specific types of involvement whenever planning or other actions affect neighborhood livability. Situations when notification or inclusion is *required* are now defined by City Code. Other City policies, including the Comprehensive Plan's Citizen Involvement Section, the Citywide Citizen Involvement Policy, and the Office of Neighborhood Involvement Guidelines, similarly incorporate this commitment. The following is from Portland City Code 3.96.070 (ONI):
 - (1) City agencies shall notify all neighborhood associations affected by planning efforts or other actions affecting the livability of the neighborhood(s).
 - (2) City agencies shall include affected neighborhood associations and district coalition/neighborhood office boards in planning efforts which affect neighborhood livability.
 - (3) Notice of pending policy decisions affecting neighborhood livability shall be given to the neighborhood association(s) affected at least thirty (30) days prior to final action on the decision by a City agency. If said 30 day period may injure or harm the public health, safety, welfare, or result in a significant burden to the City, this notice provision shall not apply.

We have written this handbook because we recognize that, while citizen involvement is important, it is not always easy. Nor is every attempt at citizen involvement effective. The responsibility we have as City staff is to make the most of the involvement/outreach opportunities we undertake. This handbook is intended to help City staff meet that responsibility.

MANAGING OUTREACH AND PARTICIPATION

Starting Out Right: A Six-Question Checklist

Use this checklist as you begin to plan a public involvement or outreach effort. It is designed to jump-start your thinking, help you make sure you haven't overlooked anything significant, and help you clarify your goals for the outreach project. Once your goals are clear, it will be much easier to determine which outreach and involvement strategies will be most effective.

↪ Note! ↩

Your Bureau may have a similar checklist to address the unique needs of your operations. Check with your communications or outreach staff. In the meantime, you are welcome to start your thinking here.

1. What is the goal of the outreach project?

- ✓ What will be different if the outreach project is successful?
- ✓ What is the specific purpose of the project? Will it educate, publicize, or coordinate?
- ✓ How does this project help fulfill your organization's mission?
- ✓ What are the key objectives of the outreach process? Are they measurable, specific, and doable?

2. Who are you trying to reach?

- ✓ What specific group or population will be impacted most by the issue at hand? The definition of the "group" may be geographic, such as a specific neighborhood; it may be service oriented, such as people who buy business licenses; or it may be problem-oriented, such as people who live in substandard housing.
- ✓ Which other groups will have related concerns? For example, is there another government or private agency it would be beneficial to partner with?

See *Finding Your Targeted Citizens* on page 12 for some suggestions.

3. What do you need to share?

- ✓ In order to get informed, thoughtful feedback, how much of an education component must be built in to the information sent out? In many City projects there is a need to inform or educate citizens about technical or other complexities inherent in the projects. To get thoughtful citizen input and feedback, City staff may need to prepare and present background materials. Take care not to assume the lay person knows all about your project.
- ✓ What is the most effective & efficient way to communicate that information?

See *Selecting the Best Approach*, beginning on page 15.

4. What kind of involvement/input do you want from citizens? For example, is the emphasis on *informing* or *involving*?

- ✓ If the emphasis is on *informing*, then your communication is only going one way: so don't use a process designed for feedback collection.
- ✓ If the emphasis is on *involving*, think carefully about when and how citizens should be involved. Consider if you most need citizen input to:
 - Generate initial ideas?
 - Create a document?
 - Review and comment on a document draft? A final version?
 - Develop recommendations, approve recommendations, or suggest modifications?
- ✓ Are there different phases in the project during which there are different types of opportunities for citizen input?
- ✓ What is the best method for obtaining the input you need?
- ✓ What process will be used to review and act on the input you receive?
- ✓ How will you let people know how their input has been used to influence your project?

Again, see *Selecting the Best Approach*, beginning on page 15 for some ideas.

5. Who else has attempted similar projects before? Chances are someone else in the City has undertaken an outreach project similar to yours, or has been involved in a different project in your target area. Check with your bureau communications or outreach staff and then call ONI. The more you know about successes – and land mines – the better you can prepare for implementing a successful project.

6. What type of resources and how much time is required?

- ✓ What staff resources will be required? Have you arranged for the resources to be available for your project?
- ✓ How much time and effort is expected of involved citizens? Are you prepared to communicate clearly to citizens regarding time commitments, meeting dates, and other issues so that citizens who wish to be involved can be well supported in making the effort?

See *Tips for Managing Outreach and Participation* beginning on page 6 for some guidance on the time commitments and communications tips.

Tips for Managing Outreach and Participation

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Allow enough time. Communicate openly. Listen carefully.

Simply put, the goal of citizen involvement is to develop effective citizen-City bureau collaboration on a project or process. To be successful, it is critical that all parties involved convey their respect for each other and for the value of citizen involvement and citizen-City collaboration in general. From the staff side, here are some tips about how to approach your project to ensure more successful citizen involvement and outreach efforts. Regardless of the specific approach you use, the following tips will be useful.

- **Plan, plan, plan ahead.** Few things are more frustrating than being asked for feedback or involvement with not enough time to respond. It can feel disrespectful, as if the participation is not really wanted or valued.

Lead times are especially critical if the project involves organizing and sending out notices about meetings, creating committees, asking for feedback on plans, or submitting information for neighborhood or community newsletters. For example, neighborhood associations typically meet on a monthly basis and plan agendas some weeks in advance. Because of this, neighborhood associations may need 45-60 days notice to get something reviewed or approved by their respective boards. When in doubt, contact the relevant individuals and organizations to confer with them about sufficient lead times.

Volunteer Organizations may need 45-60 days notice for their respective boards to review an issue.

- **Explain the process, expectations, and time lines *up front*.** When you communicate with citizens during an outreach and involvement process, clarify early on what it is you expect from *them*. Are you looking for volunteers? Open-ended discussion? Last minute changes? Endorsement? Also, clarify the process

If the deadline for feedback is looming, say so clearly!

for *how* to respond: e.g., whom to call with feedback, where to send comments, timelines for responding, or how and where to sign up. A letter that doesn't explain the expected steps for citizen involvement in an issue will cause frustration. A presentation to citizens without a clear request for action will leave many confused as to what their next steps could be. Also, if there is a final deadline after which citizen input cannot be used to influence the outcome, say so! Vagueness about deadlines can encourage citizens to spend time developing a response that may arrive too late to influence the project.

