A CITY FOR ALL OF US MORE VOICES, BETTER SOLUTIONS

Strengthening Community Involvement In Portland

COMMUNITY CONNECT FINAL REPORT

JANUARY 2008

Acknowledgements

This report is based on the contributions of hundreds of Portlanders – neighborhood and community leaders, members of under-represented groups, members of the general public, City employees, bureau directors, and City Commissioners -- who shared their insights and feedback on how to strengthen community involvement in Portland:

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The ideas shared by these contributors provided the foundation for Community Connect's recommendations. Their passionate commitment to community involvement provided the inspiration.

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Community Connect

A city for all of us - More voices, Better solutions

Glossary of Terms

Asset mapping: A process to build strong communities by inventorying the capacities, skills, interests, and resources of residents, organizations, and institutions in a particular community.

Bureau Innovation Project #9 (BIP #9): A workgroup convened by Mayor Potter to develop consistent public involvement procedures for the City.

Capacity building: Efforts of communities, organizations, and individuals to gain skills, tools, and resources to work together to solve problems and achieve their goals.

Community-based organizations (CBOs): Grassroots organizations that are led by community members and/or rooted in the community. For example, cultural and identity-based groups that organize immigrants, people of color, and other under-represented groups.

Community governance: An approach to governance that emphasizes the entire community's ownership over the governance process, and that promotes collaborative solutions that involve partnerships between government, the community, and the private and not-for-profit sectors.

District Coalitions (DCs): Seven geographically-based organizations that contract with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement to provide direct support and services to neighborhood associations, business district associations, community organizations, and other groups within their boundaries.

Neighborhood associations (NAs): Volunteer-run organizations officially recognized by the City that represent neighborhood interests, facilitate communication and action on local issues, and organize community-building events. Portland currently has 95 NAs with geographically defined boundaries.

Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI): City bureau that coordinates Portland's current neighborhood-based community involvement system, which is made up of 95 recognized neighborhood associations and seven District Coalitions.

ONI Bureau Advisory Committee (ONI BAC): A community advisory body that recommends policy direction for ONI and the City Council, contributes to the presentation of a budget that is responsive to community needs, and increases community access to the ONI budget process.

Public Involvement Task Force (PITF): The PITF was commmissioned in 2003 to review and revise the City's adopted Public Involvement Principles and to identify ways to improve the City's public involvement processes. The PITF developed 38 recommendations.

Schools, Families, Housing Initiative (SFH): An initiative to promote balanced school enrollment throughout the city and to integrate school design and operation into Portland's successful model of neighborhood planning, promoting schools as multi-faceted community spaces.

Under-represented groups: Groups of people who are less likely to participate in mainstream forums for civic participation (such as neighborhood associations), and who therefore tend to not be well represented in Portland's civic life. This includes (but is not limited to) people of color, immigrants and refugees, people who are low-income or homeless, youth, persons with disabilities, renters, and seniors.

visionPDX: A City-supported, community-led initiative launched by Mayor Potter to create a vision for Portland for the next 20 years and beyond.

Executive Summary

Portland has earned a national reputation for its strong tradition of neighborhood involvement and participatory democracy. Often described as a big city with a small town feel, Portland prides itself on its openness and sense of community. But over 30 years have passed since Portland's community involvement system was first developed, and it is struggling to meet the challenges of our 21st century city.

Mayor Potter convened Community Connect to strengthen involvement in Portland's communities, create a welcoming environment for public participation, and reinvigorate the partnership between community and government. Led by a diverse, 18-member volunteer workgroup, Community Connect talked to hundreds of Portlanders about how they would like to be involved in their city. Out of these conversations emerged a vision of a city where:

- People feel connected to one another, and to their communities;
- All Portlanders, regardless of their backgrounds, have the opportunity to be actively engaged in civic affairs;
- Government leaders are responsive and accountable to community input and priorities; and
- The inclusion of more voices in civic affairs results in a healthier and more vibrant city.

Five Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement in Portland

To achieve this vision, Community Connect developed a *Five Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement*. The *Plan* provides a comprehensive roadmap for strengthening Portland's civic life. It is organized around three interdependent goal areas representing a "three-legged stool" of effective community involvement. Each goal area has recommendations that include concrete action steps:

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

The first step to an effective community involvement system is to engage the broad diversity of the community in civic life. To achieve this goal, Community Connect proposes nine strategies that will:

- Increase the power and voice of under-represented groups;
- Overcome common barriers to participation; and
- Provide effective communication to keep the community informed about issues and opportunities for involvement.

GOAL 2: Strengthen community capacity

Once community members are actively engaged, they need the connections, skills, and tools to be able to work together effectively to solve problems and achieve their common aspirations. Towards this end, Community Connect recommends 11 strategies to:

- Foster social ties and a sense of community identity;
- Support the community's capacity to take action to move forward its priorities; and
- Foster networking and collaboration between neighborhood and business district associations and other local organizations and interest groups.

GOAL 3: Increase community impact on public decisions

A world-class system of community involvement will only be effective to the extent that City leaders are responsive to the community's input. The third goal increases the community's ability to have an impact on local government policies and decisions. Community Connect proposes 10 strategies to:

- Make public decision-making more responsive and accountable to community input;
- Institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement in decision-making; and
- Create the infrastructure to support the goals and recommendations in the *Five Year Plan* by updating the internal structure of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement.

Community Connect's recommendations were shaped by the recognition that an effective and inclusive system of community involvement is essential for a healthy city, and a functioning democracy. "We want to increase participation by all members of our community, including those groups who are currently under-represented in Portland's civic life," says Cece Hughley Noel, Community Connect's Chair. "Our recommendations build on the strengths of the existing neighborhood system while broadening the system to more fully involve the full diversity of our community."

The Five Year Plan aims to be comprehensive. It recognizes that significant improvements to our system of community involvement will require a serious commitment from the City. The recommendations have been developed with the assumption that they will be funded with new resources when needed, and that they will be implemented with fairness and accountability. Our intent is not to divert resources from existing programs to fund these recommendations.

Phase One Implementation

The *Five Year Plan* is accompanied by an Implementation Plan that details 12 strategies to be tackled first to build a foundation for successful implementation of the remaining recommendations. These include strategies to:

Engage the broad diversity of our community in civic life. *For example:*

- *Overcome barriers to participation* by providing resources for translation and interpretation, child care, transportation, and meeting accessibility.
- *Expand and make permanent the Diversity and Civic Leadership pilot project*s to support leadership development and capacity building for under-represented groups.

Strengthen Portland's communities by providing the tools and support to effectively address their needs. *For example:*

- *Expand the Neighborhood Small Grants Program* to support local community-led projects throughout the city.
- *Promote networking and collaboration* through citywide community dialogues, an annual Community Assembly, and an expansion of the Community Engagement Initiative.

Enhance the community's role in public decision making. *For example:*

- *Make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent* by requiring City boards and commissions to post online meeting notices and summary minutes.
- *Support the creation of a Public Involvement Standards Commission* and charge it with developing policy proposals to institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement.

Development of implementation plans for subsequent phases will be facilitated by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI), working with strategic action teams of key stakeholders and experts around each recommendation.

If the *Five Year Plan* is fully implemented, Portland will continue to set an example nationally as a city where the government and the community work in genuine partnership, and where everybody has a chance to be heard. Community Connect's plan gives Portland an opportunity to renew its commitment to community involvement by investing in strategies that will reinvigorate civic life in our 21st century city.

Introduction

"Good citizens are the riches of a city." This quote is inscribed at the base of the Skidmore Fountain. If the people who live in our city are our wealth, how well is the City investing in and supporting all Portlanders?

As Portland grows and changes, quality of life issues have become more complex, and our city has become increasingly diverse. How can we make sure that all Portlanders have a voice in how our city moves forward? What kind of investments do we need to make in community involvement to create a genuine partnership between government and the people so that all Portlanders are supported to solve problems in their communities?

To answer these questions, Mayor Potter convened Community Connect, an 18-member volunteer workgroup charged with developing recommendations to strengthen community involvement in Portland. This report summarizes the results of that work.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PORTLAND TODAY

The Neighborhood System

One of the central ways that Portland supports community involvement is through a neighborhood system. Officially recognized by the City of Portland, neighborhood associations are volunteer-run organizations that bring neighbors together to build community and address common concerns. Portland has 95 neighborhood associations (NAs) defined by geographic boundaries. The size of each NA varies greatly, from 21 residents (NW Industrial Neighborhood Association) to 20,587 (Centennial Community Association).

Since their development in the 1970s, NAs have played an important role in improving neighborhood livability and public safety, and representing the neighborhood's interests in land use and development decisions. NAs also organize activities and events to bring the community together and build a sense of neighborhood identity. NA members set the agenda based on the needs, values, and priorities of the participants. The capacity of each NA to carry out its objectives is largely a function of the specific skills and time availability of participants. The average annual NA budget ranges from $500 to $2,000 in City funding, and most NAs conduct clean-ups or other fundraising activities to augment these funds.

"I think that community involvement is critical to Portland's continuance as a vibrant and progressive city. Many of our best ideas come from sources like neighborhood groups and grassroots organizations. With our increasingly diverse population, it is critical to keep community involvement high."

Support for NAs is generally provided through District Coalition offices. District Coalitions (DCs) receive funding from the City to provide direct support and services to neighborhood associations, business district associations, and other community organizations and individuals within their geographic boundaries. There are seven District Coalitions representing different geographic regions of the city. Five of the seven DCs are non-profits corporations governed by boards of directors made up of primarily NA representatives. The remaining two DCs are operated by the City. Each DC has staff that support community involvement by providing technical assistance, capacity-building support, and assistance with outreach and communications.

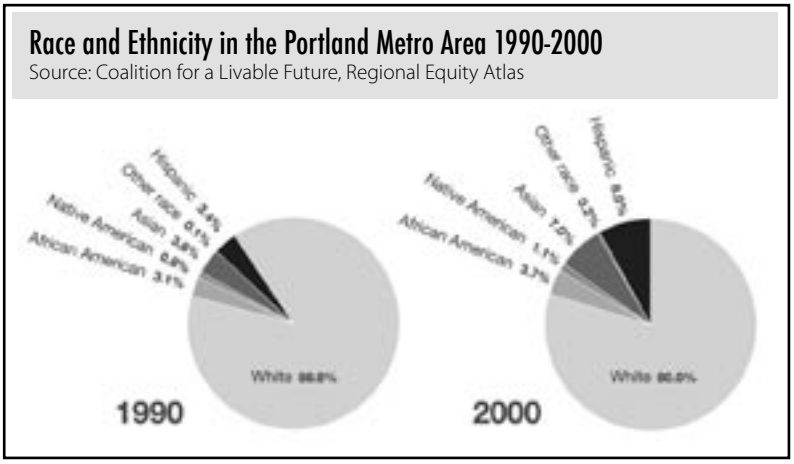
The NA and DC system is supported through the City's Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI). ONI's mission is to enhance the quality of neighborhoods through community participation. ONI works in partnership with many organizations including NAs, DCs, Business District Associations, community-

based organizations, and other City agencies to involve the public in the civic life of the city. In addition, ONI provides a range of direct services related to neighborhood livability. ONI manages the DC contracts, oversees related functions such as the crime prevention program, and contracts with other community-based organizations such as Elders in Action and the Latino Network to do targeted outreach to specific communities.

Changing Times

Portland's neighborhood system has won recognition as a national model for how cities can foster a strong partnership with their neighborhoods. By providing a formally-recognized, city-funded infrastructure for bringing residents together and giving them a voice, this system demonstrates the City's ongoing commitment to community involvement.

Despite its strengths, Portland's neighborhood system has struggled to remain relevant in recent years. Over 30 years have passed since the system was developed, and Portland has experienced many changes.



The city has grown and its population has increased through annexations, migration and natural growth[1]. The city's population has become more ethnically diverse, and one out of eight residents in the greater Portland area is now foreign born[2]. A smaller percentage of residents volunteer in their communities now than they did a decade ago[3]. And many popular public participation programs that were launched during the neighborhood system's heyday in the 1970s and 1980s, such as the Neighborhood Needs Program, have since been dismantled[4].

While neighborhood associations continue to play an important role in building community and advocating for necessary services, they also struggle with declining membership and leader burn-out. Many Portlanders are not aware of how to get involved in their neighborhood associations; others say they don't feel welcome or that the neighborhood association doesn't represent their interests. Neighborhood leaders from across the city express frustration with inadequate funding and limited capacity. And they believe that they are not having enough of an impact on public decision-making.

Portland's increasing diversity brings new vibrancy and energy to the city, but many of the city's diverse populations do not necessarily define their communities in geographic (i.e. neighborhood-based) terms. For many Portlanders, the "community" most important to them is based on their shared identity or shared interest with others. These Portlanders frequently do not participate in their local neighborhood association. Some neighborhood associations have tried to more effectively reach out and involve these groups but most have been frustrated by their limited capacity to do so.

As a result of these trends, a growing number of Portlanders belong to groups which are under-represented in civic affairs. These groups include (but are not limited to) people of color, immigrants and refugees, persons with disabilities, low-income families, youth, elders, renters, and people experiencing homelessness. Many of these Portlanders feel shut-out. And like the neighborhood leaders, they are concerned that their voices are not being heard within City government.

> *"The current system doesn't make room for the Slavic community to participate. Nor does the Slavic community understand how the system works." -- **Slavic Coalition***

[1] Between 1990 and 2000, the most significant increases in population were in the central city and the neighborhoods east of I-205, though no Portland neighborhoods have seen significant declines in population. (Metropolitan Briefing Book 2007, page 9.)
[2] According to the Urban Institute, Oregon saw a 108% increase in its foreign-born population between 1990-2000. Foreign-born now account for 13% of Portland's population.
[3] Oregon Population Survey, cited in *Summary of Research: Piecing Together Community Engagement in Portland*, Community Connect, 2007.
[4] *Report on Portland's Neighborhood Association System*, Current System Subcommittee of Community Connect, 2006.

A Community Involvement System for the 21st Century

To update Portland's community involvement system for the 21st century, we need to develop strategies to more effectively engage under-represented groups. Full representation is the hallmark of a healthy democracy. It is also the hallmark of a healthy city. The inclusion of more voices will result in better decisions that have broader support. Only if the needs of all communities are served, will Portland truly realize its vision as a vibrant city and a model of livability.

Creating a more inclusive city will require deliberate strategies to make sure all Portlanders have the opportunity to be heard. This means supporting under-represented groups to overcome the barriers that have prevented them from getting involved in the past. We will need to provide neighborhood organizations and City agencies with the tools and resources they need to more effectively reach out and build bridges with under-represented communities. And we will need to support leadership development and organizing within under-represented communities to enable them to enter into civic life with a strong voice so that they can participate on an equal footing.

> *"Portland's immigrant and refugee leaders are . . . eager to offer their skills, experience, insight, and effort to collaborate with City government—to support their communities, improve communication and understanding among the city's diverse residents, and truly make Portland the open, welcoming, accessible town it often is described as."*
>
> ***-- Immigrant and Refugee Taskforce***

Several promising pilot projects have been developed in recent years to give more Portlanders a voice in shaping our City's future. For example, visionPDX did extensive outreach to engage community based organizations from under-represented communities in the process of identifying common values and a shared vision for the City. The Bureau of Housing and Community Development has successfully included the perspectives of low-income and homeless residents on its advisory boards. And ONI's Community Engagement Initiative has fostered innovative partnerships between under-represented communities and local District Coalitions. These efforts require intention and additional resources such as language translation, training, and customized outreach strategies. They demonstrate that under-represented groups are ready to respond if effective engagement processes are in place. We need to build on these successful initiatives to make Portland's community involvement system truly inclusive of our increasingly diverse communities.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY CONNECT?