- **Minimize scheduling conflicts, and when possible coordinate with other City outreach events.** The Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) maintains a calendar of City bureau-sponsored outreach events. Visit the ONI website and/or call ONI in advance of setting meetings dates in order to minimize scheduling conflicts. Also, where possible, coordinate your efforts with similar efforts being conducted by other bureaus – a small amount of extra inter-bureau coordination can mean a large amount of extra appreciation from the citizens with whom you are meeting. Also, when setting meeting times, consider the time constraints of citizen volunteers who work, or have extra holiday or summer responsibilities. A quick check of the PortlandOnline Calendar can be helpful in knowing what other meetings or events are scheduled.
- **Use up-to-date mailing lists.** Make sure your mailing list is as up-to-date as possible. One of the most common complaints of neighborhood and citizen activists is that they continue to receive notices from the City years after they stopped being chair of their neighborhood association or editor of the newsletter.

The Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) maintains a current directory of all neighborhood association and district coalition boards and staffs. The lists are updated twice a year by ONI.

*ONI's lists are
twice a year.*

Another suggestion about mailing lists: Consider carefully the audience you intend to reach, and target your outreach efforts accordingly. A common complaint of neighborhood activists is that they receive notices and requests for feedback or participation on projects **that do not impact their neighborhood.**

Go to the people. When setting meeting locations, look for locations that are convenient for people in the impacted neighborhoods. Generally, if you want the best civic dialogue, it is better to go to the people than to ask the people to come to you. Citizens are more likely to come to a local event. Some citizens who do not regularly go downtown find it a burden to do so. Also, it will give you one more chance to be in the effected neighborhood, which can further enhance your understanding of all the issues involved.

- **Represent the City, not just your bureau.** When City staff attends neighborhood meetings, they commonly receive questions on topics that go

Recognize the need to help citizens work with all City bureaus.

beyond the scope of their project. Citizens find it frustrating to hear a staff person respond to such questions with comments such as, “I don’t know. That’s the responsibility of the XYZ bureau. You

will have to ask them.” Of course, no staff person can know the details about every bureau in the City, but City staff should be knowledgeable about activities by other bureaus that relate to the project at hand. Be prepared to give overall answers about those activities along with specific phone numbers or the ONI Information & Referral Line (823-4000) for citizens to call and find out more. Again, we do not suggest that staff must memorize every activity of every bureau. But we do ask that all staff recognize the need to help citizens work with all City bureaus and to work with citizens in the spirit of that shared responsibility.

- **Listen to both the question *and* the problem.** An obvious example to illustrate the point: if a citizen asks “how do I get the Portland police to get rid of the abandoned car parked at the curb in front of my house?” One answer to the *question* is: “It would be difficult. The police don’t do that.”

An answer to the *problem* is: “Call the Bureau of Traffic Management’s abandoned vehicle hotline at 823-7309. They are responsible for tagging and towing abandon vehicles.” Another answer is “I don’t know, but I can find out and get back to you or you can call 823-4000 to get more information.” You can represent the work of the City most effectively if you do your best to answer both the question *and* the problem – thus educating the citizen about the City *and* helping the citizen solve the particular problem.

- **Respect citizens’ expertise.** When staff people meet with citizens, they are doing so in part because citizens are the experts in what it is like to live or work on their particular neighborhood. While citizens are not always knowledgeable of City procedures, they are the experts in the livability of their own neighborhood. Let them teach you.

*Be careful of jargon.
If you use it,
explain it.*

On the other hand, remember that you are an expert in *your* field. A common mistake staff make at meetings is forgetting their own level of expertise: they lapse into obtuse jargon and technical or trade terminology without taking the time to explain the language to citizens. You are paid full time to address an issue that other citizens can study on only an intermittent, part time basis. Just as a citizen understands better what it is like to live on his or her block, you understand better the issues, trade-offs, politics, and possibilities associated with your area of expertise. So don’t assume that citizens already know the jargon and the issues – take the time to explain them whenever necessary.

- **If you “quote policy,” also explain it.** If a bureau policy seems to stand in the way of accomplishing something citizens want, citizens will want an explanation. Do your best to explain not just the policy, but *why* it is in place. Suggest alternate ways to accomplish what the citizens want. Listen to citizen suggestions about how the policy could be adjusted to account for legitimate needs that are apparently stymied by policy specifics.

- **Make meeting notes available.** If notes or minutes are taken of meetings or other proceedings, let people know where and how to get copies.
- **Communicate the results of citizen input.** It is not enough that the staff person understands the effect of citizen input on a project. The results of citizen involvement must also be documented so that both citizens and decision making bodies understand as well. As described earlier, summarize citizen input gathered through outreach efforts and include this information in the report(s) to decision making bodies. Identify how citizen input has influenced policy or planning recommendations and make sure that innovative ideas and consensus concerns are acted upon by staff. Unless the influence of citizen input is documented, citizens can come to believe that their opinions were not respected and the time taken to offer input was wasted.

How ONI Can Help

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This section of the handbook is designed to help the City staff person get started in designing a successful outreach program for plans and activities that affect the livability of neighborhoods. Inevitably, the following can only be a beginning checklist of questions to consider and potential tools to include as you design an effective public participation process. The staff person who is new to citizen involvement efforts will benefit most by taking these first two steps:

1. **Review the suggestions offered in this handbook and develop initial thoughts on the appropriate approach for your particular issue.**
2. **Contact the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) to discuss the approach.** The following is a brief overview of ONI – what we do and how we can help:

The Office of Neighborhood Involvement is a City of Portland bureau supported by general fund dollars to promote citizen participation, coordination and communication among the City neighborhoods. We do this through a variety of programs: Crime Prevention; Citizen Participation (Contracts with District Coalitions); Neighborhood Mediation; Outreach Coordination; Information and Referral; and Training.

Regarding your outreach and participation process, ONI will be able to offer various types of assistance, including:

- ▶ **Technical suggestions** on the approach planned and its appropriateness, given the goals of the involvement effort.
- ▶ **Updated mailing lists** for Neighborhood Associations, District Coalitions and other district neighborhood offices, and many other targeted groups.
- ▶ **Coordination with other outreach projects** currently underway in the City including the potential of cost saving efficiencies.
- ▶ **Referrals to people who “have been there:”** We can give you names of City staff, coalition staff, or other citizens who have experience with outreach projects similar in scope to your own. The advice of someone who has been there before may serve you better than any handbook, no matter how informative.

Finding Your Targeted Citizens

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Who gets involved? Who should be included in outreach? City outreach staff should think creatively when considering the appropriate “target” group for a particular City project. When thinking about who should be involved, it is important to think about both the general definition of who the potentially effected citizens may be as well as the more narrow question of which official groups must be notified. Often, local neighborhood associations are one of the groups with whom you are *required* to communicate. Rarely are such groups the only ones with whom you *should* communicate. Descriptions of both the neighborhood association network and potential other outreach channels are given below.

While neighborhood associations are the officially recognized voice of the neighborhood, remember the importance of other individuals and community groups as well.

- **Outreach through Neighborhood Associations.** One of the major channels for outreach that City staff should consider using is Portland’s Neighborhood Association Network. On the one hand, as organizations which are recognized by the City as the official representatives of their respective neighborhoods, the importance of communicating with the neighborhood association network should never be overlooked. On the other hand, don’t make the equally inappropriate mistake of assuming that *once* you have communicated with a neighborhood association, you have reached all concerned citizens. For a discussion of locating other targeted groups, see the next section on outreach through other channels. Having said that, below is a brief description of what makes up the neighborhood network.

Neighborhood Associations are the source of many neighborhood-based activities. A legal entity, each neighborhood association is governed by citizen-written bylaws that determine boundaries, the election and function of officers, and the frequency of meetings. Each neighborhood association reflects the issues and needs of its active members and is the channel officially recognized by the City for citizen participation. They are volunteer

organizations that bring neighbors together to solve a range of common problems and improve services in individual neighborhoods.

A *District Coalition* contracts with the City's Office of Neighborhood Involvement. The *District Coalition Board* provides oversight and management of its respective Coalition office. The board is made up of citizen volunteers who are elected local neighborhood association and headed by a Coalition Board chairperson. Like the independent neighborhood associations, each board and local office determines its own procedures and standards for operation. Note, however, that *not all neighborhoods in Portland are represented by District Coalitions* – North Portland and East Portland areas are key examples.

District Coalition & Other District Neighborhood Offices provide direct support and services to the numerous neighborhood associations located within their borders. Each of the eight offices is staffed with a director, crime prevention specialists and other support staff who assist citizens with information resources, technical advice, and direct work on their behalf. This is the "staff" side of the neighborhood network.

- **Outreach Through Other Channels.** While it is important to contact the impacted neighborhood associations and district coalitions, they won't necessarily be the only, or even most appropriate, organizations to reach. Many other groups represent potentially impacted constituents as well. City of Portland outreach staff can access citizen groups and individuals by using a variety of other existing networks and organizations as well: for example: watershed areas, community, and civic organizations, etc. Remember that interested persons are not confined to any group. Beware of assuming that contacting the neighborhood associations means contacting the full range of the public.

Both ONI and the staff at the District Coalition offices can help with identifying these groups. Others may be familiar to the staff person conducting the outreach project as a result of special knowledge about the issues at hand. The following are just some examples of other types of groups that may have legitimate concerns and wish to be included in an outreach and involvement process. Contact ONI for ideas about other organizations and associations.

- **Individual citizens/neighbors**
- **Citizen groups**
- **Ethnic and racial community groups**
- **Individual businesses and Business associations**
- **Community groups** – for example: “friends of...” groups, Parent Teacher Associations, interest/activity groups, and many others.
- **Environmental groups**
- **Religious groups and associations**
- **Other impacted government and social service agencies**
- **Owners of a particular type of business** – for example, those who have liquor licenses.
- **Geographically specific neighbors** – for example, those who live along a specific street.
- **Users of a particular service** – for example, an outreach project might want to explore the opinions of people who:
 - ✓ Purchase building permits
 - ✓ Call police
 - ✓ Received a special event permit for the use of public parks
 - ✓ Ride a bike to work
 - ✓ Use a specific park or community center
 - ✓ Have children in a specific neighborhood
 - ✓ Participate in any number of other activities related to the project at hand

ONI can help you connect with the right target group.

Selecting the Best Approach

Every involvement effort builds either a bridge or a barrier for the next one.

If you ask citizen activists, they'll tell you two of the most common mistakes the City makes when implementing citizen involvement efforts: Using the **"wrong" approach** for the outreach process, and **not allowing enough time** for outreach and involvement. This section gives City staff an idea of the range of possible approaches and some examples of when to use them. The issue of not enough time is addressed in the next section: Tips for Managing Outreach and Participation.

Each involvement effort has a different goal, which will frequently require a different approach. Large public meetings can be valuable ways to generate ideas, but poor vehicles to statistically quantify community opinion. A neighborhood meeting is a valuable way to get insight into the viewpoint of some of the neighborhood's leaders, but if the issue at hand affects a few specific blocks, door-to-door contact with residents on those blocks will be important as well.

Every citizen involvement effort builds either a bridge or a barrier for the next one. When citizens see that City staff is truly listening to their concerns and working to gain the most benefit from the involvement effort, those citizens are more likely to treat the *next* involvement effort as credible.

Any staff person's involvement effort connects to all others...

Conversely, if citizens believe their time was wasted or disrespected – that the involvement effort was only to put a veneer of endorsement on set decisions – those citizens are more likely to approach the next involvement effort with suspicion or apathy. In this sense, any City staff person's involvement efforts connect to all others: all the more reason to think carefully about the right approach for your project.

- **Surveys, interviews, and community forums.** Many projects share a common objective in the early stages: to conduct an open-ended hunt for good ideas and creative input from many citizens. In this idea-generating stage the range of vehicles for data collection are as varied as the problems that we in the City try to solve – examples include: surveys mailed to specific geographic areas, door-to-door surveys, and “exit” or follow-up interviews with people who have just used a specific City service. For some projects, community forums held expressly for the purpose of presenting concepts and soliciting feedback may be appropriate. The key is to recognize that there are many survey techniques, each appropriate for specific types of data collection needs. The actual approach selected will depend broadly on two factors:

While there are many survey techniques, each is only appropriate for specific types of data collection needs.