Community Connect was convened by Mayor Potter as part of a Bureau Innovation Project to update and strengthen Portland's community involvement system to meet the needs of our changing city. Led by an 18-member workgroup of diverse community volunteers, Community Connect talked to Portlanders from all walks of life about what they wanted to see in a community involvement system and then developed recommendations to respond to the community's priorities.

Community Connect Values

Make a broad impact: Create a system that serves the greatest good for the City of Portland. Increase participation by all members of our communities.

Be inclusive: Foster the involvement of the full diversity of our community. Increase participation by communities that are under-represented in Portland's civic life.

Be responsive: Reach out and gather input from diverse stakeholders. Develop recommendations that respond to the needs and priorities identified by the community.

Build on our assets: Build on the strengths of the neighborhood system. Leverage the talents of current leaders and existing grassroots community-based organizations.

Our Process

Community Connect began its work with a listening process. Nearly 1,400 Portlanders representing a wide range of different stakeholder

groups and communities were interviewed or surveyed. About half of these respondents participated through community-based organizations serving under-represented groups. Community Connect volunteers also conducted a national search for promising models and best practices and reviewed previous efforts within Portland to reform community engagement. Overall, 19 different sources contributed to Community Connect's research. These included:

- **Underrepresented groups:** More than 700 people of color, low-income individuals, renters, and other groups that are under-represented in Portland's civic life;
- **Neighborhood association and community leaders:** Leaders of Portland's 95 neighborhood associations, and members of official City boards, commissions, and committees;
- **City government:** City of Portland employees who specialize in public involvement, bureau directors, and City Commissioners;
- **Other community sources:** Portland's small business community, local technology experts, and local public agencies such as Tri-Met;
- **The general public:** Almost 15,000 visionPDX questionnaires were analyzed for themes related to community engagement.

Community Connect's listening process provided detailed information on the strengths and challenges of Portland's community involvement system, including almost 1,000 unique ideas on how to strengthen the system. These ideas were analyzed and coded by community members who participated in a Data Analysis Workgroup. Based on this data, the Community Connect workgroup developed a set of draft recommendations which it took back out to the community for further feedback. Over 500 Portlanders responded, providing input through surveys, two community forums, and an Advisory Committee. Community Connect's workgroup refined the recommendations in response to this feedback, and then prioritized strategies for phase one implementation.

Guiding Principles

The development of Community Connect's recommendations was guided by the following principles:

- **Strengthen the important work of neighborhood associations**
  - ✓ Recognize what neighborhood associations do well;
  - ✓ Provide neighborhood associations with additional resources and technical support;
  - ✓ Build bridges between neighborhoods, businesses, and under-represented communities.
- **Broaden Portland's community involvement system beyond neighborhood boundaries to more fully engage our city's diverse communities**
  - ✓ Build the leadership and voice of under-represented groups so that they can participate in Portland's community involvement system on an equal footing;
  - ✓ Honor the unique cultures and participation styles of Portland's diverse communities, and support the organizing work already happening in these communities;
  - ✓ Provide neighborhood associations, community organizations and City agencies with the tools and resources they need to more effectively reach out and build bridges with under-represented groups.
- **Reinvigorate how government works with the community**
  - ✓ Recognize that community involvement is a two-way street, requiring a genuine partnership with government;
  - ✓ Provide City bureaus with additional tools and resources to support their public involvement efforts;
  - ✓ Make government more accessible and responsive to community input.
- **Build upon innovative models piloted by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, City bureaus, and local communities**
  - ✓ Provide adequate resources to support the most promising models;
  - ✓ Monitor effectiveness through performance measures and evaluations.

WHAT WE HEARD

Community Connect talked to hundreds of Portlanders from all walks of life about what they would like to see in a community involvement system. A number of core themes emerged from their input:

Increasing Community Involvement:

The current neighborhood-based system needs to be updated and re-energized:

- Many people value the work of neighborhood associations (NAs), but participation in NAs is relatively low, with estimates ranging from 1,000-7,000 Portlanders citywide.
- NAs rely on the volunteer efforts of a relatively small number of leaders, many of whom are stretched thin, at-risk of burn-out, or on the brink of retirement.
- Most respondents said they identify with a community, but for many, this community was not neighborhood-based. Respondents from under-represented groups in particular tended to define their community in terms of their ethnicity, race, faith, or other social identities.

We need better strategies for outreach and engagement:

- Many respondents emphasized the importance of improving participation through one-on-one relationship building and by better marketing of NAs and public involvement events.
- Many Portlanders face barriers to participation such as lack of time, language barriers, the competing demands of work and family responsibilities, and lack of accessibility.
- Some Portlanders, especially those from under-represented groups, say they don't feel welcome or comfortable at NA meetings, or don't see the NA as representing their interests.
- Portlanders want a wide range of opportunities for involvement, not just attending meetings.

Strengthening Community Capacity:

Portlanders want to feel more connected:

- Many Portlanders are interested in becoming better connected to people and organizations both within their local communities and citywide.
- Portlanders want more opportunities for community-building such as social and cultural events, neighborhood clean ups, and other community projects.
- Respondents called for more resources and tools to strengthen communication both within and across organizations and neighborhoods.

Community members need training and support to build their capacity:

- Portlanders want the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to solve local community problems and become effective participants in the public decision-making process.
- NAs rely on volunteers who vary in their skills, time availability, and resources. Areas of the city with more skilled or time-rich NA members are often better able to accomplish their goals. We need to recruit and train more (and more diverse) community members to become leaders.
- Under-represented groups want leadership and organizing support using culturally appropriate methods.

Increasing the Community's Impact on Public Decisions:

Neighborhood associations and community groups want more of a voice:

- Portlanders want support to identify their communities' needs, and more opportunities to communicate these needs to the City.
- Community members need better information on citywide issues and how the system works.
- Portlanders want more formal control over resources and decisions affecting their communities.

The City needs to be more responsive to community input:

- Community activists don't feel they're having enough of an impact on public decision-making. They want the City to be more accountable to the community.
- There is a perceived decrease in the ability of NAs to impact City decisions (i.e. membership seen as not representative, less openness to the neighborhood perspective from City Hall.)
- Emerging communities are increasingly organized and interested in impacting local decisions, but, unlike NAs, aren't recognized or supported by the City.

A City For All Of Us – *More Voices, Better Solutions*

A FIVE YEAR PLAN TO INCREASE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PORTLAND

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the extensive input gathered through its community surveys and focus groups, Community Connect identified three goals as the essential building blocks of an effective community involvement system:

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

All Portlanders, regardless of their backgrounds, should have the opportunity to become actively involved in their communities and the government process. There is skill, talent, and wisdom in every sector of our city. Through effective outreach and recruitment we can tap into this potential, inspiring new leadership and involving the broad diversity of our community in civic life.

GOAL 2: Strengthen community capacity

Many of our city's most important achievements have come from the efforts of communities working on their own behalf. Every Portlander should have the tools and support they need to take action on the issues they care about. This includes fostering social ties and a sense of community identity; providing leadership training and technical support; and fostering networking and collaboration between neighborhood and business district associations and other local organizations and interest groups.

GOAL 3: Increase community impact on public decisions

Community involvement is a two-way street; it is only effective if the City is committed to listening to the community. People need assurance that their input is being heard, and they need the City to be accountable to the community's priorities. This means redefining the role of the community in public decision making and transforming the internal culture and structure of local government to make it more responsive to the community.

These goals represent a "three-legged stool" of community involvement. Just as a stool requires three strong legs in order to be stable and balanced, we will need to achieve results in all three of these goal areas in order to lay the foundation for an effective and sustainable system of community involvement. Community Connect's *Five Year Plan* to Increase Community Involvement offers a series of recommendations and strategies for fulfilling each of these goals.

Implementation

The *Five Year Plan* is intended to provide a comprehensive road map with proposed immediate and long term action steps. Some of the recommendations can be implemented relatively quickly, without substantial new investments. Other recommendations will require significant new funding or structural changes, and may take several years to fully implement. The plan is built on the assumption that funding would not be diverted from the existing neighborhood system to support these new proposals.

The *Plan* is accompanied by a Phase One Implementation Plan which includes resources to support taking the plan into action. It is recommended that implementation be led by ONI staff working with strategic action teams,

and that the ONI Bureau Advisory Committee (BAC) be expanded to include diverse community leadership and act as an implementation oversight body. The ONI BAC will report annually to Council regarding progress toward implementation.

The *Plan* builds on a trend begun in 2005 through the ONI BAC process to broaden the City's existing neighborhood-based system to more fully engage the diversity of our communities. We encourage ONI's BAC to use the *Five Year Plan* as a framework for their ongoing strategic planning and budget priorities.

Accountability and fairness

Accountability and fairness among all organizations that contract with ONI were strong themes throughout the Community Connect process. Various methods for achieving accountability and fairness were discussed including: establishing certain common criteria for organizations to qualify for resources through an open and fair process; holding organizations accountable to specific performance and outcome measures; and requiring organizations to meet specific standards for openness, accountability, transparency, fairness, and equity. See Recommendation 5 for more details.

As City bureaus develop their annual budgets, we encourage them to consult the *Five Year Plan* for public involvement recommendations and to be innovative in considering ways to adapt their existing models to incorporate the *Plan's* recommendations. We also encourage other government bodies and jurisdictions to use this plan as a model for improving their public involvement efforts.

If Community Connect's *Five Year Plan* is successfully implemented:

- Portlanders will feel connected to one another and their communities;
- Members of the city's increasingly diverse populations will be more involved in civic affairs;
- When issues arise, Portlanders will be aware of the issues and opportunities for involvement, and will feel welcomed and supported in getting involved;
- Portlanders from a broad range of communities will have the capacity to solve problems that impact them;
- City government will develop more consistent, transparent, accountable, respectful, and informative processes to involve people in making decisions;
- Both the community and government will experience satisfaction in the decision-making process;
- Greater community input at the front end will result in decisions that have wide public support, saving resources in the long run;
- The inclusion of more voices will result in better outcomes for building a healthy and vibrant city.

Community Connect's plan gives Portland an opportunity to make strategic investments that will reinvigorate our civic life and build a genuine partnership between government and the community.

"Make us feel important, value our opinion, give us more credit and inspiration to talk."

---Multnomah Youth Commission

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

RECOMMENDATION 1

Increase the power and voice of under-represented groups

■ **Create and fund leadership training for members of under-represented groups**, particularly people of color and immigrants, using culturally appropriate models. Provide opportunities for under-represented groups to share their unique leadership and organizing models (e.g. popular education).

"The most important thing the City can do is build capacity of marginalized communities to affect change."

■ **Provide support to grassroots organizations that represent Portland's diverse communities** including people of color, immigrants, and other under-represented groups. Contract with organizations that currently do leadership development and organizing work with under-represented groups to support opportunities for involving their constituents in the City's community involvement system.

■ **Provide formal access to City government.** Create formal recognition and a "seat at the table" for organizations that represent people of color, immigrants, and other under-represented groups. (See Recommendation 9 for suggested implementation ideas.)

SUMMARY Significant portions of Portland's increasingly diverse population do not participate in the City's neighborhood system because they don't define their communities in geographic terms. Many of these "under-represented groups" have created effective grassroots organizations to engage their members in civic life and give them a voice in public decision-making, but these organizations currently have no formal status within Portland's community involvement system and receive little support from the City. *This recommendation* will more effectively engage the city's diverse communities.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Engage the full diversity of our community by addressing common barriers to participation

Identify best practices and provide training and support to enable organizations to implement appropriate strategies to:

- **Make opportunities for participation more worthwhile, rewarding, and effective.** Use clear agendas and effective facilitation; incorporate time for fun and relationship-building; focus on issues that are relevant and important to the community; achieve meaningful outcomes.

> *"Everyone must feel an integral part of the community and have a chance to be heard if they so desire."*

- **Make meetings and events welcoming and accessible to all.** Use inclusive methods of dialogue and decision-making; enable under-represented groups to share their own unique ways of community-building and decision-making; use culturally sensitive facilitation methods.

- **Overcome logistical barriers to participation.** Provide child care, food, translation, and transportation at key meetings; hold meetings and events at times that work for people and in locations that are easily accessible and comfortable; address barriers that prevent the disability community from physically accessing and fully participating in meetings.

SUMMARY Many Portlanders told us that they would like to be involved in their communities, but there are too many barriers. Getting to meetings is hard for people with young children, inadequate transportation, or demanding work schedules. Once people get to the meeting, if they feel like their time wasn't well spent or their input wasn't valued, they aren't likely to come back. *This recommendation* will increase community involvement by making participation easier and more rewarding.

CONNECTING THE SOMALI COMMUNITY TO PORTLAND'S CIVIC LIFE

Imagine fleeing your home to escape a civil war and being transported to another country with an entirely different language and set of cultural norms. This is the experience of many Somali immigrants living in Portland today. These newcomers fled their eastern African homeland of Somalia in the early '90s when a devastating civil war erupted. Approximately 6,000 Somali immigrants are scattered throughout the Portland area from SW Capitol Hwy to the Kateri Park Apartments in southeast Portland to New Columbia in north Portland.

Lui Abdulle of the Somali Women's Association

Lul Abdulle, coordinator for the Somali Women's Association (SWA), helps to empower Somali women "to do something for themselves." According to Abdulle, empowering Somali women is especially important since Somali women face many challenges in adapting to a new society and may have lost their husbands in the war. Often on their own, they must navigate through a new system to care for their families, which requires a level of independence that is unfamiliar in traditional Somali culture. "Culturally, it's very hard to come out as a woman and for your voice to be heard," she said.

Abdulle strives to support others "to be strong to face the challenges they face." As SWA Coordinator, Lul has helped fellow Somali women learn how to drive, organized a monthly sewing class to bring Somali women together for job training and socialization, arranged free English classes close to Somali homes, successfully advocated for on-site translators with social service providers, and connected women in domestic violence situations to culturally-appropriate services.

Established in 2002, the Somali Women's Association is a recipient of a 2007 Community Engagement Initiative grant from the City of Portland to build bridges between neighborhood system leaders and under-represented groups. Working in partnership with Southeast Uplift and Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., SWA has brought together neighborhood associations and Somali community members in SE and SW Portland to learn about each other's cultures, identify community needs, and connect the Somali residents to social services and other resources.

By advocating for the needs of Somali women, Lul believes people from her community are slowly beginning to feel a sense of empowerment. "You can't ask immigrants to engage with City Hall first," she says. "People have other needs to be met. Do they have transportation, child care? We need to listen and ask them what they need; assess their needs, connect them to resources. Once we fix that, we can help them connect to the neighborhoods, let them learn the advocacy of the neighborhoods. And at that time, they're going to be ready to go to City Hall."

Abdulle notes that her work in connecting the Somali community to their neighborhoods was well received and that Somalis are developing a sense of identity with their neighborhoods. In organizing events called "Get to Know Your Somali Neighbor," she explained, "Both sides wanted to come together, but didn't have a chance or ways to communicate. So the project made it possible. Many community members now are close to their neighbors and they feel they are welcome. No more saying 'they' or 'them' . . . They say 'our neighbor.'"

The project's success was recognized with a 2007 "Spirit of Portland" award, an annual award recognizing those who have made positive contributions to Portland. Abdulle sees the award as "something which is going to the entire Somali community." She is grateful for the involvement of other Somali leaders and looks forward to the contributions of emerging leaders of the Somali community. Together, they are doing something for themselves and their neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Promote effective communication to keep the community informed about issues, opportunities for involvement, and ways to plug in

- **Facilitate communication and information sharing** within and among neighborhood associations, business district associations, and other community organizations through print newsletters, flyers, list-serves, e-newsletters, and web communications. Explore the creation of a central website for neighborhood and business district association newsletters, calendars, and websites.