- **The nature of the target audience.** Where the target audience is located and how easy they will be to find may significantly influence the approach. See page 12 for more on defining and locating a target group.
 - **The complexity of the issue.** Gaining feedback on an issue about which the public is already well-informed can be as simple as sending out a reply card and asking for opinions. However, for many issues, effective information gathering includes an education element as well – before citizens can respond thoughtfully about an issue, they will need an understanding of some of the trade-offs, resource issues, or other factors with which staff are already familiar. Because of this, the complexity of the issue can play a pivotal role in the design of the survey approach. Remember: even in the idea-collection stage, the learning is usually two-way – staff teaching citizens and citizens teaching staff.
- **Mailers to Neighborhood Associations and other organizations.** You don’t need to speak with every neighborhood association about every issue. Members of neighborhood associations have limited time to do their work and don’t want to spend unnecessary meeting time discussing issues that are of marginal interest to them. But for those who *are* interested, it is very important to find the time to meet and discuss the issues at hand.

Here is one example of how to apply this approach. Before having the print shop run off hundreds of copies of your 200 page report for distribution to all neighborhood associations and other interested organizations, stop! While there are times when many organizations should be sent a full report, such a

Before making hundreds of copies of your 200-page report for distribution, STOP!

step is often unnecessary. Neighborhood associations are inundated with requests to comment, meet, participate in planning, testify, and much more. No association can, or wants to, participate in every involvement

process. So let the association decide on its level of involvement. For example, consider posting the document online, the sending a card or letter to every organization, briefly describing the intent and scope of the document for review and how to find in the website. Then let those who are interested in participating call and request multiple copies if desired. That way, those who don't desire to participate need not be burdened with what will seem to them as only a waste of City printing resources.

- **Presentations to district coalitions meetings, neighborhood association meetings, and other organizations.** Presentations take time—both yours and that of the people who attend them. Think carefully about when and whom to present to. On the one hand, it is very important to meet with groups that are genuinely interested in discussing a specific planning and policy issue. On the other hand, it is important not to waste a group's time if the issue is not expressly important to it.

With those groups that are interested in the topic, be prepared to participate in a lively two-way discussion. Be ready to listen, take notes, and make commitments about following up on ideas or requests made at the meeting. The best time to attend such meetings is when there is ample time for citizen input to affect the proposed course of action. The worst time is when the course of action is already carved in stone. Since organization boards are deliberative by design, go to them when the purpose is two-way communication — don't ask for their time if you don't plan to consider their recommendations!

- **Public information campaigns.** Public information campaigns are essentially one-way communication tools: from the City to the citizens. Do not use this approach for decision making. Use it to communicate

Public information campaigns are one-way communication tools: from the City to the citizens.

information and to encourage citizens to get involved in a direct solution. This is a good approach for promoting phone numbers or encouraging civil behavior.

Examples are the Reclaiming Our Streets “Slow Down for Kid’s Sake” campaign; information delivered to city residents about recycling policy changes; public awareness campaigns for the reduction of summer residential water use, and some crime prevention campaigns. Before launching such an effort, plan well. Including impacted citizens in designing the approach may go a long way to uncovering unanticipated weakness in the message before the campaign begins.

Also, every public information campaign doesn’t have to include glossy mailers, and broadcasted public service announcements. In some cases, the target audience can be reached well through press releases to neighborhood newsletters and the local commercial news media. For example, if your primary target is reaching those citizens who are already involved in their neighborhood association network, the newsletters of the neighborhood associations is an excellent vehicle for communicating information.

- **Advisory committee & task force work.** At the other end of the spectrum from a basic public survey is the establishment of an advisory committee designed to study an issue in-depth and assist the City in recommending and/or designing policy and procedures to match. Effective advisory committee work takes substantial time and effort; so don’t use this tool if it isn’t needed. However, when an issue demands it, and a willing cross section of representatives from the impacted communities are willing to participate, substantial results can be gained. A few basic issues to keep in mind:

If representatives from the effected groups participate, substantial results can be gained.

- ✓ **Make sure the major stakeholders are involved.** Meaningful committee work cannot be accomplished if citizens representing concerns from only one side of the issue are present.
- ✓ **Spread a broad net to find the right participants.** While it can be tempting to recruit only from citizens who have a depth of prior City committee experience, the committee should include concerned community representatives who haven't recently participated.
- ✓ **Invest the time to do it right.** If the committee is going to work together for some time, it will be important to spend initial meetings developing ground rules, clarifying expectations, writing a mission statement, team building, and other tasks to ensure the committee can work effectively.
- ✓ **Find a skilled facilitator.** Committee work on controversial issues can melt down fast if skilled meeting facilitation is not used. (Sometimes, even *with* competent facilitation, it can meltdown!) Make sure that you have the skills in place to guide the process effectively. In the past, staff has solved this problem by contracting with a good facilitator, recruiting other staff with the right skills, or finding a volunteer committee member with strong facilitation experience.

Before starting an advisory committee, spend time with City staff, district coalition staff, and/or citizens who have had prior experience with such work. For additional information about issues to consider when developing an advisory committee, see Committees: Some Important Considerations, on page 21.

- **Project reports: closing the communication loop.** Citizens want to know what happened to their suggestions. Citizens' desire to stay involved will be severely tested if they believe their feedback was ignored.

Therefore, when designing a citizen involvement process, plan for a way to get back to citizens with a summary of the project outcomes that

Citizens' desire to stay involved is severely tested when they believe their feedback is being ignored

includes a description of key input and how it impacted the result. Also, summarize citizen input gathered through outreach efforts and include these in the report(s) to decision making bodies. Identify how citizen input has influenced policy or planning

recommendations and make sure that innovative ideas and consensus concerns are acted upon by staff. Not only should staff be developing better solutions on the basis of citizen

input; it is also important to document the influence of citizen input. Otherwise, both staff and citizens can come to believe that the involvement process used was a waste of time and resources – that it did not produce a benefit to the City of Portland.

Committees: Some Important Considerations

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Effective committee work takes substantial time and effort of City staff. So only use this tool when it can serve the purpose well: When an issue demands it, and a willing cross section of representatives from the affected communities are willing to participate, substantial results can be gained.

Seek out staff members who have successfully managed committees and get their advice as well

Not all committees are alike – some are advisory, others are decision-making bodies. Some are ad-hoc, others are standing committees. Don't rely on terms to define a committee. For example, different City bureaus define "citizen advisory committees" in different ways. This

checklist can help you think through your decision to create a committee as part of your outreach and involvement process. We also suggest that you check with your bureau communication or outreach staff, as well as other City staff who have managed effective advisory committees and get *their* advice.

1. First things. Before you embark on forming a committee, consider these questions first:

✓ **Roles and Responsibilities:**

- What is the role of the committee?
- What are the tasks of the committee?
- What is the legal authority of the committee?
- To whom does the committee report – City Council, a particular Commissioner, a bureau manager...?
- What is the structure of the committee – is there an executive committee, are there subcommittees?
- What are the roles of individual members on the committee?

✓ **Requirements and Process:**

- Is the committee subject to:
 - Open meetings laws?
 - Open records laws?
 - Public notice requirements?
 - ADA accessibility regulations?
- What resources (City staff support, meeting rooms, equipment) will be needed?
- What facilitation and/or conflict resolution will be provided?
- What is the time frame for action by the committee?

Contact ONI for information about the basics of complying with legal requirements for your Committee

2. Now that you have decided to form a committee...

Here are some key elements that may help ensure success:

- ✓ **A mission statement for the group which includes:**
 - Who is forming the group and why.
 - What the group will accomplish, its outcomes.
 - Who the policy or decision will affect and how they will be included.
 - What process will be used to fulfill the mission and how it will be evaluated?

- ✓ **A stakeholder assessment which includes:**
 - Who will be affected by the decisions the group makes.
 - How stakeholders will be included in the process.
 - How outcomes will be communicated to stakeholders.
 - A mechanism for identifying stakeholders not immediately recognized and for including them in the process.

- ✓ **A recruitment plan which includes:**
 - Demographic goals for group makeup.
 - A timeline.
 - A clear appointment or application process.
 - Follow-up and documentation.

- ✓ **A job description for potential recruits which includes:**
 - A statement of responsibilities of group members.
 - A clear definition of the role members will play (e.g. is the member a stakeholder who brings a unique point of view to the group or is the member a stakeholder group member who has representative responsibilities?)
 - A statement of how much time is involved and an overview of the timeline and process.
 - Information on how the process and outcomes will be evaluated.

- ✓ **A clear group process which includes:**
 - Clarity about conflict of interest, representation and reporting, and open process.
 - Goals and objectives written by the group after it convenes
 - Evaluation criteria
 - Appreciation and follow-up

- ✓ **A communication process that includes stake holder groups, interested citizens, etc. on a constant basis and may include:**
 - Distribution of meeting notes or minutes
 - Notice of meetings
 - Opportunities for hearing/input
 - Press releases

- ✓ **Evaluation/reporting which includes:**
 - Self-evaluation by the group.
 - Constituent evaluation, if appropriate.
 - Evaluation by the originating bureau/official.
 - A follow-up report or reports which state the impact of the work of the group.

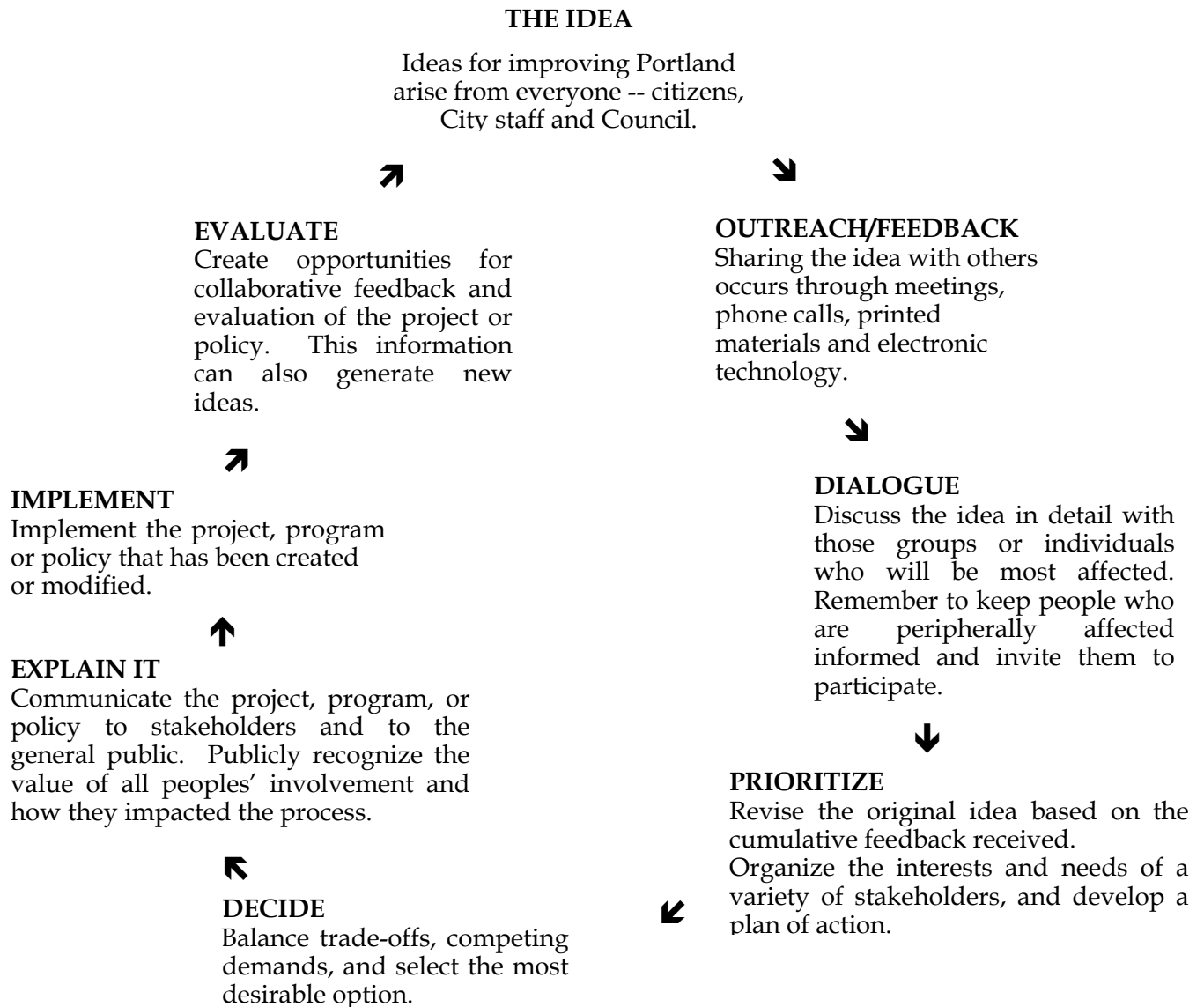
Process Flowchart

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A Road Map for Citizen-City Collaboration

Below is sketch of typical components in a citizen involvement process. Of course, every process is different, and the degree of citizen involvement at each stage will vary, depending on both outreach/information needs and citizen interest. We offer this flow chart primarily to make sure the City staff person is thinking through the whole process and the time necessary to undertake it before starting out.