- **Promote dialogue and communication through new technologies.** Identify the most effective tools, develop them, and create a marketing strategy to publicize them. Possibilities include: eVolvement and Back Fence, small business and neighborhood blogs, issue specific news forums, 24/7 Town Hall, youth-oriented technologies, 311 number for non-emergency government services, cable and radio strategies, and community kiosks.

"Not all the people have computers. For those that do there is tremendous opportunity to connect. Meanwhile the Neighborhoods and Coalitions need to communicate through the public media, newsletters, newspapers, and via internet."

- **Promote culturally appropriate direct outreach and communication strategies** including door-to-door and one-on-one relationship building, reaching out to different populations where they naturally gather, building on existing networks, using customized approaches for different communities, and providing translated materials as well as alternative communication methods (theater, popular education, etc.)

SUMMARY Many Portlanders don't know what's happening in their communities or how to get involved. Meanwhile, neighborhood associations and local organizations struggle to get information out to the community with limited resources and with strategies that often don't reach every member of the community. *This recommendation* will provide additional support for traditional communication mechanisms like newsletters and person-to-person outreach, and it will use new technologies to enable Portlanders to communicate more easily with each other and with local government.

GOAL 2: Strengthen community capacity

RECOMMENDATION 4

Foster social ties and a sense of community identity

Identify best practices and provide training and support to implement appropriate strategies, such as:

- **Community building:** block parties, community and multi-cultural fairs and festivals, and face-to-face relationship building to foster mutual understanding.
- **Publicize neighborhood identities and assets:** e.g. welcome kits for new residents informing them about who lives in their community, its assets and amenities, and their local associations and community organizations; street sign caps with neighborhood names.
- **Create and preserve physical spaces and design features** that provide a focus for the community and a welcoming, inclusive place where people can gather, such as schools as centers of community, markets, gardens, intersections, community centers, parks, and benches.

"Amazingly, on the block where I live, in NE Portland, and on a block adjoining it, approximately 85% of the families know each other. We share toys, play music together, have potlucks and block parties, ask directly for help with lost pets, rescued wildlife...."

SUMMARY People across the city value the role that their local neighborhood associations and community organizations play in bringing community members together and building a sense of community. *This recommendation* will support strong and vibrant communities by encouraging relationship building, gatherings, and community building projects.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Support the community's capacity to take action to move forward its priorities

■ **Build leadership and advocacy skills** through a citywide leadership training program for neighborhoods, communities, and business district associations. Create citywide coordination and require each District Coalition and ONI contracting organization to collaborate in providing trainings in Civics 101, advocacy and organizing skills, and cultural competency.

■ **Provide small grants to community organizations** to enable them to organize community-building projects and events, to determine community needs and desires through inclusive processes such as asset mapping and community organizing, and to develop and implement community action plans.

■ **Provide targeted staff support to communities experiencing a high degree of development pressure or other major changes** to keep community members informed, manage conflict, and allow the community to respond effectively to issues that arise.

■ **Provide evaluation and best practices information by creating a Community Involvement Resource Center** that is based in the community (and facilitated by ONI and/or PSU) to identify local and national best practices, develop performance measures, evaluate and document existing efforts, and share learnings with local communities and City bureaus through user-friendly tools, resources, and trainings.

■ **Promote equity and accountability in ONI contracts to provide effective support to neighborhoods and communities throughout the City:**

- Require District Coalitions to provide a minimum level of core services to effectively build neighborhood capacity and serve as a link between City bureaus and their neighborhoods. Services include providing effective technical assistance and organizational development support for leadership development and board orientation, communications, membership base building, issue campaign organizing, culturally competent outreach and coalition building, land use and urban planning, fund development, information and referral, and basic administration of organizational contact info and official documents.
- Provide District Coalitions and other contracted agencies with adequate resources to fulfill their contract requirements and provide core services, including enough resources to hire adequate staff with necessary expertise.
- Create an equitable distribution of resources and services provided to each District Coalition and neighborhood throughout the city (e.g. develop an equitable formula for distributing resources for staffing and other services.)
- Hold District Coalitions and other contracted agencies accountable to specific performance measures that are written into their contracts. Create a part-time position to monitor accountability for all ONI contracts and to provide technical assistance to contractors[5].
- Develop a consistent structure for all contracted agencies including District Coalitions (e.g. all non-profits led by community-based Boards of Directors.)

SUMMARY Portland has a long history of community action. Many of the city's most important achievements have come from the efforts of communities working on their own behalf. Creating and sustaining a healthy, livable city requires that communities have the capacity to identify their needs and aspirations and advocate for their priorities. *This recommendation* strengthens the ability of local communities to take action by providing them with skills, resources, and staff support.

[5] The Auditor's Office will conduct an assessment of ONI's performance measurement needs with a report to be completed by the end of January 2008. This will be followed with a consultant-led process to fill in the gaps not addressed by the City Auditor's report to develop more detailed performance measurements for the neighborhood program. Funding for this effort was allocated in the FY 07-08 budget.

REDEFINING SUSTAINABILITY FOR PORTLAND'S DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

A new Portland non-profit has developed an innovative model to engage a broader diversity of residents in improving their communities. For decades, concerns about nature and the environment have drawn Portlanders to get involved in their communities. By linking environmental sustainability with economic development, Verde has broadened the sustainability movement to engage recent immigrants and low income residents.

Verde, which means 'green' in Spanish, was formed more than two years ago to improve the economic health of disadvantaged communities by creating environmental job training, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities. Verde provides native plant nursery and commercial landscaping services such as removing invasive plant species, revegetating streams with native plants, and restoring wetlands—all while paying workers a living wage of $12/hr along with full health benefits, vacation time and sick leave.

Verde also offers each nursery crew member the chance to build skills through weekly, paid classroom and field learning. "You get opportunities at Verde," said Jesus Nuñez Jr., who is 19 and has worked at Verde for 7 months. "I'm learning stuff that I never did before, like maintenance and how to care for the environment."

Jose Velasco, who has been on the crew since it first started, points to several Verde projects he's proud of, including the installation of bioswales at Glencoe Elementary in southeast Portland and the construction of a greenhouse to nurture plants that will eventually restore watersheds.

Verde workers (left to right) Jose Veasco, Jesus Nuñez Sr. and Jesus Nuñez Jr.

Verde workers also use their projects to build greater awareness of environmental issues among residents in the communities where they work. For example, when they perform commercial landscaping services at affordable housing properties of Hacienda CDC, Verde's Nursery Crew members build watershed awareness among residents through one-on-one conversations, flyers, and other media. "We feel good when we're planting and we have a chance to explain what we're doing," says Velasco.

With a recent grant from the City of Portland's Diversity and Civic Leadership pilot project, Verde will be able to expand its work to fulfill its long-term vision: reaching out to low-income residents to identify their needs, connecting those needs to jobs which protect the environment, and organizing residents to advocate for environmental policies which address those needs.

"A lot of people of color are disconnected from the environmental movement and environmental decision-making," said Alan Hipólito, founder of Verde. "We think that is, in part, because the environmental movement spends little time talking about the issues that these communities really care about. . . . You can look at a number of environmental and sustainability initiatives . . . and most of the decision-making and institutional energy in those arenas is focused on the environmental benefits and the economic benefits. There's almost no attention paid to whom those benefits are distributed."

"We are all people with capacities and frailties. Let's conspire to believe that everybody is half-full."

--John Kretzmann, Asset-Based Community Development Institute

RECOMMENDATION 6

Foster networking and collaboration between neighborhood and business district associations and other local organizations and interest groups

■ **Promote opportunities for neighborhoods and other communities to come together citywide.** Hold an annual citywide Community Assembly that brings together a wide range of people and organizations to network, share information and best practices, discuss issues, identify common concerns and desires, and deliberate over citywide policy and planning priorities.

"The times we live in require connection and cooperation."

■ **Promote collaboration between organizations.** Reinforce the role of ONI as a convener of a wide range of interests and organizations. Foster formal partnerships as well as issue- and project-based collaborations among different groups (e.g. by providing grants to partnerships rather than individual organizations). Support organizations that contract with ONI (District Coalitions, community-based organizations serving under-represented groups, and business organizations) to build broad-based networks and partnerships with other groups.

■ **Bring together different communities and interests to build shared understanding.** Foster local and citywide dialogue on controversial and divisive issues; facilitate "study circles" and listening sessions to build shared understanding; provide mediation and conflict resolution as needed.

SUMMARY One of the most consistent ideas we heard from our interviews was the desire to bring people and organizations together across differences, both to learn from one another and to build a more unified community voice. *This recommendation* promotes dialogue and information sharing across different communities, but it also emphasizes the importance of bringing a wide range of interest groups to the table for problem-solving and decision-making.

GOAL 3: Increase community impact on public decisions

RECOMMENDATION 7

Make public decision-making more responsive and accountable to community input

■ **Create a broad and open City budgeting process.** Hold budget workshops in the community early in budget development and with thorough, easy to understand explanations. Create clear guidelines for incorporating community input into the decision-making process. Consider switching to a two-year budget cycle to facilitate more effective community involvement.

■ **Create an ongoing Community Needs Process.** Develop a process that enables neighborhoods, communities, and business district associations (both individually and collaboratively) to assess their needs and define their priorities as an integral part of various City planning and budgeting processes. Revisit prior models (e.g. Neighborhood Needs program of the 1990s) to increase effectiveness.

■ **Create formal liaisons between the community and government.** Designate existing City staff as liaisons to all recognized neighborhood and business district associations and community-based organizations. Liaisons would be available to attend community meetings and serve as a communication link between the community and City government, and provide limited information and referral to appropriate bureaus for issues that may arise.

"Ask questions, listen and implement actions based on our feedback. Then tell us about tangible outcomes."
– Girls, Inc.

■ **Make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent.** Require all boards, commissions, and advisory committees to post online meeting notices, agendas, and minutes in a timely manner. Provide adequate notification in advance of meetings. Develop clear criteria for putting items on the City Council's consent agenda and provide a summary explanation of consent agenda items for the public. Standardize an open and accessible public records request policy for all bureaus.

■ **Close the loop.** Circle back to the community to explain the major budget, planning, policy, and capital improvement decisions that were made, the rationale for the decision, and how community input was used. If input was not used, provide explanations as to why community input was not followed. Continue to inform and involve the community to the extent feasible in the implementation phase.

■ **Encourage City bureaus to create Bureau Advisory Committees (BACs)** and to actively engage them as advisory bodies to bureau management. Charge BACs with reviewing and advising bureau directors on budgets, key policies, and annual bureau work plans. Recruit BAC members from a broad cross-section of the community and provide adequate staffing and consistent training.

■ **Give the community direct control over certain decisions.** Develop a detailed policy proposal to bring to City Council that decentralizes decision-making by giving communities direct control over certain locally-specific projects or functions. For example, empower the local community to make decisions about designated revenue pools or give the community priority input over certain locally-specific planning or development issues.

SUMMARY In our research, one of the themes we heard most frequently was that the community needs an opportunity to proactively shape public decisions, not just respond to proposals; and government needs to be responsive to community input. *This recommendation* aims to build clear guidelines and processes for incorporating communities' priorities into public decision-making.

THE MOUNT TABOR PARK MASTER PLAN: GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

In the summer of 2007, members of the Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association, the South Tabor Neighborhood Association, and other concerned citizens sat down with Portland Parks and Recreation (PPR) officials to design a public involvement process to update the Mt. Tabor Park Master Plan. The result was a proposal for a process that would be "open, transparent, community-wide and inclusive — where all ideas are welcomed and considered." In presenting the proposal to City Council, PPR Director Zari Santner said "I'm very, very proud today to be here before [City Council] and to be accompanied by representatives from the two neighborhood associations . . . in full agreement as to how we proceed from here on." City Council unanimously approved the proposal.

John Laursen, a leader in the Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association

What is remarkable about this story is how it began. A year earlier, in September 2006, neighborhood leaders caught wind of a proposed sale of the Mt. Tabor Park maintenance yard and nursery to a neighboring private college with no public input — a deal that would have transferred about 20 acres of public land into private hands. Outraged, the neighborhood organized against the sale, leading the City and PPR to eventually take the deal off the table. "They could have come to the neighborhood association and gotten immediate feedback that this was simply a bad idea that would find very little community support," said John Laursen, a leader in the Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association. "It would have saved an enormous amount of time, energy, and heartbreak just to talk with the community and ask, 'What do you think about this?' I think they never stopped and thought what they were doing and what it looked like from the perspective of any ordinary person outside of the bureau."

With the help of Ombudsmen Michael Mills, Santner entered into mediation with the neighborhood associations and interested stakeholders. Neighborhood residents were skeptical that mediation would work. "I give Zari, personally, tremendous credit for initiating this process," said Laursen. "It took a lot of courage on her part. There was a real likelihood that the neighborhood associations would not be receptive to mediation in the first place, or not be receptive to an actual mediated outcome in the second place. . . . Zari recognized that this was an extremely difficult situation and it would be better to sit down with the citizens and try to solve the problem rather than enforce a solution."

In the process of mediation, 16 dedicated neighborhood and community leaders volunteered their time to meet with Parks officials. They discovered that facilities of the Mt. Tabor Central Maintenance Yard were in poor condition, and had been on the decline for decades. They also learned that there was no procedure in place for citizen involvement in the sale of publicly held lands. An agreement was reached to address the central maintenance yard by updating the Mt. Tabor Master Plan through an open public involvement process and to develop a formal process for any future consideration of the sale of public property.

This outcome is one that the neighborhood associations can accept and embrace, according to Laursen. "We see this public involvement process as a model of how concerned citizens can work with government to create a better solution than what a bureau might come up with on its own," he said. "Another benefit that came out of the mediation is that we created the circumstances in which the citizens and the parks bureau can work in partnership on issues in the future."

Laursen is optimistic about the upcoming public process. "If we get people to sit down and talk to each other, it can be pretty satisfying and result in a positive outcome that has real legitimacy," he said. "Portland is a city where you can do this, but both the citizens and the agencies need to be willing to make the effort."

RECOMMENDATION 8

Institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement in decision-making

■ **Foster an internal culture within City government that supports a commitment to public involvement.** Provide staff training and capacity building, and include quantifiable public involvement measurements in performance evaluations, particularly for upper management. Involve community members in evaluating the public involvement process for projects that they have participated in.

■ **Create comprehensive public involvement standards and guidelines:** Support implementation of the following key recommendations from Bureau Innovation Project #9 and the Public Involvement Task Force:

- Incorporate a section into the City Charter that articulates the City's commitment to the principles and values of community governance.
- Have the City Council adopt community governance principles by ordinance to set the standard for all City bureaus and staff.
- Require City bureaus to develop formal written public involvement policies.
- Require written public involvement plans for certain types of major capital, policy, and planning projects and budget decisions.
- Ensure that culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques are used to reach out to and involve constituencies traditionally under-represented in the community.
- Establish a stable funding mechanism for public involvement processes.
- Establish a standing Public Involvement Standards Commission to advise bureaus and hold the City accountable to adopted public involvement principles, standards, and guidelines. Maintain a Public Involvement Support position to adequately staff the Commission and issue an annual report, among other duties.