When and where citizen involvement starts and ends, and what forms it takes at each phase are critical decisions. Collaborative decision making can involve a multi-phase citizen involvement process requiring considerable up-front planning and a willingness to see the process through to its conclusion. Like democracy itself, an outreach and participation process is not the most efficient way to make decisions, but it *is* the most effective way to ensure that the City's work is aligned with the needs and concerns of the people we are here to serve.



When people think of City outreach and involvement, they often imagine public meetings, advisory committees, or public information campaigns. In its most basic form, citizen outreach and involvement is *any interaction between a City employee and the general public*. Every contact is an opportunity for the citizen and the City employee to influence and inform each other. We consider these golden opportunities – too often overlooked or dismissed – for City staff to gather informally citizens’ ideas about City practices and policies. If attention is paid to this informal, daily contact, there won’t be a lot of surprises when formal outreach is conducted. The outreach will validate what the bureau already knows and serve primarily to reassure citizens that the City listens well to the concerns of the people.

If City staff doesn’t conscientiously attend to this daily contact, citizens may experience city staff as unresponsive to their concerns. In which case, formal outreach may become little more than a painful exercise in hearing citizens explain the shortcomings of the particular bureau to its staff.

That’s why we are convinced that citizen involvement must be seen as an integral part of City work, not an isolated phase of a project. If a bureau recognizes the value and impact of daily contact between City staff and citizens, it can set systems and skills in place to make the most of every phone call, letter, or face-to-face conversation.

Telephone Interactions

Many City employees spend a significant portion of the workday on the phone, yet most have not attended such City-sponsored courses as

“Telephone Etiquette” and “Dealing with Difficult People.” Most of us could improve the quality of our daily phone contacts if we paid more attention to the impact and art of telephone communication.

Phone Skills for the Individual

Rather than attempt to provide an exhaustive list of effective telephone skills, we encourage City staff to take advantage of the training opportunities available through the City or other training firms. In brief, some basic skills to keep in mind:

- ☎ Make sure any referrals you give are accurate. Remember: The City’s Information and Referral service (823-4000) is always available when you don’t know who in the City to call. Also, your caller may not be aware of this service.
- ☎ Whenever possible, transfer the call and stay on the line until the caller is connected to the right person.
- ☎ Don’t practice “hit and run referrals” – give your name and encourage the person to call back if he or she doesn’t get the help wanted.
- ☎ Be honest – if you don’t have the information, say so. But offer to get it and return the call or to transfer the caller to the Information & Referral line.
- ☎ Consider every phone call an opportunity to teach citizens a little about how the City works and a chance to learn from citizens about their concerns.
- ☎ Recognize that working with citizens isn’t an interruption—it’s what we do. When staff people consider citizen calls an interruption of their “real” work, consider some internal changes. One or both of the following may be appropriate:
 - Evaluate how calls are being routed within the office, so calls that should have gone to a different phone are not ending up at the wrong person’s desk; or
 - If the phone calls received are generally appropriate for the person, consider training for the office to ensure that all staff recognize their role in serving the public and understand the time commitment that requires.

Organizational Phone Skills

In addition to the skills of the individual, there are organizational issues to consider:

- ▶ Make sure your bureau has an effective system for tracking phone calls, complaints, requests for information, and other such information.

- ▶ Set bureau standards for how telephone calls are directed and responded to. Where appropriate, set guidelines for both administrative and program staff.
- ▶ Making the most of telephone technology:
 - Make sure your office's intake recording message is clear, easy-to-understand, and relatively brief.
 - Encourage employees to check routinely for voicemail messages, and to update their recorded message regularly.
 - Assign a bureau staff person responsibility for assessing the organization's telephone and voicemail needs, monitoring telephone traffic, and making recommendations to improve the way telephone calls are routed and responded to.

Walk-ins

Countless citizens visit City staff every day, some for scheduled events, others on their own initiative. How a bureau anticipates these visits and sets itself up to respond can greatly improve citizen satisfaction. It also can help the bureau learn what citizens are interested in, what information they find useful, what type of services they want, and what concerns the citizen.

"Front Office" Procedures

A good place to start is evaluation of the "front" office – the place where citizens first enter. The way the following questions are best answered will vary by the office and the nature of the service it provides, but they are valuable to consider in every office. We present them here to spark your thinking about walk-ins as another form of citizen involvement:

- ▶ Is the "front" office of a bureau inviting to citizens, or does it more closely resemble a fortress, designed to keep out all non-bureau staff?
- ▶ Is commonly requested information readily available?
- ▶ Are intake forms, applications, etc. easy to read and understand? Does it take a staff person to explain them? Is such staff readily available? Are they available in alternative formats and languages other than English? (ONI staff can assist in translation services.)

Unscheduled visits

Quite often the unscheduled visit by a citizen feels like an interruption to the City employee. But it is also an opportunity, and if we remember to treat it like one, both the citizen and the City will benefit.

This doesn't mean all City staff must be available during all working hours. It does suggest that a bureau that anticipates the walk-in visits can organize its front-desk triage to ensure that *someone* will be available to answer citizens' questions and hear their input.

Field Work: High Profile City Employees

A third type of City-citizen interaction is perhaps the most visible. For many citizens, City employees working in the field – repairing streets, mowing park lawns, laying new water pipes, inspecting buildings, or responding to public safety calls – are the embodiment of the City of Portland. This handbook is not designed to address the unique challenges of preparing field workers for their interactions – direct or indirect – with citizens. But we wish to recognize that it is an area worthy of continual examination and support from management. As City staff, we should not overlook the impact that field workers have on the opinions of average citizens.

We must never overlook the impact field workers have on the opinions of average citizens.

Additional support on this topic may be available in the future: ONI and the City Information and Referral service are considering training in public interactions for field workers.

Advocacy, Anger & Apathy

City employees, especially those involved in outreach and participation efforts, soon discover the variety of citizen responses to City programs. On any given project or issue, some citizens will be effective advocates for a particular point of view, others may be angry or fed up, and still others simply won't care. The better the City staff person anticipates these different responses, and learns to recognize them, the more effective he/she can be in addressing the various needs of the citizens and the program.

The following descriptions are intended to characterize different citizen responses, not label people. In fact, one person can fit all three categories: being apathetic about one issue, blindly angry about another, and a highly effective advocate for a third. The following looks at how these approaches differ and offers some basic tips on how to apply the values of citizen involvement to each.

- ☞ **Effective advocacy.** Just as we profiled effective City staff, we can profile an effective citizen activist: a person who has an ability to make an impact on his/her city. Citizens most effective at influencing City policies and plans are simultaneously understanding, respectful, *and* demanding. They understand the potential role they play in shaping the city, while respecting the role of City staff and elected officials. These citizens can be very demanding when City efforts don't seem sufficient. But they are also vocal in their support of effective City programs and projects. When City staff encounter citizen responses akin to advocacy, they are wise to recognize and value what they have: an effective and enthusiastic partner. Listen, respond, encourage their involvement, and ask for their support.

- ☞ **Anger.** City staff is challenged to deal with angry citizens. When a citizen's anger arises from frustration with a specific City policy/action *and* from frustration unrelated to any work of the City government, it becomes a greater challenge for City staff to unravel. Listen for what makes up the concern or complaint, and agree with the citizen to focus on the issues that

are City-specific. Approach the City-related issue by listening carefully to gain a full understanding of the problem, and then address it – whether that involves de-mystifying an otherwise obtuse policy or taking action to correct problems identified by the complaint.

The ways that such issues are addressed are as varied as the content of the complaints. Regardless, the goal of the staff person during the interaction is to help the citizen toward a solution. At one end of the spectrum is simple education – for example correcting a citizen’s misconception of a City policy. At the other end of the spectrum is staff deciding to recommend a change in City policy to correct for an unanticipated, unjust outcome. Also, if it seems clear that another bureau could better help the citizen, give a specific referral – ideally give the name and phone number of a person in that bureau to call. While referrals to other City staff are certainly appropriate, be careful of giving the wrong one! Instead of helping to dissipate the anger, the staff person will only be adding to it by sending complainants for help where they won’t find it. Again, the Information & Referral Line is valuable and appropriate to share and to use.

While angry citizens may be a challenge for staff, such citizens *have* chosen to engage the City about an issue and are willing to express their passion and concern. For all the anger expressed, recognize that such people want to be involved and are willing to spend the energy do so. Take advantage of the opportunity: Learn from them about their complaint and educate them about the workings of the City. People who begin by expressing anger about an issue can become effective advocates for their concerns, if the staff person takes the time to listen, recommend, and respond to the initial complaint.

Remember: even the angriest complainer has chosen to be involved! Take advantage of the opportunity: learn about the complaint and educate about the workings of the City.

- ☞ **Apathy.** When citizens express anger about a City policy, at least there is little question about where they stand on an issue! The same cannot be said for the problem of citizen apathy.

While low turnout and minimal feedback can be a function of public perception that the issue is unimportant, this is rarely the case. Low turnout or minimal feedback is more

*Low involvement is **not** the fault of the target audience; have you informed the right group why your project matters to them?*

commonly a result of those citizens who care most not being made aware of the opportunity to comment, or because the initial communication did not effectively educate potentially affected citizens who *would* care about the issue if they had understood it better. Outreach efforts should be thoughtfully targeted and include the necessary educational components to combat potential apathy. If initial outreach does not uncover the important concerns, those concerns will remain unaddressed and potentially resurface to derail a project at its later stages. For more information on how to make sure your outreach efforts are the most effective, see the section on managing outreach and participation, on page 6.

Profile of Effective Staff

Citizens who have worked with the City government consistently describe successful staff people as having the following traits. We present them here as qualities worth aspiring to and characteristics that should be encouraged in all staff, regardless of position. Citizens describe effective staff as:

- ◆ Prompt.
- ◆ Respectful: good listeners.
- ◆ Responsive.
- ◆ Accurate, yet admits what he/she doesn't know.
- ◆ Helpful: can assist outside a specific program area.
- ◆ Well informed, especially about other relevant programs.
- ◆ Flexible, open-minded: willing to rethink techniques and approaches.
- ◆ Consistent and fair.
- ◆ Good facilitators, presenters, or mediators.
- ◆ Inclusive: builds bridges and coalitions with citizens, minimizes "Us and Them."
- ◆ Committed to planning ahead and checking in to make sure goals are being met.
- ◆ Good at follow-up.
- ◆ Dependable: keeps promises.

APPENDIX

3rd Edition Draft

District Coalition Offices & Neighborhood Offices

For the most recent list of all neighborhood associations, contact the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. ONI's listings are updated twice a year. Be sure you are using the most recent list!

If you are thinking of going to the neighborhood associations or looking for good insight into the issues and concerns facing a particular area of Portland, consider contacting the coalition or district neighborhood office that serves that area. This list shows those offices. For a complete, updated listing of addresses and contacts for all neighborhood associations, contact the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. (For a description of Portland's neighborhood network, see page 9.)