"Listening to people and hearing their aspirations is a basic service of government."
-- Mayor Tom Potter

SUMMARY We heard concerns from many people that the City isn't consistent or comprehensive enough in its efforts to involve the community. Community involvement is a two-way street, but many Portlanders worry that the City isn't committed to listening to the community. *This recommendation* aims to create a culture of public involvement that guarantees a right to input for the community and builds a genuine partnership between the community and government.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Create the infrastructure to support the goals and recommendations in this Five Year Plan by updating the Office of Neighborhood Involvement's internal structure

Rename the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) to reflect a broader mission that includes neighborhoods and non-geographic communities. Develop a structure for it that supports the following objectives:

- Broaden Portland's community involvement system to better include the City's diverse communities, with a recognition that Portlanders identify their "community" in more ways than just geographic (i.e. neighborhood-based).
- Build stronger community capacity by supporting and empowering local neighborhoods, communities, and businesses through strategic investments in local organizations.
- Combine a decentralized implementation structure with effective coordination and support at the bureau level.
- Strengthen collaboration and communication among neighborhoods, businesses, and communities both locally and citywide.
- Provide neighborhoods, businesses, and communities with vehicles for working together on both local and citywide issues.

Photo by Thomas Le Ngo

- Provide formal recognition and access to City government for a broad range of groups and organizations representing the diversity of Portland's communities.
- Create a resource for City bureaus by providing better access to neighborhood, business, and community input on government decisions.

"The redefinition of public involvement to be based on non-geographic groups is essential. As a potential of member of several groups, my concerns are not represented by one geographic group, but by several. Similarly, I do not share the same concerns or grassroots expertise as many of the vocal members in my geographic group."

Any structural changes should meet the following criteria:

- New funding should be identified to support all programs and functions not within ONI's ongoing budget. Funding should not be diverted from existing programs to support new functions.
- Expanded functions or expectations for agencies that contract with ONI should not be implemented unless adequate resources and capacity are available to insure success.
- All organizations that contract with ONI for funding or other support should be required to meet certain common criteria and should be held accountable to specific performance and outcome measures to be defined in their contracts.
- An effort should be made to keep the bureaucracy as streamlined as possible.

The Appendix of this report includes information on potential models for this structure.

SUMMARY Portland's current community involvement system is structured around the city's 95 neighborhood associations and seven District Coalitions. ONI's name and internal structure reflect this neighborhood focus. As we expand the city's community involvement system to be more inclusive of non-geographic communities, particularly under-represented groups, ONI's structure will need to be updated to support these changes and to facilitate better linkages between neighborhood associations, community-based organizations, and business district associations.

Phase One Implementation Plan

The Phase One Implementation Plan outlines the strategies from Community Connect's Five Year Plan that should be implemented first. These strategies will provide a foundation for the successful implementation of the rest of the Five Year Plan.

In identifying Phase One strategies, Community Connect focused deliberately on strategies that do not require significant new infrastructure to implement. These strategies build on successful pilot projects and refine existing programs to better meet the community's needs. Many of the recommendations in Community Connect's Five Year Plan are not included in the Phase One list because they will require more detailed planning and negotiations among multiple stakeholders in order to develop an effective implementation plan. ONI will facilitate the development of implementation plans for subsequent phases by convening action teams of key stakeholders around each recommendation.

PHASE ONE RESOURCE SUMMARY

The following summary chart lists Community Connect's proposed Phase One strategies and shows what resources are currently in place to meet these objectives, budget requests related to these objectives that have been submitted for FY 08-09, and what more needs to happen.

	PHASE ONE STRATEGY	CURRENTLY IN PLACE (FY 07-08)	08-09 BUDGET REQUESTS (Requesting Bureau)	WHAT ELSE IS NEEDED?
1	Increase capacity within ONI to coordinate implementation of Community Connect's *Five Year Plan*		$96,000 in one time funding for program specialist to facilitate implementation of various initiatives including Community Connect, DCL, small grants, contract management and performance measures (ONI)	Make funding for position permanent
2	Expand and make permanent Diversity and Civic Leadership (DCL) pilot projects	$200,000 one time funding for DCL Organizing Project, plus $68,000 from ONI budget in Fall BuMP $72,310 permanent funding for DCL Academy	Make funding for DCL Organizing Project permanent at current levels ($268,000) (ONI) Increase DCL Academy budget by $31,000 in permanent funding for language translation, childcare, etc. (ONI)	Increase permanent funding for DCL Organizing Project to $450,000 Increase permanent funding for DCL Academy to $140,000
3	Overcome barriers to participation by providing resources for translation, childcare, transportation, and accessibility support	$30,000 in one time funding to create a Neighborhood Accessibility Fund	Continue program at current levels with $30,000 in one time funding (ONI)	Make funding permanent and expand by 50-100%
4	Expand Neighborhood Small Grants Program to support local community-led projects	$206,600 in permanent funding	Increase by 25% with $50,000 in one time funds (ONI)	Expand program with an increase in permanent funding to meet the demand
5	Define minimum programmatic service levels for District Coalitions and provide adequate funding to support fulfillment of contract requirements	$1.72 million base funding plus $350,000 in one time funding to increase District Coalition (DC) staffing capacity $50,000 in one time funding for consultant to develop performance measures	Extend $350,000 in one time funding to increase DC staffing capacity (ONI) Limited increased staffing capacity for contract management through Strategy #1 FTE (see above)	Update DC contracts Make funding for additional DC staffing permanent and expand to increase staff expertise and to enable DCs to fulfill contract expectations Create 1FTE with permanent funding for ONI contract management

PHASE ONE STRATEGY		CURRENTLY IN PLACE (FY 07-08)	08-09 BUDGET REQUESTS (Requesting Bureau)	WHAT ELSE IS NEEDED?
6	Promote networking and collaboration among organizations locally and citywide	$46,485 in permanent funding for Community Engagement Grants	Expand Community Engagement Grants to $70,000 ($10,000 per District Coalition) by adding $23,515 in one time funding (ONI)	Make expanded funding for Community Engagement Grants permanent Fund an annual citywide Community Assembly (cost range: $55,000-$62,000)
7	Make Effective Engagement Solutions program permanent to support communities and City bureaus around high stakes, controversial and divisive issues	$69,114 one time funding for 1 FTE program specialist (position funded only for part of fiscal year)	Extend one time funding for 1 FTE and increase to $96,000 to cover overhead costs (ONI)	Make funding for position permanent
8	Expand support for communication and information sharing	$95,000 in permanent funding to promote communications through District Coalitions. (Historically DCs have allocated $1,000 per NA for communications from their base budget.) $7,000 in permanent funding to post neighborhood minutes to PortlandOnline	$186,000 for PortlandOnline maintenance and expansion of eVolvement (OMF)	Communications training: about $19,500 Central website: $20,000 to support community groups to connect to expanded eVolvement Newsletter support: about $340,000 for quarterly neighborhood association newsletters
9	Develop and implement a citywide leadership development/ capacity-building training program	ONI provides ad hoc leadership development training and support as feasible within existing budget		Citywide leadership training (cost range: $20,000 - $240,000) Citywide dialogues (cost range $20,000 - $120,000)
10	Support strategies to create and preserve schools as centers of community	$110,000 one time funding for Schools, Families, Housing Initiative	Schools, Families, Housing Initiative budget request still to be determined (Sten)	
11	Support the creation of a Public Involvement Standards Commission and charge it with developing policy proposals to institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement	$75,000 one time funding for 1FTE Coordinator of Citywide Public Involvement	Extend one time funding for position and increase to $96,000 to cover overhead costs (ONI)	Make funding for position permanent
12	Make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent	Same as #11	Same as #11	Same as #11

STRATEGY 1:

Increase capacity within ONI to coordinate implementation of Community Connect's Five Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement in Portland

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Introduction to *Five Year Plan*:** *"It is recommended that implementation be led by ONI working with strategic action teams, and that the ONI BAC be expanded to include diverse community leadership and act as an implementation oversight body. The ONI BAC will report annually to Council regarding progress toward implementation."* *"As City bureaus develop their annual budgets, we encourage them to consult the Five Year Plan for public involvement recommendations and to be innovative in considering ways to adapt their existing models to incorporate the Plan's recommendations."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Provide staffing capacity within ONI to facilitate implementation of Community Connect's *Five Year Plan*.** Estimated cost: $96,000 for 1 FTE program specialist (salary and benefits plus associated program costs.) This FTE will also facilitate implementation of Strategy 5 and support implementation of Strategies 2 and 4.
Strategy Description	Implementation of Community Connect's phase one strategies and the development of implementation plans for Years 2-5 will be led by ONI, with the ONI BAC acting as an implementation oversight body. For implementation to be successful, many of the strategies in the *Five Year Plan* will require bringing together a diverse group of key stakeholders – including District Coalitions, neighborhood associations, business district associations, community-based organizations serving under-represented groups, City bureaus, and other partners -- to discuss and develop coordinated action plans. ONI will convene strategic action teams that bring together the relevant stakeholders around each recommendation to develop and prioritize detailed implementation strategies. Sufficient staffing capacity will be needed within ONI to lead the implementation process. In order to take on this additional workload, which will be particularly time intensive in the first two years, ONI will need the resources to pay for additional staff time. As City bureaus develop their annual budgets, they will be encouraged to consult the *Five Year Plan* for public involvement recommendations, engage with the soon to be formed Public Involvement Standards Commission, and be innovative in considering ways to adapt their existing models to incorporate the Plan's recommendations. The ONI BAC will be responsible for overseeing implementation of phase one strategies and reporting to Council on progress in September 2009. The current effort to expand the BAC to include more diverse community leadership should be continued to reflect Community Connect's emphasis on engaging under-represented groups.
Rationale	The Community Connect Workgroup, an 18-member volunteer committee, worked to gather broad input about what Portland needs in a community involvement system, and to develop a comprehensive road map in response to this input. In order to truly foster community involvement, it has been critical for this process to be community-led by volunteers with links to various grassroots constituencies and City bureaus. It will be equally important for implementation of recommendations to be overseen by community members. We feel that this oversight would best be accomplished through the ONI BAC.

Rationale cont.	The ONI BAC will need to be supported by professional staff within ONI working with small action teams of experts and key stakeholders. Complex dialogue and planning among multiple stakeholders will be required to implement phase one strategies, and to develop detailed implementation plans for remaining strategies. In addition to qualified staffing, it will be critical for Community Connect's recommendations to be supported across bureaus with relevant resources and in a consistent manner.
Background	ONI's current management level staff have the necessary qualifications to facilitate the implementation process. But additional staffing capacity will be necessary to enable ONI to lead the development of detailed implementation plans for subsequent years while implementing new and expanded programs that are supported by the Community Connect recommendations.
Partners	**Leads:** ONI management and staff ONI BAC **Partners:** City bureaus District Coalitions and neighborhood associations Community-based organizations serving under-represented groups Business district associations Other stakeholder groups
Outcomes	■ Successful implementation of Community Connect's Phase One Implementation Plan by 2009. ■ Development of effective implementation plans for Years 2-5, with support and buy-in from a wide range of key partners and stakeholders, including District Coalitions, neighborhood associations, community-based organizations that work with under-represented groups, business district associations, City bureaus, local agencies, etc. ■ Successful implementation of Community Connect's Five Year Plan by 2013, with the following outcomes: • Portlanders will feel connected to one another and their communities; • Members of the city's increasingly diverse populations will be more involved in civic affairs; • When issues arise, Portlanders will be aware of the issues and opportunities for involvement, and will feel welcomed and supported in getting involved; • Portlanders from a broad range of communities will have the capacity to solve problems that impact them; • City government will develop more consistent, transparent, accountable, respectful and informative processes to involve people in making decisions; • Both the community and government will experience satisfaction in the decision-making process; • The inclusion of more voices will result in better outcomes for building a healthy and vibrant city. Specific performance measures will be developed as part of the creation of overall performance measures for ONI, a process which is currently underway.
Innovations	Community Connect's Five Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement in Portland is necessary in order to update and strengthen Portland's community involvement system to meet the needs of our changing City. A strong, inclusive system of community involvement is critical to creating a vibrant city, thriving communities, and effective government.

STRATEGY 2:
Expand and make permanent Diversity and Civic Leadership pilot projects

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #1, 1st and 2nd strategies** ***"Provide support to grassroots organizations that represent Portland's diverse communities*** *including people of color, immigrants, and other under-represented groups. Contract with organizations that currently do leadership development and organizing work with under-represented groups to support opportunities for involving their constituents in the City's community involvement system."* ***"Create and fund leadership training for members of under-represented groups,*** *particularly people of color and immigrants, using culturally appropriate models. Provide opportunities for under-represented groups to share their unique leadership and organizing models (e.g. popular education, etc.)."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Expand and make permanent the Diversity and Civic Leadership (DCL) Academy and the DCL Organizing Project** to support leadership development for members of under-represented groups and to strengthen the capacity of grassroots organizations that represent Portland's diverse communities. **Estimated cost:** The City Council first funded the **DCL Academy** in 06-07, and it is currently funded at $72,310 in permanent funding. At a minimum, to make the program more effective at its current funding level, an additional $31,000 is needed for language translation, interpretation, and child care costs. (Out of the current 45 participants there are 26 languages being spoken which has impacted the ability to communicate the workshop curriculum.) The program's base funding should ideally be doubled to $140,000 to allow for more in-depth leadership development of current participants and to expand the program to more participants. Funding for the **DCL Organizing Project** began in 07-08 with $200,000 in one-time funding plus an additional $68,000 transferred from the ONI budget and fall BuMP. At a minimum, funding for this program should be made permanent at the current level ($268,000). To become sustainable over the long term, the program will need an additional $250,000 (total annual funding of $450,000) to provide ongoing funding to five ethnic community organizations (African American, Latino, American Indian, Immigrant and Refugee, and Asian American) at $90,000 each – enough for 1 FTE community organizer, minimal program support and organizational overhead.
Strategy Description	ONI launched two Diversity and Civic Leadership pilot projects over the past two years to expand opportunities for civic governance for underrepresented communities with the City of Portland and neighborhood associations. We recommend that these programs become permanent and that funding be expanded to support their success. **Diversity and Civic Leadership Academy:** This is a training program for emerging leaders in communities of color, immigrant, and refugee communities. The goal of the academy is to expand the range of community leaders of color who engage in the civic life of the City for the advancement of policies to achieve economic and social equity based on the wisdom, voice, and experience of their constituencies. **Diversity and Civic Leadership Organizing Project:** This is a capacity building program for underrepresented community-based organizations in order to increase constituent participation in the civic governance of the City. The goals of the project are to develop culturally appropriate means to build community identity, understanding of existing City governance structures, and skills to analyze City power dynamics.