Central Northeast Neighbors (CNN) 4415 NE 87th Ave
(503) 823-3156 Portland, OR 97220
E-mail: cnn123@teleport.com Website: www.explorepx.com/cnn.html

Represents: Beaumont-Wilshire, Cully, Hollywood, Madison South, Rose City Park, Roseway, Sumner, Sunderland

East Portland Neighborhood Office (EPNO) 735 SE 106th
(503) 823-4550 Portland, OR 97216
E-mail: epno@epno.org Website: www.epno.org

Represents: Argay, Centennial, Glenfair, Hazelwood, Lents, Mill Park, Parkrose Neighborhood Association, Parkrose Heights, Pleasant Valley, Powellhurst-Gillbert, Russell, Wilkes, Woodland Park

Neighbors West/Northwest (W/NW) changing in Jan 05
(503) changing in Jan 05 Portland, OR 97210
E-mail: coalition@nwnw.org Website: www.nwnw.org

Represents: Arlington Heights, Forest Park, Goose Hollow, Hillside, Linnton, Northwest District Association, Northwest Industrial, Northwest Heights, Pearl District, Sylvan-Highlands

Northeast Coalition of Neighborhood (NECN) 4815 NE 7th
(503) 823-4575 Portland, OR 97211
E-mail: necn123@hotmail.com

Represents: Alameda, Boise, Concordia, Eliot, Grant Park, Humboldt,
Irvington, King, Sabin, Sullivan's Gulch, Vernon,
Woodlawn

Southeast Uplift (SEUL) 3534 SE Main
(503) 232-0010 Portland, OR 97214
E-mail: southeastuplift.org Website: www.southeastuplift.org

Represents: Ardenwald-Johnson Creek, Brentwood-Darlington, Brooklyn
Buckman, CENTER, Creston-Kenilworth, Eastmoreland, Foster-
Powell, Hosford-Abernethy, Kerns, Laurelhurst
Montavilla, Mt. Scott-Arleta, Mt. Tabor, Reed, Richmond,
Sellwood-Moreland, South Tabor, Sunnyside, Woodstock

Southwest Neighborhood Information, Inc. 7688 SW Capitol Highway
(503) 823-4592 Portland, OR 97219
E-mail: swni123@teleport.com Website: www.spiritone.com/~swni123

Represents: Arnold Creek, Ashcreek, Bridlemile, CollinsView,
Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill, Crestwood, Far Southwest, Hayhurst,
Hillsdale, Homestead, Maplewood, Markham, Marshall Park,
Multnomah, South Burlingame, West Portland Park

North Portland Neighborhood Services (NPNS) 2209 N. Schofield
(503) 823-4524 Portland, OR 97217
E-mail: npnsc@ci.portland.or.us

Serves: Arbor Lodge, Bridgeton, Community Association of Portsmouth,
East Columbia Friends of Cathedral Park, Hayden Island,
Kenton, Overlook, Piedmont, St. Johns, University Park

If your project has commercial impact, you may also want to contact the City's
Business Associations. You can contact the Office of Neighborhood Involvement
for information on specific business associations, or contact:

Alliance of Portland Neighborhood Business Associations (APNBA)
PO Box 5123
Portland, OR 97208-5123 (503) 774-2832

Unaffiliated Neighborhood Associations

3rd Edition Draft

Downtown Neighborhood Association

PO Box 1534 Portland, OR 97207

Website: www.portlanddca.com

Lloyd District Community Association

PO Box 6762 Portland, OR 97228-6762 (503) 774-2832

E-mail: NChapin@TSGPDX.com

Old Town/ChinaTown Neighborhood Association

Howard Weiner Cal Skate 210 NW 6th Ave. Portland. OR 97209 (503) 248-0495

E-mail: howard@calsk8.com Website: www.oldtownchinatown.com

Southwest Hills Residential League

PO Box 1033 Portland. OR 97207

E-mail: swhrl@yahoo.com

Contacts Available from ONI

The Office of Neighborhood Involvement maintains up-to-date lists for the following organizations. To receive a copy of a list, call us and we can deliver you the information on disk, hard copy, or by fax. We have elected not to provide the lists in this manual because the information changes too frequently – so call us and we will deliver our most current information quickly. This information is also available on the ONI website at www.portlandonline.com/oni.

Print Media

Includes such organizations as *The Oregonian*, *The Observer*, *The Skanner*, *Willamette Week*, *Hispanic News*, *El Mundo*, *The Asian Reporter*, *Daily Journal of Commerce*, *Business Journal*, *St. Johns Review*, *Northwest Examiner*, *Southwest Examiner*, and the Associated Press

Broadcast Media

Includes addresses and fax numbers for local radio and TV stations such as , KATU, KGW, KOIN, KOPB, KPTV, Paragon, KEX, KINK, K103, KMJK, KUPL, KWJJ, KJIB, KXL, and KPDX

District Coalition Newsletters

The list includes contact name, fax number and issue deadlines. Includes such newsletters as *The SUNN* (Southeast Uplift), *East Portland Neighborhoods* (East Portland Neighborhood Office), *Neighborhood Activist* (Neighbors West/Northwest), *The Next Page* (Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods),

Southwest Neighborhood News (Southwest Neighborhood Information), *Neighbors Between the Rivers* (North Portland Neighborhood Office), and *Progress* (Association for Portland Progress).

Neighborhood Association Newsletters

Many neighborhood associations print their own newsletters. The Neighborhood Associations Directory (published quarterly by ONI) lists contact information for current newsletter editors. You can call the neighborhood association directly or the respective district coalition for deadline or other information.

Did You Consider...?

ADA Accessibility

- Sign language interpretation for City events 823-4164
- Non-English language interpretation for City events, for written material 823-4164
- TTY General number for the City of Portland (Many City bureaus have their own TTY phone line.) 823-6868

Bus Routes

- Is bus route information provided on your literature? 238-RIDE

Cultural Diversity/Sensitivity Issues

- Affirmative Action Office 823-4164
City of Portland/Multnomah County

- Public Meetings/Public Records law requirements, call ONI at:** 823-4519

**If you don't know who to call for
information about City services,
call the
City of Portland's Information and Referral line:
823-4000**

Getting Started: How ONI Can Help

The staff person who is new to citizen involvement efforts will benefit most by taking these first two steps:

- 1. Review the suggestions offered in this handbook and develop initial thoughts on the appropriate approach for your particular issue.**
- 2. Contact the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI), 823-4519, to discuss the approach.**

The Office of Neighborhood Involvement is a City of Portland bureau supported by general fund dollars to promote citizen participation, coordination and communication among the City neighborhoods. Regarding your outreach and participation process, ONI will be able to offer various types of assistance, including:

- **Technical suggestions** on the approach planned and its appropriateness, given the goals of the involvement effort.
- **Updated mailing lists** for Neighborhood Associations, Neighborhood Coalitions and other district offices, and many other targeted groups.
- **Coordination with other outreach projects** underway in the City, including the potential of cost saving efficiencies.
- **Referrals to people who “have been there:”** We can give you names of City staff, district coalition staff, or other citizens who have experience with outreach projects similar in scope to your own. The advice of someone who has been there before may serve you better than any handbook, no matter how informative.

Call us at 823- 4519