Strategy Description cont.	In addition to supporting leadership and capacity building within under-represented groups, the DCL projects provide an important opportunity to connect these groups with the neighborhood system. For example, DCL contractors will soon begin participating in ONI's monthly citywide Directors and Chairs meeting to build bridges and move the system forward in a collaborative way.
Rationale	**Programs that increase involvement by under-represented groups are critical:** ■ Of more than 700 respondents to Community Connect's survey from under-represented groups, the vast majority defined their community by their 'religion/faith' or their ethnicity/race'. While respondents placed a high value in being involved in their community, almost all respondents said they hadn't participated in their neighborhood association in the last five years. ■ According to recent research of neighborhood associations conducted for the League of Women Voters, 18 of 30 (60%) observed meetings of neighborhood associations were attended only by Caucasians. Most attendees were homeowners. ■ The most frequent suggestion that appeared in an analysis of visionPDX's comments related to community involvement was to implement culturally competent ways to engage with minority communities and actively recruit minorities to be in positions of power. Another frequently heard theme called for neighborhood system reform to allow for greater minority participation and new faces. ■ In Community Connect's interviews with City employees in 2006, the following comments were made: • The City's public involvement employees said the area of improvement neighborhoods need most is to involve more underrepresented groups. • At least two bureau directors support involving more and different voices, and believe funding should be allocated to community groups as well as neighborhood associations. ■ City Commissioners offered the following feedback regarding diverse participation: • minorities are underrepresented in neighborhood associations; • recent immigrants don't have good connections to City government; • another system in addition to neighborhood associations is needed. **Current funding is not adequate to meet program needs:** ■ Current DCL Academy awardees – as well as several other applicants to the RFP – have consistently commented that $70,000 in funding is inadequate to fund an effective partnership and accomplish the project goals with 45 participants. The original program design called for $150,000. ■ With additional funds from ONI and the fall BuMP being approved by Council, the current funds for the DCL Organizing Project are $67,000 for each of four grantees. This is not enough to hire a full time organizer and cover necessary program costs. Additional funding of $90,000 per organization would allow for hiring full time organizers and program costs to minimally meet the project goals and objectives. Additional funding would also allow for funding a fifth grantee, serving the Asian-American community. **Applications for DCL pilot projects far outstripped the available resources:** ■ In its first year of pilot implementation, the amount of funding requested for the Diversity and Civic Leadership Organizing Project exceeded the available supply of $268,000 by almost five times. ■ This was also the case for the Diversity and Civic Leadership Academy, with $70,000 in available funding and $420,000 in requests. ■ The number of interested organizations for both programs also exceeded the number of awardees by at least four times.

Rationale cont.	**Alignment with other current initiatives:** Both of the DCL programs are also supported by the Immigrant and Refugee Taskforce, convened by Mayor Potter to investigate barriers experienced by Portland's growing immigrant and refugee population, and to then identify possible solutions.
Background	**DCL Academy:** In this project's first year, a contract for $70,000 was awarded to the Latino Network, partnering with the Center for Intercultural Organizing and Oregon Action. Up to 45 community members from diverse immigrant/ refugee community organizations and community organizations of color in Portland are being recruited to participate in this 12-month leadership training program. The initial program runs from June 2007 through June 2008. **DCL Organizing Project:** In late 2007, three grants totaling $200,000 were awarded to Urban League of Portland, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, and Native American Youth and Family Services ($67,000 grants.)
Partners	**Lead** ONI **Partners** Community-based organizations working with under-represented communities
Outcomes	• Increase in the number of issues affecting under-represented communities that relate to City budgeting, planning, or policies being advanced with City agencies by underrepresented community groups. • Increased numbers of underrepresented residents receiving information about City budgeting, planning, or policy projects. • Increased numbers of underrepresented residents participating in two-way communication with City agencies about City budgeting, planning, or policy. • Increase in underrepresented resident participation on City boards, commissions, bureau advisory committees, and citizen advisory committees for hundreds of City projects. • City agencies/bureaus learn new strategies from DCL projects about engaging underrepresented communities in their public involvement efforts and adopting new strategies to meet the changing needs of Portland's diversifying demographics.
Innovations	Expansion of Portland's community involvement system to support the leadership and capacity of under-represented communities with an emphasis on people of color, immigrants and refugees. Policy, planning, and budgeting processes are best served when developed with public input representing a diverse cross-section of Portland's increasingly diverse communities.

STRATEGY 3:

Overcome barriers to participation by providing resources for translation, childcare, transportation, and accessibility

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #2, 3rd strategy** ***"Overcome logistical barriers to participation.*** *Provide child care, food, translation, and transportation at key meetings; hold meetings and events at times that work for people and in locations that are easily accessible and comfortable; address barriers that prevent the disability community from physically accessing and fully participating in meetings."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Make Neighborhood Accessibility Fund permanent** **Estimated cost:** In FY 07-08 City Council funded a pilot Neighborhood Accessibility Fund to help neighborhood associations and District Coalitions to overcome barriers to participation. The pilot is funded with $30,000 in one time dollars. This funding should be made permanent. An increase in resources, and potential realignment of this program into other existing programs should be considered pending the results of year one evaluations.
Strategy Description	The Neighborhood Accessibility Fund provides limited funding to neighborhood associations to pay for language translation, childcare, transportation, and accessibility supports to enable more people to participate in meetings and events. We recommend making this program permanent. And we recommend exploring the possibility of expanding the Fund to include non-geographic community organizations serving under-represented groups that meet certain criteria. We also recommend the creation of trainings (see Strategy 9) to insure that these resources are used in the most cost effective and strategic manner possible. These trainings could include information on low- and no-cost strategies (e.g. tips for recruiting and supervising volunteers to provide childcare, translation, and other services.) Information should also be made available to City bureaus on how to overcome barriers to participation in City hearings and other government-led decision-making processes.
Rationale	Community Connect's research identified significant barriers to participation affecting the ability of a wide range of Portlanders to get involved in their communities and to have a voice in public decision-making. For residents with young children, attending evening meetings is almost impossible unless childcare is available. Seniors and those with disabilities struggle to make it to community events when transportation options are limited and meeting facilities are often not accessible. And for community members with limited English, meaningful participation is not possible without language interpretation and translation. Current rules governing neighborhood associations require that all votes be made in person. In order to facilitate full participation at meetings, extra resources are needed to remove these barriers to participation. **The current allocation of $30,000 is insufficient to meet the need, but it is an important start. Consider these costs:** • Interpretation two meetings/ year for each NA: $18,200 • Language translation: $100 per page • On-site licensed child care: $75 to 150 per event. • Real time captioning interpretation for hard of hearing: $300 per 2-3 hour meeting.

Rationale cont.	In research provided for Community Connect, the Slavic Coalition and Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization noted that cultural supports, translators, and intermediaries would be helpful to connect their community members with government—especially given prior negative experiences with government in their home countries.
Background	Neighborhood associations (NAs) and District Coalitions (DCs) have occasionally tried to address barriers to participation by organizing potlucks, providing interpretation or childcare, or translating segments of newsletters. These efforts have relied primarily on volunteers. Relying on volunteers to perform these tasks has resulted in frustration and criticism – e.g. that translation at times has been inaccurate or poorly done, that parents are uncomfortable leaving their children with unlicensed or unfamiliar community volunteers, etc. But funding and technical support have generally not been available to enable associations to pay for these supports. ONI launched the pilot Neighborhood Accessibility Fund to help build capacity for NAs to make their activities and meetings more accessible for those for whom child care, language, transportation or accessibility are a barrier to participation. ONI has been working with the DCs to develop the criteria and procedures for NAs and DCs to access the Fund. The goal of the 1st year pilot project is to create an easy to access fund on a first-come, first-serve basis to identify the level of need -- geographic areas most in need and demographics seeking services most frequently.
Partners	**Lead** ONI **Partners** District Coalitions Neighborhood associations Community-based organizations that work with under-represented groups
Outcomes	• Number of neighborhood association and District Coalition events and meetings offering childcare, interpretation, translation, transportation, and/or increased accessibility. • Increase in number of community members attending meetings because of these supports. This includes community members with children; with disabilities; for whom English is a second language; and senior citizens. • Increase in capacity of neighborhood associations and District Coalitions to provide childcare, translation, transportation, and accessibility supports on their own without City resources (e.g. development of effective partnerships or volunteer base, volunteer management infrastructure, etc.)
Innovations	With a relatively limited public investment, neighborhood associations will gain the capacity to overcome common logistical barriers that prevent Portland's community involvement system from being truly inclusive and welcoming to all members of the community.

STRATEGY 4:

Expand Neighborhood Small Grants Program to support local community-led projects throughout the City

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #5, 2nd strategy** ***"Provide small grants to community organizations*** *to enable them to organize community-building projects and events, to determine community needs and desires through inclusive processes such as asset mapping and community organizing, and to develop and implement community action plans."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Increase funding for Neighborhood Small Grants Program** **Estimated cost:** The Neighborhood Small Grants Program was first funded by City Council in FY 06-07 and is currently funded at $206,000 in permanent funding. Permanent funding should be increased by at least 25-50% ($50,000 - $100,000), and ideally more to better meet the demand for this popular program.
Strategy Description	The Neighborhood Small Grants Program provides small grants to neighborhood and community-based organizations for a wide range of projects including beautification such as clean-ups, communications such as web-sites and print newsletters, outreach campaigns such as door knocking, crime prevention, art and culture, youth leadership grants, school-community partnerships, neighborhood fairs and festivals, and partnerships between neighborhoods and under-represented groups. Grants are distributed through and administered by the District Coalitions. The goal of the Neighborhood Small Grants Program is to provide neighborhood and community organizations an opportunity to expand their community-building capacity, attract new and diverse members and sustain those already involved. We recommend expanding this program to make more funding available to local initiatives. Additional funds would be divided equitably among all seven District Coalitions to be distributed to neighborhood and community organizations within their boundaries. Each Coalition is required to do outreach to a range of stakeholders within their district and to form a diverse volunteer review committee including non-neighborhood community leaders to select grantees. Grantees are required to complete evaluations at the end of their project.
Rationale	The small grants program responds to years of input from neighborhood and community leaders for increased direct resources to neighborhood associations and other community-based groups working on local projects. In its first year of implementation, the demand has far outstripped the supply of available funding: • Total amount of grant funding awarded: $184,057 • Total amount requested in applications: $628,516 • Total # of organizations funded: 92 • Total # of organizations requesting funding: 177 • Average dollar amount funded: $1,896 • Total amount of leveraged dollars: $683,469 By empowering grassroots groups with direct resources, the small grants program provides an incentive for communities to organize and improve livability on a local level. The result is a partnership in which government and communities work together to address locally-identified needs. This program expands community involvement by encouraging participation among people who would like to contribute to their communities in a hands-on, practical way. For instance, small grants funding has been awarded to sponsor one-

Rationale cont.	time cultural events, tree plantings, and communication efforts to build membership. The following Community Connect research respondents specifically supported the small grants program and advocated for its expansion: members of the City's boards, commissions, and committees; District Coalition directors; neighborhood association leaders; and a study committee of the League of Women Voters. Additionally, community respondents selected "providing small grants" and a "community needs process" as top priorities in response to Community Connect's draft recommendations in fall 2007
Background	There have been proposals to create small grants programs through ONI at various times over the past 15 years, if not longer. Research for creating such a program was conducted in the mid-90's and considered as recently as 2003. These efforts looked to such cities as Seattle, WA which has had a neighborhood grants program since the mid-90's and is currently funded at $3.2 million. ONI launched a Neighborhood Small Grants Program in FY 06-07, providing 92 grants in the first year averaging $1,850 per grant. 38% went to under-represented organizations. Three technical assistance workshops were held to assist neighborhood, community, and business district associations in developing proposals, with over 120 participants. *Examples of projects funded with small grants in year one include:* ■ **Cully Association of Neighbors outreach:** CAN organized an outreach campaign that has resulted in successful relationship building with the Latino and Somali communities. A leader of Hacienda CDC is now a CAN board member and meetings are regularly interpreted due to demand. ■ **Emergency Preparedness Fair:** Northwest Industrial Neighborhood Association organized a very successful fair for all businesses in the NINA area to raise awareness of NINA, encourage business networking, and educate businesses about preparing for disasters. ■ **International Day Festival:** The Sandy Blvd. business district association organized a fair highlighting the diversity of their community including producing an interactive theatrical skit encouraging community dialogue about change in their community held in several SE Asian restaurants. ■ **Educate Ya:** The Latino Youth Leadership Council provided civic leadership trainings for Latino high school students using a civics 101 curriculum and organized social networking events.
Partners	**Lead** ONI and District Coalitions **Partners** Neighborhood associations Community-based organizations Business district associations
Outcomes	• Number of neighborhood and community organizations funded; • Number of people served by grants; • New projects, infrastructure, and partnerships that would not have happened without the small grants; • Increased neighborhood and community organization capacity; • Increased membership and involvement in neighborhood and community organizations, especially from underrepresented populations.
Innovations	Provides communities with direct control over resources to use for small local projects to address community-identified goals.

STRATEGY 5:

Define minimum programmatic service levels for District Coalitions and provide adequate funding to support fulfillment of contract requirements

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #5, 5th strategy:** ***"Promote equity and accountability in ONI contracts to provide effective support to neighborhoods and communities throughout the City:*** • *Require District Coalitions to provide a minimum level of core services* • *Provide District Coalitions and other contracting agencies with adequate resources* • *Create an equitable distribution of resources and services* • *Hold District Coalitions and other contracting agencies accountable to specific performance measures* • *Develop a consistent structure for all contracting agencies"*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Define minimum programmatic service levels for District Coalitions (DCs).** Identify minimum services that can be expected across all DCs citywide, based on realistic funding levels and incorporate these expectations into new contracts. **Provide adequate funding for DC staff** to enable them to fulfill these minimum service levels and meet contract requirements. **Hold DCs and other contracting agencies accountable to specific performance measures,** and track their effectiveness by providing Contracts Management and Performance Measurement services. **Estimated Cost:** City Council approved additional one time funding of $350,000 for DCs in FY 07-08 to increase staffing capacity. This additional funding should be extended. Depending on how minimum service levels are defined, additional funding may be necessary to enable DCs to effectively meet contract requirements. In addition, 0.5 to 1.0 FTE will be necessary to provide Contracts Management and Performance Measurement services.
Strategy Description	This strategy supports establishing minimum service levels for Portland's seven District Coalitions, providing adequate funding for DCs to fulfill these minimum service levels, and creating staffing capacity within ONI to manage contracts and performance measures for DCs and other ONI contractors. We recommend that ONI and DCs work together to identify minimum programmatic service levels for all DCs based on realistic funding levels. These standards should be incorporated into ONI's contracts with the DCs. The definition of minimum service levels should be based on prioritization of the following list: • Neighborhood small grant program • Leadership development and board orientation • Communications • Diversity outreach and coalition building • Membership base building • Issue campaign organizing • Land use and urban planning • Fund development • Information and referral • Special events organizing • Serving as a link for the City to the neighborhood system • Basic administration of organizational contact info and official documents

Strategy Description cont.	The definition of minimum service levels for DCs should be accompanied by an analysis of the necessary staffing capacity, professional expertise, and resources to enable DCs to fulfill their contract expectations. The FY 07-08 budget increased District Coalition funding by $50,000 per coalition in one time dollars to support financial management responsibilities of new programs such as neighborhood small grants, increasing public demands for technical assistance, better outreach to underrepresented groups, enhanced communications, and program management responsibilities including evaluation. Community Connect recommends that these one time dollars be extended. This strategy provides each District Coalition with approximately one additional FTE and helps them be minimally staffed with a director, office manager, and two program specialists. In reality, this staffing level is probably not adequate to fulfill all of the necessary functions of DCs. Given this constraint, minimum service levels should be prioritized in order to focus on the most important functions that are achievable within current resource levels. Ultimately, resources for DCs should reflect what it will actually cost to achieve all of the core functions of DCs within an effective community involvement system. Additional ONI capacity (0.5-1.0 FTE) will be needed to manage and evaluate contracts and performance measurements. This includes training contractors on best practices for measuring performance, ensuring contractors comply with reporting requirements, maintaining document files and data, and producing summary reports for the budgeting process and annual reports.
Rationale	Portland's neighborhood system provides an important and valued forum for addressing neighborhood needs and helping Portlanders to access City government. The city's seven District Coalitions play a key role in supporting this system by providing technical assistance and capacity building to neighborhood associations. There has been a consistent call for more resources to improve Portland's neighborhood involvement system. It was a recent recommendation by the League of Women Voters as well as a key recommendation of the 1996 Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement appointed by Commissioner Charlie Hales. In Community Connect's research, concerns about the capacity of the neighborhood system, and District Coalitions in particular, were a common theme. Neighborhood volunteers and DC staff stressed the need for more funding to enable DCs to fulfill core functions effectively. Given that DCs are part of the infrastructure of our community involvement system, we need to provide them with adequate resources to do their work. This includes resources to maintain sufficient staffing levels and to provide for an increasingly more complex and professional level of service required by the contracts. But we must also have better mechanisms for holding them accountable for using public dollars effectively and fulfilling citywide priorities. Mayor Potter and other Council members have continually raised the need for ONI to better evaluate its programs and contractors in order to justify future funding increases. There will be the need for increased staff in order to implement more robust performance evaluation systems.
Background	Until recently, funding for all DCs stagnated at $1.34 million. Since 2005, funding to DCs has increased due to new initiatives such as the small grants. The FY 07-08 budget included an additional $50,000 per coalition in one time dollars to support increased staffing capacity. DCs emphasize the need to make this additional funding permanent, but they also express concern that this additional funding is not sufficient to enable them to effectively provide core services. The District Coalitions' contracts with ONI must be renewed for FY 2008-09. Negotiations will include prioritizing minimum service levels commensurate with staffing and resources allocated in the final FY 08-09 budget approved by City Council. The contract agreements will incorporate the recommendations from Community Connect's Phase One Implementation Plan that were prioritized by the ONI BAC as part of its 07-08 budget package.

Partners	**Leads** ONI District Coalitions **Partners** Neighborhood associations Auditor's office (for developing performance measures)
Outcomes	■ District Coalitions will have clear expectations of minimum service levels, and these expectations will be achievable with available resources ■ District Coalitions and other ONI contractors will be held accountable for fulfilling the terms of their contracts, and will receive support to enable them to do so effectively ■ Neighborhoods throughout the City will receive equitable levels of technical support to strengthen their ability to build community and to engage community members to take action to promote livability and quality of life **Performance Measures:** ONI is working with the Auditor's office and will hire a contractor after the Auditor's initial report due in January to develop updated and effective performance measurements. Current measurements include: • Requests for technical assistance • Coordination of community projects • Partnerships with diverse constituencies • Attendance at neighborhood meetings and staff presence at those meetings • Attendance at leadership trainings • Distribution of newsletters
Innovations	■ **Minimum service levels for District Coalitions** will establish clear roles and priorities for the neighborhood system, making the system more focused and effective. ■ **Improved development and monitoring of performance measures:** Increased staffing capacity for contracts management and performance evaluation will enable ONI to implement Auditor recommendations and ensure that consistent and valid, goal-based performance measures are collected, analyzed, and reported. Contractors will be able to demonstrate their effectiveness, and community involvement indicators will be tracked on a citywide basis.

STRATEGY 6:
Promote networking and collaboration among organizations locally and citywide

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #6, 1st and 2nd strategies:** ***"Promote opportunities for neighborhoods and other communities to come together citywide.*** *Hold an annual citywide Community Assembly that brings together a wide range of people and organizations to network, share information and best practices, discuss issues, identify common concerns and desires, and deliberate over citywide policy and planning priorities."* ***"Promote collaboration between organizations.*** *Reinforce the role of ONI as a convener of a wide range of interests and organizations. Foster formal partnerships as well as issue- and project-based collaborations among different groups (e.g. by providing grants to partnerships rather than individual organizations). Support organizations that contract with ONI (District Coalitions, community-based organizations, and business district organizations) to build broad-based networks and partnerships with other groups."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Expand Community Engagement Initiative** to promote collaboration between District Coalitions and community-based organizations that work with under-represented groups. **Continue to use small grants to emphasize partnerships** at the local level. **Hold an annual citywide Community Assembly** to network, share information/best practices, identify common concerns, discuss issues, and deliberate over policies. **Cost estimate:** The Community Engagement Initiative was funded by City Council in FY 06-07 with $45,000 in permanent funds. Funding should be increased by 30-50% to increase the program's effectiveness. A citywide Community Assembly will require coordination either by 0.33 FTE or a consultant (approximately $32,000.) Outreach and event costs for a 300-person event are estimated at an additional $23,000-$30,000. Funding for small grants is covered under Strategy 4.
Strategy Description	Community Connect's *Five Year Plan* emphasizes the importance of partnerships and collaboration both locally and citywide for building community capacity, breaking down barriers, and fostering more effective public decision-making. As Portland's community involvement system expands to include more under-represented groups, this bridging function is especially important. Over the past year ONI has launched two initiatives that are supporting the development of broad-based partnerships at the local level. **The Community Engagement Initiative** funded three pilot projects that brought together District Coalitions and under-represented communities to work together on a common project. Potential future projects include joint leadership training and civic capacity building, community dialogues, cultural exchanges, and targeted outreach and organizing efforts. We recommend an expansion of this successful pilot to increase its effectiveness and its reach. More funding will allow each District Coalition to participate in the Initiative. The **Neighborhood Small Grants** program (described in Strategy 4) encourages partnerships as one of the core criteria for grant funding. As a result, many of the projects funded in the program's first year involved creative partnerships among diverse groups. We recommend continuing to use these grants to promote these kinds of local collaborations. We also recommend that Portland create an ongoing forum for citywide communication and collaboration across a wide range of groups by organizing an annual

Strategy Description cont.	**Community Assembly.** The purpose of the Community Assembly would be to bring together a wide range of people and organizations to network, share information and best practices, discuss issues, identify common concerns and desires, and deliberate over citywide policy and planning priorities. The Community Assembly would build bridges across leaders and communities who identify by identity, geography, and issues. Given limited capacity, it may be most feasible to organize the Assembly as a representative gathering, with each association and community organization in the city asked to send one representative. The Assembly should be established as an annual event to promote ongoing networking and bridge-building among the city's diverse communities and organizations.
Rationale	Both the Community Engagement Initiative and Neighborhood Small Grants program have provided valuable incentives for neighborhood associations and District Coalitions to build programmatic partnerships with non-geographic community organizations with an emphasis on under-represented groups. This is an important step towards breaking down existing silos and making the neighborhood system more inclusive. In order for the benefits of these programmatic partnerships to be fully realized, we need to also create an ongoing forum that brings communities together across differences – the Community Assembly. Support for this strategy is reflected in the following common themes: • Neighborhood association leaders who were convened together in September 2006 remarked that the act of getting together and building relationships is necessary to increase participation. • The importance of bringing different groups together to build common under standing and foster collaboration was a key theme in input that Community Connect gathered from public involvement employees, visionPDX respondents, and the small business community. • Commissioner Sten's office and Coalition Directors cited the importance of community leaders convening people to identify and address common needs.
Background	**Community Engagement Initiative:** ONI launched the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) to support the development of broad-based partnerships at the local level. This initiative funded three pilot projects that brought together District Coalitions and under-represented communities to work together on a common project. The initiative facilitates genuine relationship-building among groups that may not otherwise work together, serving an important bridging function. In fiscal year 06-07, three grants totaling $45,000 were awarded: • Welcome to the Neighborhood ($11,250): A joint project between East Portland Neighborhood Office and Human Solutions targeting outreach to low-income renters and recent immigrants, primarily from Latino, Russian/Slavic, and Southeast Asian populations. • Together We Solve: Community Awareness Cross-Training ($11,250): A joint project between Central NE Neighbors (CNN) and Native American Youth and Family Services organizing cross-cultural, intergenerational community between Native elders and youth, Latino youth, Cully and other CNN neighborhood leaders. • Neighborhood Initiative for Community Engagement ($22,500): Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. (SWNI), Southeast Uplift (SEUL), and Somali Women's Association (SWA) are partnering on a project to bring neighborhood associations and Somali community members together to learn about each other's cultures and build relationships so that they can work together effectively to make their communities more livable.

Background cont.	**Small grants:** Current guidelines for the Neighborhood Small Grants program promote partnerships at the local level. Proposed projects must address one or more of the following in order to qualify for consideration (the third and fourth bullets both relate to partnerships): • Projects that build capacity in neighborhood associations and communities within the designated District Coalition's area. • Projects that build capacity in community-based organizations working with underrepresented populations within the designated District Coalition area. • Projects that show partnerships between neighborhood associations and community-based organizations within the designated District Coalition area. • Projects that show partnerships between neighborhood associations and under-represented organizations and communities within the designated District Coalition area. **Community Assembly:** ONI and community volunteers have organized citywide neighborhood summits and congresses intermittently over the past 20+ years. Four were organized between 2000-2003 drawing up to 325 participants. They included a range of activities including skills workshops, small and large group panels and forums, and large group plenaries for visioning discussions on the future of the City's civic engagement strategies. These efforts can be staff intensive; without dedicated funding, consistent organizing and follow-up to the events has been a challenge.
Partners	**Leads** ONI and District Coalitions **Partners** Neighborhood associations Business district associations Community organizations, particularly those serving under-represented groups
Outcomes	• Increase in effective working partnerships and information sharing between neighborhood associations, District Coalitions and diverse community organizations, particularly those serving under-represented groups; • Increased connections and networks among individuals from various communities; • Increased understanding of other communities' interests; • Increased capacity within neighborhood associations, business district associations, and community organizations serving under-represented groups; • Increased leadership and organizational capacity within under-represented groups; • Increased understanding of citywide policy context among community leaders, including understanding the interests and needs of a wide range of constituencies; • Increase in the number of emerging coalitions and collaborative projects.
Innovations	Building bridges and collaboration between neighborhood associations, businesses, and non-geographic communities, especially under-represented groups, both locally and across the city.

STRATEGY 7:

Make Effective Engagement Solutions program permanent to provide staff support to communities and City bureaus around high stakes, controversial, and divisive issues

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #5, 3rd strategy** ***"Provide targeted staff support to communities experiencing a high degree of development pressure or other major changes*** *to keep community members informed, to manage conflict, and to allow the community to respond effectively to issues that arise."* **Recommendation 6, 3rd strategy** ***"Bring together different communities and interests to build shared understanding.*** *Foster local and citywide dialogue on controversial and divisive issue; facilitate "study circles" and listening sessions to build shared understanding; provide mediation and conflict resolution as needed."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Make funding for Effective Engagement Solutions program permanent.** Increase effectiveness of one-person program by designating liaisons in all bureaus, including those connected to land-use and livability such as Planning, BDS, PDC, public safety, and each infrastructure bureau to serve as a resource and improve responsiveness to the public. **Estimated cost:** The Effective Engagement Solutions program was funded by City Council in FY 07-08 short-term at one FTE. Making this program permanent would cost $96,000 for 1 FTE program specialist (salary and benefits plus associated program costs.)
Strategy Description	We recommend making this program permanent to accomplish the following goals: • Provide targeted staff support to communities experiencing a high degree of development pressure or other major changes (e.g. develop Community Impact Assessment Tools with a limited number of neighborhoods) • Bring together different communities and interests to build shared understanding and to foster dialogue on controversial and divisive issues (e.g. Gentrification Listening Circles) • Facilitate collaborative processes for issues of growth, development, and change (e.g. siting of group housing bringing together developers, non-profits service providers, and neighborhood groups) • Provide consulting services to the City around high-stake/ high-conflict community issues, including in direct response to Council requests To effectively accomplish the program's objectives, we recommend developing more formal partnerships with all bureaus, including those involved with land use and livability (Planning, BDS, PDC, public safety, and each infrastructure bureau) to facilitate greater coordination. Currently, the program coordinates with bureaus on a case-by-case basis, using personal contacts. With the designation of liaisons in these and other bureaus, lines of communication will be established so that controversial issues can be addressed more quickly on a sustained basis.
Rationale	Reduction in conflict: Controversial planning and development issues can cause conflict and ill will. Providing skilled facilitation at the front end of these issues will ameliorate these kinds of situations in the future. Restoration of community: Past development dynamics such as gentrification have fractured communities and created lingering racial tensions. Providing skilled facilitation proactively in these situations (e.g. Gentrification Listening Circles) is essential to restoring community. The opportunity cost of conflict: Neighborhoods and communities often feel be sieged by development and land use pressures that can absorb a lot of time and

Rationale cont.	make it difficult for residents to engage in broader community building or other issues. Team approach for maximum effectiveness: Through bureau coordination with the Effective Engagement Solutions program, the City can engage in dialogue with communities and proactively develop win-win strategies before issues reach a crisis level.
Background	ONI currently has temporary funding for an Effective Engagement Solutions position. This position is being filled by Judith Mowry, a skilled high-stakes facilitator of community dialogues. Since being hired, Judith has held two listening circles on gentrification, an issue about which many Portlanders are concerned. With minimal outreach, each forum attracted more than 100 attendees and created connections and community-building ideas. In several months she has already accomplished or initiated the following projects: • Veteran Reintegration Project – facilitation around project providing housing and social services for vets • Cully Pilot Project/Community Impact Assessment Tool (this would identify community priorities to provide developers with community interests at the front-end of construction projects, and could also provide Council with a check list of community needs) • Handbook entitled 'When Controversy Comes to Your Neighborhood' to assist concerned community members facing controversial issues in their communities • Police's approach to people experiencing homelessness • What's Race Got to Do with It? – panel discussions to educate the public about race relations in everyday life (in planning phase) This position grew out of the seven year Community Residential Siting Program that provides facilitation support for high-stakes dialogues related to siting of group home housing between neighborhood and community-based groups, social services and developers. More recently Resolutions NW contracted with ONI to provide a limited number of facilitation hours for assisting with a broader range of neighborhood organizational and City bureau conflict resolution or issue-based dialogues. The ONI BAC recommended in winter 2007 to fund a full time position to provide ongoing high-stakes facilitation and problem-solving services for neighborhoods experiencing pressures related to development and other conflicts.
Partners	**Lead** ONI **Partners** City bureaus: PDC, Planning, BDS, infrastructure bureaus Public safety agencies Private developers (where applicable) Community groups: District Coalitions, neighborhood associations, business district associations, and community-based organizations
Outcomes	• Increase in general public's understanding of successful decision-making and public process; • Decline in the number of land use cases that are appealed to City Council; • Decline in the number of planning and development decisions that result in sustained community conflict; • Increase in general public's awareness of the importance of inclusivity; • Increase in ability among leadership at all levels to be inclusive.
Innovations	This provides the City with the internal capacity to proactively engage the community in dialogue and negotiations in high-stakes or controversial situations in order to reduce conflict and promote win-win solutions.

STRATEGY 8:
Expand support for communication and information sharing

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #3, 1st strategy** *"**Facilitate communication and information sharing** within and among neighborhood associations, business district associations, and other community organizations through print newsletters, flyers, list-serves, e-newsletters, and web communications. Explore the creation of a central website for neighborhood and business district association newsletters, calendars, and websites."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Continue funding to District Coalitions (DCs) to directly support neighborhood association (NA) communications** through print newsletters, flyers, list-serves, e-newsletters, and web communications. Explore the creation of a central website for neighborhood and business district association newsletters, calendars, and websites. **Estimated cost:** DCs have historically received roughly $1,000 in funding per NA to support communications, for a total of $95,000 in baseline funding. An additional $95,000 in new funding (i.e. an additional $1,000 per NA) was allocated in FY 06-07 to each District Coalition to strengthen communication efforts. This increase still does not adequately cover the costs of effective communications. The following estimates provide an indication of costs for creating more comprehensive communications capacity: • Communications training: about $19,500 to provide 6 training sessions/ year • Create a central website: OMF has submitted a $185,000 budget package request for expansion of eVolvement; $20,000 would enable ONI to support NAs and Diversity and Civic Leadership program participants in connecting to this site • Newsletter support: about $340,000 to provide every household with a quarterly newsletter from their neighborhood association
Strategy Description	We recommend providing additional funding to DCs to support electronic and print communication by NAs and other community based organizations. Phase one priorities include: **Communications training:** Citywide training sessions on topics such as web site development, writing newsletter articles, communicating with cultural competence, developing media plans, writing press releases, and sharing of best practices. Participants would include members of neighborhood associations, business district associations, and community organizations serving under-represented groups. **Create a central website:** eVolvement, an effort launched in North Portland, allows users from that geographic area to view localized articles, and to communicate with each other through an online forum called "The Back Fence." This strategy proposes to expand the tools of eVolvement to the rest of Portland. This tool has been used by North Portland community members to build relationships and report and solve community problems, from lost dogs to drug houses. The Office of Management and Finance, Business Operations has submitted a budget package request for $185,000 for staffing and development related to PortlandOnline maintenance and expansion, including expansion of eVolvement citywide and development of business and youth portals. One component of this proposal includes one-time funds for 2 part-time FTE in FY 08-09 to assist with set up of sites, posting content and marketing and training community members. One of the part time staff could be housed in ONI to facilitate neighborhood associations, business district associations and Diversity and Civic Leadership program participants to set up, maintain, and utilize online content.

Strategy Description cont.	A key criteria for the success of such a partnership would be insuring that eVolvement meets the needs of local organizations – e.g. ease of use and maintenance, allowing community groups sufficient ownership over site content, ensuring future support capacity within ONI/ District Coalition offices, etc. **Newsletter support:** Increase communication funding for DCs and NAs so that NAs can distribute quarterly newsletters to all residents in their boundaries. For example, to send out four newsletters per year, printing and mailing costs are roughly estimated at $339,249 ($.44 per newsletter for printing and postage x 2029 homes/per NA x 95 NAs x 4 times/year=$339,249).
Rationale	A recurring theme from Community Connect's research was the importance of communication for neighborhood associations and other community groups to share information with their members and network with each other. Research respondents stressed the need for better communication in all directions: within NAs, within the neighborhood system, between the neighborhood system and business district associations and non-geographic organizations, and between the community and local government. **Communications training:** This strategy would complement and enhance existing communications resources provided by DCs to NAs by providing NAs with the necessary knowledge and training to support their communications strategies. There is currently a wide disparity in the sophistication of NA communications, mainly due to differences in individual members' technological expertise. The trainings would help to level out the playing field, and would particularly benefit those NAs which do not have highly skilled communications strategies. Previous efforts by DCs to arrange similar trainings have been very popular. This strategy is taking a demonstrated need and making it available citywide with the assistance of DCs. Trainings should also be open to other ONI-funded community groups meeting certain criteria. **Create a central website:** Of the 95 neighborhood association and 34 business district associations, approximately 36% currently do not have a stand-alone online presence. This strategy creates a free communication tool for those associations and community groups that would like to use it. A variety of community stakeholders have advocated for centralized, interactive websites to foster communication. Community Connect's research identified interest in developing a centralized website for neighborhood and business district associations to support their electronic communications capacity. The demand for the ability to post to PortlandOnline has been led by the Small Business Advisory Council and the Youth Project. In the past, Commissioner Adams has expressed his support for NAs to post their minutes to PortlandOnline. **Newsletter support:** Many respondents to Community Connect's surveys emphasized the importance of NA newsletters to maintain ongoing communication with residents. While electronic communication holds potential for greater community involvement, Community Connect equally heard from respondents that traditional methods of communication are just as important. Some respondents also cautioned that over- reliance on electronic communications could undermine the inclusivity of the Portland's community involvement system. This strategy builds on a recent development in which ONI can now provide NAs with mailing lists of every household within their boundaries.

Background	District Coalitions have historically received roughly $1,000 in funding per NA to support communications. This funding is essential, but it has not proven to be adequate. About 65 NAs have their own websites and dozens have regular newsletters and list-serves, but many are infrequent. Considering it would cost in excess of $1 million a year to provide monthly newsletters to all residents in Portland, the neighborhood system is still woefully under-funded for communications. NAs are organizing increasingly sophisticated online communications, but how they implement web sites, list serves, etc. varies across the City making coordination difficult. There is strong interest in the City or Coalitions providing web server space to host web sites. An effort was also made in FY 06-07 to post neighborhood minutes to PortlandOnline, but for various reasons this initiative has not moved forward.
Partners	**Leads** ONI OMF District Coalitions **Partners** Neighborhood associations Community-based organizations Business district associations
Outcomes	• Increased frequency of regular print communications between neighborhood associations and residents; • Increase in number of neighborhood associations with websites and e-newsletters; • Creation of central website utilized by neighborhood associations, business district associations and other recognized community organizations; • Increased capacity and knowledge base for managing content of electronic communications; • Increased number and diversity of individuals and organizations receiving training and capacity building in communications; • Increased level of community awareness of neighborhood association activities and organizing issues as well as City public involvement efforts.
Innovations	This strategy will help Portlanders communicate with each other and with the City. By allowing groups to post to PortlandOnline, the City is providing access and a forum for volunteer civic groups that have been traditionally apart from government. Allowing groups to post content to the City's website is one step toward a more collaborative style of governance. Through the expansion of eVolvement, community members will have the option of using discussion forums and posting locally-important content.

STRATEGY 9:

Develop and implement a citywide leadership development/ capacity-building training program

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #5, 1st strategy** ***"Build leadership and advocacy skills** through a citywide leadership training program for neighborhoods, communities, and business district associations. Create citywide coordination and require each District Coalition and ONI contracting organization to collaborate in providing trainings in Civics 101, advocacy and organizing skills, and cultural competency."* **Recommendation #6, 3rd strategy** ***"Bring together different communities and interests to build shared understanding.** Foster local and citywide dialogue on controversial and divisive issue; facilitate study circles and listening sessions to build shared understanding; provide mediation and conflict resolution as needed."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Develop and implement a citywide leadership development/ capacity-building training program** to provide training in Civics 101, cultural competency, making meetings more inclusive, and best practices in community building. **Estimated cost:** Costs for a leadership training program range from $20,000 for a small scale pilot project run by ONI staff or a consultant to $240,000 for a comprehensive citywide program run collaboratively by ONI and the District Coalitions. Costs for a monthly citywide dialogue series range from $20,000 for a small scale pilot program run by a consultant or ONI staff to $120,000 for an ongoing series run collaboratively by a diverse range of organizations.
Strategy Description	**Leadership trainings:** The leadership trainings would include workshops and classes in key topics including: • Navigating how City government works • Advocacy and organizing skills • Cultural competency • Outreach to under-represented communities • Land use 101 • How to run an effective, inclusive meeting These trainings should include opportunities to bring together diverse participants – including neighborhood associations, under-represented groups, and city staff – to learn and share together. Training should be offered in multiple forms in addition to classroom training, such as: • Social networking (e.g. cluster gatherings, informal dialogues) • Online training content linked with discussion boards and case studies related to each topic • Production of print how-to manuals • Hands-on experiences (e.g. organizing a graffiti clean up, producing a newsletter, facilitating a meeting) • Book groups or discussion circles that spin off from interesting topics • Grant-based projects • Mentoring and internship projects **Citywide dialogues on contemporary issues:** In addition to formal leadership trainings, we recommend the development of facilitated dialogues on civic issues designed to bring together community members citywide. The opportunities would be designed to reach not just the "professional citizens," who routinely engage in civic life, but also the "occasional citizens," who are interested in the good of the community, but have limited ability to participate on a regular basis.

Strategy Description cont.	Dialogues would focus on a range of contemporary issues in the spirit of the deliberative democracy/National Issues Forum model (e.g. affordable housing, police accountability, skinny lot developments). Follow-up to each forum could include online dialogues on each topic and follow up small-group dialogues to develop collaborative action steps.
Rationale	This proposal would provide a coherent structure to leadership development compared to what has historically been loosely organized training opportunities based upon available staffing and capacity from year to year. District Coalition contracts require DC's to provide board orientations and trainings, and the ONI Standards direct ONI to provide technical assistance and coordination. But, due to insufficient funding, they have been provided at a minimum level and sporadically in most years. Yet Community Connect's research highlighted the vital role of leadership training in creating an engaged community and in fostering productive working partnerships between the community and government. Commissioner Adams has noted that neighborhood activists could have more understanding of City Hall. Commissioner Sten's office has offered strong support for leadership development, even recognizing the importance of paid leaders. Other Community Connect sources which emphasized the importance of leadership development include: • VisionPDX Interviewees • Coalition Directors • Neighborhood Association Leaders • Public Involvement Taskforce (2004) • Taskforce on Neighborhood Involvement (1996) • Recommendations to the League of Women Voters By combining leadership trainings with citywide dialogues on contemporary issues, this strategy would not only help to build community members' leadership skills, it would create a more informed public with an understanding of citywide policy issues and a broader view of how local issues fit into a citywide context. A common theme from interviews with the City's bureau directors and survey comments from city employees was that community activists often advocate with a narrow, issue-based focus. Through these dialogues, community members could gain a larger perspective. Dialogues would also allow community members to know each other better so that when difficult citywide issues arise, relationships are already in place to work through certain issues. Steve Johnson, Ph. D., professor at PSU, researched and produced a report entitled "Portland Civics Academy" for ONI in the summer of 2007. His findings highlighted the need for alternatives to traditional didactic training formats. He called for an emphasis on more social networking, mentoring, online training, and being flexible to meeting the needs of specific groups or constituencies. The proposed approach to leadership development would employ these techniques. The leadership development trainings would be open to members of neighborhood and business district associations as well as community groups meeting certain criteria, allowing for people with different backgrounds to network with each other. The dialogues would complement the leadership trainings by providing a forum for broader networking and a dynamic non-traditional learning environment.
Background	District Coalitions provide board orientations and limited leadership trainings on their own to varying degrees. Few coalitions have had the capacity to sustain more than one or two training events in a year. ONI has coordinated citywide trainings with coalitions from year to year ranging from 0-15 workshops per year on a wide range of topics. In 2006-07 sixteen workshops were held for more than 500 Portlanders on topics including raising cash, holding events, and creating welcoming environments. A Citizen Involvement Handbook, a 'how to' manual for neighbor-

Background cont.	hood leaders – to include information on navigating City Hall, is within the current Neighborhood Resource Center budget. Southeast Uplift has developed a Toolkit for Effective Leadership and resources for neighborhood leaders available online that could be updated and modified for citywide use. Over the past year, ONI has partnered with Portland State University to begin examining models for civic leadership training programs. The proposed leadership program would build on this work.
Partners	**Lead** ONI **Partners** District Coalitions Neighborhood associations Community-based organizations Portland State University
Outcomes	• Check ins with participants several months later will indicate an increased level of civic involvement, interest in involvement, and/or confidence about ability to influence their community in positive ways; • Neighborhood and community groups advocate and negotiate with City bureaus from a more informed and skilled position resulting in better outcomes for City policy, budgeting, planning and capital improvements projects; • Broader and more diverse participation in neighborhood and community-based organizations.
Innovations	This will make community involvement and public input into government decision-making more effective by increasing the knowledge, skills, and civic capacity of a wide range of Portland residents.

STRATEGY 10:
Support strategies to create and preserve schools as centers of community

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #4, 3rd strategy** *"**Create and preserve physical spaces and design features** that provide a focus for the community and a welcoming, inclusive place where people can gather, such as schools as centers of community, markets, gardens, intersections, community centers, parks, and benches."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Support strategies to create and preserve schools as centers of community.** **Estimated cost: N/A**
Strategy Description	We recommend that ONI leverage the resources of District Coalitions, neighborhood associations, and other community organizations to engage community members in partnership with Portland school districts and the Schools, Families, and Housing Initiative (SFH) to: • Better connect community members with their neighborhood public schools; • Engage the community in a dialogue about the potential for schools to serve as multi-purpose centers of community life in a way that also benefits their educational mission; • Identify key missing neighborhood amenities and infrastructure that affect neighborhood livability for residents, including families with children; • Develop a prioritized action list for preserving schools as centers of community. This work is already being piloted in several Portland neighborhoods. We support the Schools, Families, and Housing Initiative's efforts to expand the project to additional neighborhoods, and we recommend a greater role for ONI, District Coalitions, and other ONI contractor organizations as partners. We also encourage ONI to employ other strategies to create and preserve schools as centers of community, including • Securing space for neighborhood meeting locations in schools • Supporting networking opportunities between leaders of school groups and neighborhood associations to meet and identify opportunities for working together on common issues • Supporting communication sharing between neighborhood and school groups
Rationale	One of the issues raised repeatedly in Community Connect's research process was the importance of physical spaces and design features that support community building. Neighborhood and community activists identified the need for free and accessible meeting spaces in the community. Many people noted the valuable role that schools and community centers can play in providing a focus and gathering space for communities and a location for programs to serve the community's needs. For example: ■ Of a review of comments from more than 15,000 visionPDX respondents, the importance of schools as a cornerstone of neighborhoods was frequently mentioned. As one respondent put it, "Make public schools a hub for community development and enrichment so folks who don't have children feel invested in our public schools." ■ The East Portland Neighborhood Office commented that "schools are the best institutions in Portland," and several community members suggested that community meetings and meetings with City officials should be held in schools after hours.

Rationale cont.	SFH recognizes the valuable role of schools as centers of community both to preserve enrollment levels within our public schools, and to promote stronger neighborhoods. This initiative has worked in several pilot sites to support community dialogue about the role of schools as centers of community. In recent years many neighborhood schools have closed and PPS has sold off some key surplus school property. PPS is now engaged in developing a long range facilities plan. It is a critical moment for community participation. SFH received $110,000 in the Fall 2007 budget adjustment to expand its work. This strategy would increase the efficiency of those funds by strengthening community involvement in the SFH process.
Background	ONI has done some work in recent years to better connect neighborhood associations to schools. For example, ONI and District Coalitions worked with PPS to renew allowing neighborhood associations to meet in public schools free of charge. ONI also worked with PPS and Metro to develop a GIS map of PPS school and neighborhood association boundaries. Neighborhood associations and PPS worked collaboratively in 2003 to retain the Washington Monroe High School site as a community resource. The SFH Initiative offers a successful model for formalizing and expanding this work to connect communities and schools. The two primary goals of SFH are to: • Use resources and partnerships cost-effectively to promote balanced school enrollment throughout the city; and • Integrate school design and operation into Portland's successful model of neighborhood planning, promoting schools as multi-faceted community spaces.
Partners	**Lead** Commissioner Sten's Office Schools, Families, Housing Initiative **Partners** Portland school districts Portland Schools Foundation Bureau of Planning District Liaison Program District Coalitions, neighborhood associations, and community organizations
Outcomes	• Formal partnerships between Schools, Families, and Housing Initiative (SFH) and District Coalitions, neighborhood associations and community organizations in targeted SFH sites; • Expanded communication linkages between neighborhood associations, PTA's and school advocacy groups, the people of color coalition on school policy framework issues, community organizations and schools; • Increased use of school for community meetings, programs, and events; • Increased number of community residents who are aware of their neighborhood school and support it.
Innovations	Leverages ONI's networks and resources to increase the effectiveness of the Schools, Families, and Housing Initiative and to build long-term partnerships between communities and schools.

STRATEGY 11:

Support the creation of a Public Involvement Standards Commission and charge it with developing policy proposals to institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #8, 1st and 2nd strategies** ***"Foster an internal culture within City government that supports a commitment to public involvement.*** *Provide staff training and capacity building, and include quantifiable public involvement measurements in performance evaluations, particularly for upper management. Involve community members in evaluating the public involvement process for projects that they have participated in."* ***"Create comprehensive public involvement standards and guidelines:*** *Support implementation of the following core recommendations from Bureau Innovation Project #9 and the Public Involvement Task Force:* • Incorporate a section into the City Charter that articulates the City's commitment to the principles and values of community governance. • Have the City Council adopt community governance principles by ordinance to set the standard for all City bureaus and staff. • Require City bureaus to develop formal written public involvement policies. • Require written public involvement plans for certain types of major capital, policy, and planning projects and budget decisions. • Ensure that culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques are used to reach out to and involve constituencies traditionally under-represented in the community. • Establish a stable funding mechanism for public involvement processes. • Establish a standing Public Involvement Standards Commission to advise bureaus and hold the City accountable to adopted public involvement principles, standards, and guidelines. Maintain a Public Involvement Support position to adequately staff the Commission and issue an annual report, among other duties.
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Support the creation of a Public Involvement Standards Commission** by providing ongoing staffing capacity within ONI to convene and staff the Commission. **Estimated cost:** City Council funded a short-term 1 FTE position in FY 07-08 to convene a Public Involvement Standards Commission. Making this position permanent will cost $96,000 (salary and benefits plus associated program costs.)
Strategy Description	This strategy supports the establishment of a Public Involvement Standards Commission, a standing City advisory committee to act as an ongoing body to review and advocate for consistent and comprehensive public involvement standards and practices in the City of Portland. Whereas the ONI BAC will provide oversight of implementation of the Five Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement in Portland, this Commission will focus on internal City public involvement processes. ONI recently hired a public involvement specialist, a new position that is funded short-term to coordinate the implementation of recommendations from Bureau Innovation Project #9, including the formation of a Public Involvement Standards Commission (PISC). We recommend that funding for this position be made ongoing in order to create permanent capacity to staff the Commission and to institutionalize a commitment to public involvement through comprehensive public involvement standards and guidelines citywide. Over the next year this position will focus on organizing the PISC and laying the groundwork for future implementation of key recommendations from BIP #9 and the Public Involvement Taskforce, as identified in Community Connect's Recommendation #8. Year one work includes restarting the Citywide Public Involvement Network, assessing public involvement training needs and developing training

Strategy Description cont.	opportunities, cultural competency training for public involvement staff, and coordinating a joint bureau project for developing a public involvement management database.
Rationale	Many other City policy priorities have formal boards or commissions that focus both public and government attention on issues and provide a vehicle to review and comment on related City government activities. The proposed Commission would focus on issues and policies that cut across all bureaus. A standing commission is needed to facilitate coordination across bureaus and to engage bureaus and City Council in developing citywide public involvement policies. Both Metro and Multnomah County have citizen involvement committees that have similar roles to the proposed Public Involvement Standards Commission; the City currently has no board or commission that fills this role. This strategy directly includes and supports recommendations of the Bureau Innovation Project #9 committee, which has been successfully used by the Parks bureau and other City agencies. This strategy will address a common theme from interviews with bureau directors: the need for improved, more consistent, and more coordinated outreach efforts. It will also promote front-end inclusion, an important aspect of public involvement that was specifically identified by local agencies and neighborhood association leaders as a priority.
Background	The need for better coordination and improvement of citywide public involvement practices has been discussed for over ten years including the 1996 Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement. City Council passed a resolution in 1996 establishing a set of Principles for Public Involvement that set a framework for future discussions on this topic. As a resolution, it did not have the desired effect of establishing City Code or funding specific action steps. The Administrative Service Review effort in 2000 as well as the Public Involvement Task Force in 2003 recommended numerous steps to standardize as well as better fund public involvement efforts by City bureaus. The creation of a staff position to coordinate the development and implementation of such recommendations has been discussed in all of these efforts. Most recently the Bureau Innovation Project #9 committee on public involvement recommended creating such a position as well as establishing an ongoing citizen committee to advocate for and monitor such efforts. Specifically, BIP #9 recommended requiring all City bureaus to survey stakeholder committees to identify levels of impact for designing their public involvement workplans for major policy, budgeting, planning, and capital improvement projects.
Partners	**Lead** ONI **Partners** Mayor's office Previous members of the BIP 9 committee Previous members of the Public Involvement Task Force Key city public involvement staff and supportive bureau management (OMF, Water, PDC, BES, Parks) District Coalitions International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

Outcomes	• PISC is established and meeting on a regular basis; • PISC creates viable policy proposals to accomplish each of its Year 1 objectives, with buy-in and follow through by City Council and City bureaus; • City public involvement staff networking meetings are taking place on a regular basis to foster coordination and collaboration to implement citywide public involvement projects; • Trainings are provided for City public involvement staff on best practices and strategies succeeding at engaging appropriate constituencies, especially communities not traditionally involved with civic governance; • City bureaus begin to develop citywide public involvement contact management database for better coordination and cost savings with contact data list management.
Innovations	This will create comprehensive, coordinated standards and practices for public involvement within City government.

STRATEGY 12:
Make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent

Recommendation from *Five Year Plan* that this Strategy supports:	**Recommendation #7, 4th strategy** ***"Make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent.*** *Require all boards, commissions, and advisory committees to post online meeting notices, agendas, and minutes in a timely manner. Provide adequate notification in advance of meetings. Develop clear criteria for putting items on the City Council's consent agenda and provide a summary explanation of consent agenda items for the public. Standardize an open and accessible public records request policy for all bureaus."*
Strategy Summary and Cost Estimate	**Charge the Public Involvement Standards Commission with developing policies to make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent.** **Estimated cost:** Covered under Strategy #11
Strategy Description	We recommend that in addition to standardizing and institutionalizing public involvement practices, the Public Involvement Standards Commission also begin identifying strategies to make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent. As a starting point, we recommend that the PISC develop policy proposals and implementation strategies to: • Enforce current state law for all official boards, commissions and their subcommittees that may make decisions or policy recommendations, as well as advisory committees making recommendations to Council, to post online meeting notices, agendas, and minutes within a reasonable timeframe, and provide adequate notification in advance of meetings (see ORS 192.640-50). • Require all advisory committees reporting to internal bureau management to post online meeting notices, agendas, and minutes within a reasonable timeframe. • Implement a standardized open and accessible public records request policy for all bureaus. The implementation strategies should include mechanisms to enforce these requirements and hold City bureaus accountable This strategy will require the cooperation and collaboration of all City bureaus. Staff of these bureaus will need to be able to provide the Public Involvement Standards Commission with detailed information on existing practices as well as any obstacles to implementing proposed standards. Once standards are developed, bureau staff will be invited to participate in trainings on the new standards. For boards, commissions and committees not currently keeping written records, implementation of this strategy represents a slight additional workload. The City Attorney's Office has developed an open and accessible public records request policy that went into effect in January 2008. The PISC is well positioned to support implementation of this policy by coordinating trainings for bureau employees and by partnering with ONI to inform the public about the new procedures.
Rationale	In Community Connect's outreach, one of the themes heard most frequently was that Portlanders want their City government to be more responsive and accountable to community input. Recommendation 7 of Community Connect's Five Year Plan includes a number of important strategies for accomplishing this goal. To lay a foundation for these strategies to succeed, the first step must be to make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent. This was identified as a top priority for phase one by both community members and City employees, and

Rationale cont.	in previous research by neighborhood association leaders and the small business community. The Public Involvement Standards Commission is the appropriate body for moving forward this objective. This strategy will help coordinate the City's decentralized system of boards, commissions, and committees. Community Connect determined that there are 38 official City boards and commissions and at least 50 committees. These groups operate independently and are staffed by bureaus without consistent central coordination. For example, a central list of advisory committees does not exist, nor do any requirements for these committees to provide public notification. Adequate notice of all these groups and a requirement to post documents will ensure transparency and give the public the opportunity to attend if they so choose. While this strategy of online posting won't be accessible to all members of the public, it is a step toward a more transparent government and will maximize resources currently available to bureaus with nominal added effort.
Background	This recommendation mirrors previous efforts advocating for improved transparency and accountability in City government. In 1996 City Council passed citizen involvement principles (Resolution No. 35494) which included the goal of "informed and involved citizens." A Council resolution was passed in 2003 requiring all bureaus to post all significant meetings and events on the new PortlandOnline (Resolution No. 36170). However, due to a lack of enforcement or any community oversight, many critical meetings and events continue to not be posted. The Public Involvement Task Force in 2003 considered a broad range of recommendations similar to this one advocating for increased transparency and accountability. Currently, there are no citywide guidelines for posting meeting notices, minutes, and other background documents online – the preferred means of accessing such information by a growing segment of the public. In 2002 Commissioner Dan Saltzman began requiring bureaus in his portfolio to summarize public involvement efforts on proposed ordinances for major projects – an idea now seen as a model for consideration as a citywide practice. More recently, as a result of a directive by the Oregon legislature, City Council approved a resolution to standardize public information requests on December 19, 2007 to be enacted in practice beginning January 2008.
Partners	**Lead** Public Involvement Standards Commission **Partners** City Council Auditor's Office City bureau public involvement staff
Outcomes	• Require online meeting notices and summary information: Report completed with recommendations for implementation in FY 08-09. • Implement a standardized open and accessible public records request policy for all bureaus: bureaus trained and ready to implement new policy, and community members informed about policy guidelines.
Innovations	While state law governs adequate notice of agendas and meetings for official boards and commissions, this strategy would enforce these requirements and extend these provisions to the City's advisory committees. It would also require posting of summary minutes so that the public can be informed of developments in issues of civic importance.

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Community Connect Workgroup and Contributors

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Research Documents and Background Resources

The following documents, as well as additional background resources, are available online on the Community Connect website at www.portlandonline.com/mayor/communityconnect and/or the website of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement at www.portlandonline.com/oni.

Summary of Research: Piecing Together Community Involvement in Portland: Community Connect began its work in 2006 with a listening process. Almost 1,400 Portlanders from all walks of life shared their insights about how to strengthen Portland's community involvement system through interviews, surveys, and focus groups. Their input, as well as ideas culled from national research on best practices, were coded by a group of community volunteers and put into a large database which provided the basis for Community Connect's recommendations. This document summarizes Community Connect's 2006 research, providing summaries of all 19 data sources in one place. Individual summary analyses for each source are also available, organized by six broad research categories.

Menus of Ideas from Research: The 2006 research database was analyzed and then categorized into a Menu of Options that formed the basis of the Community Connect Workgroup's recommendation development process. In addition to the main menu, a menu of potential ideas for structural change was also developed. The menus offer a diverse array of ideas, many of which were incorporated into Community Connect's recommendations, and others that may be worthy of future consideration.

Draft Recommendations: After analyzing the input from the 2006 research process, the Community Connect Workgroup developed a set of draft recommendations. The draft recommendations were shared with the Community Connect Advisory committee for input, and with the general public through two community forums and a survey.

Outreach Survey Data Report: This document summarizes the input of more than 500 Portlanders who responded to the draft recommendations through surveys and two community forums. Based on their feedback, the Workgroup revised the recommendations and identified phase one priorities.

Potential Model for Structural Change: The Community Connect Workgroup sketched out an initial concept for how to modify the internal structure of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement to better support the recommendations in the Five Year Plan (see Recommendation #9.) This model wasn't put forward in the recommendations because of the recognition that any restructuring will need to happen in a deliberative manner, involving complex discussions among all the key stakeholders. The model developed by Community Connect's Workgroup may be appropriate as a starting point for further discussion as this restructuring process moves forward.

Who Will Make the Recommendations Happen?

Many different people and organizations will be involved in implementing Community Connect's recommendations. This chart lists the key stakeholders in Portland's community involvement system and the recommendations which are most relevant to each group. Stakeholders denoted with a check mark (•) will play a key role in implementation, in some cases working on their own but in most cases working in collaboration. Leads for each strategy are indicated by an asterisk (*).

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGY	ONI	Other City Bureaus	District Coalitions	Neighborhood Associations	Community Organizations	Business District Associations
Recommendation #1 **Increase the power and voice of under-represented groups**	Create and fund leadership training for members of under-represented groups	✓*				✓*	
	Provide support to grassroots organizations that represent Portland's diverse communities	✓*				✓*	
	Provide formal access to City government	✓*	✓*			✓	
Recommendation #2 **Engage the full diversity of our community by addressing common barriers to participation**	Make opportunities for participation more worthwhile, rewarding, and effective	✓*		✓*	✓*	✓	✓
	Make meetings and events welcoming and accessible to all.	✓*		✓*	✓*	✓	✓
	Overcome logistical barriers to participation	✓*		✓*	✓*	✓	
Recommendation #3 **Promote effective communication to keep the community informed about issues, opportunities for involvement, and ways to plug in**	Facilitate communication and information sharing within and among NAs, businesses, and community orgs	✓*		✓*	✓	✓	✓
	Promote dialogue and communication through new technologies	✓*	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote culturally appropriate direct outreach, communication	✓*		✓*	✓*	✓	✓

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGY	ONI	Other City Bureaus	District Coalitions	Neighborhood Associations	Community Organizations	Business District Associations
Recommendation #4 **Foster social ties and a sense of community identity**	Community building	✓		✓	✓*	✓*	
	Publicize neighborhood identities and assets	✓		✓	✓*		
	Create and preserve physical spaces and design features that provide a focus for the community	✓	✓*	✓	✓*	✓	✓
Recommendation #5 **Strengthen the community's capacity to take action to move forward its priorities**	Build leadership and advocacy skills through a citywide leadership training program	✓*		✓*	✓	✓	✓
	Provide small grants to community organizations	✓*		✓*	✓	✓	✓
	Provide targeted staff support to comm.-unities experiencing major changes	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provide evaluation and best practices information by creating a Community Involvement Resource Center	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote equity and accountability in ONI contracts	✓*		✓*		✓	
Recommendation #6 **Foster networking and collaboration between neighborhood and business district associations and other local organizations and interest groups**	Promote opportunities for neighborhoods and other communities to come together citywide	✓*		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote collaboration between organizations	✓*		✓*	✓	✓	✓
	Bring together different communities and interests to build shared understanding	✓*		✓	✓	✓	✓

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGY	ONI	Other City Bureaus	District Coalitions	Neighborhood Associations	Community Organizations	Business District Associations
Recommendation #7 **Make public decision-making more responsive and accountable to community input**	Create a broad and open City budgeting process	✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Create an ongoing Community Needs Process	✓*	✓*	✓	✓	✓	
	Create formal liaisons between the community and government	✓	✓*				
	Make information about government decisions easily accessible and transparent	✓	✓*				
	Close the loop	✓	✓*				
	Encourage City bureaus to create Bureau Advisory Committees (BACs)	✓	✓*				
	Give the community direct control over certain decisions	✓*	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation #8 **Institutionalize the City's commitment to public involvement in decision-making**	Foster an internal culture within City government that supports a commitment to public involvement	✓*	✓*				
	Create comprehensive public involvement standards and guidelines	✓*	✓*				
Recommendation #9 **Create the infrastructure to support the goals and recommendations in this *Five Year Plan***	Rename the Office of Neighborhood Involvement	✓*	✓*	✓	✓	✓	
	Update the Office of Neighborhood Involvement's internal structure	✓*	✓*	✓	✓	✓	

QUESTIONS? Want More Information?

www.portlandonline.com/mayor/communityconnect

This report was written by consultant Kristina Smock
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This report is available in larger print. Please contact communityconnect@ci.portland.or.us or 503-823-4277.

For translations of this report in other languages, please contact communityconnect@ci.portland.or.us or 503-823-4277.