

Chapter 5: Recommendations & Solutions

Introduction

The recommendations in this report outline the steps for redefining and restructuring Neighborhood Services. These steps begin with the need to build a solid foundation for community involvement at the City level. The City builds this foundation by creating awareness of its existing core values for public involvement, redefining Neighborhood Services' Mission Statement and relocating Neighborhood Services within city government. Based on the values and mission statement, JLA recommends programs and staff resources to enhance existing programs and establish new programs to address identified challenges and needs.

Many of the community members interviewed felt that conflicts resulting from interactions between neighborhoods and the city could be resolved if city directors, managers and staff understood and

incorporated the City's values for involving the public. Internally, some city staff members expressed a need to develop a consistent process or policy that city staff could realistically apply when working with the neighborhoods and the broader community. Establishing awareness of the existing core values, and possibly enhancing them, would help establish shared expectations for both community members and city staff.



The core values will guide Neighborhood Services in redefining its mission, function and target customers. Many of the people who participated in sidewalk surveys were unaware of Neighborhood Services. If they were familiar with the office, they were unclear about its function. City department staff echoed this latter point. According to many of the people interviewed, a number of city employees are unclear about how Neighborhood Services fits within the City structure or how it supports other city departments.

An updated mission statement should meet the needs of the customers that Neighborhood Services serves. After identifying its customers, the City is in a better position to develop programming to meet the needs of those customers. Logically, after programming is determined, the next step is to articulate expertise and staffing needed to create and manage those programs successfully.

The recommendations are laid out in this organizational framework:

1. Core Values and Mission
2. Organizational Location and Target Customers
3. Programming
4. Staffing
5. Communications
6. Policy and Procedures

Core Values and Mission

RECOMMENDATION 1: Re-evaluate and Enhance the City's Existing Core Values to Improve Public Involvement Processes

All city employees should understand the City's values and expectations when communicating with and involving neighborhood associations and the broader community. Re-evaluating and enhancing the City's existing core values will provide consistency, create shared expectations and instill more community trust in city government. These values will help guide city staff when involving the community in planning and implementing city projects, programs and events. The Neighborhood Services' manager should set the stage for this task and facilitate City executives and staff in evaluating and enhancing the core values to improve coordinated and consistent public involvement processes city wide. This should be an internal collaborative process with outcomes approved by the City Manager. These core values can be communicated both internally and externally by city staff through the Neighborhood Liaison program.

Input received during the assessment process and the Neighborhood Empowerment Initiative Action Plan provides general themes to consider when the core values are re-visited to ensure public involvement processes are considered:

- Proactively support and assist neighborhood, business and community organizations in broadening community involvement.
- Incorporate into public involvement plans targeted outreach to hard-to-reach stakeholders: renters, non-English-speaking residents, business owners, families and minorities.
- Develop and use both traditional and non-traditional communication methodologies to involve and inform the broader community.

- Promote two-way communication, information sharing, community organizing and partnerships between neighborhood associations and local organizations, and regional utilities and agencies.
- Involve and communicate with neighborhood associations, non-profit communities, business groups and all potentially impacted individuals as early as possible about city projects, programs, opportunities and initiatives.
- Facilitate community empowerment through coordinated, responsive community building, training and funding opportunities.
- Ensure that all communications include a feedback loop to explain how public input was considered and incorporated into the final decision or project.
- Promote community identity and safe, sustainable and accessible neighborhoods.
- Recognize the value of volunteerism to the city and the community as a whole.

The City's current mission statement for Neighborhood Associations, adopted by City Council in May 1999: To build community at the neighborhood level and improve the livability of the City's neighborhoods

RECOMMENDATION 2: Update Neighborhood Services Mission and Role

Having a clearly articulated mission will significantly improve city employees and the community's understanding of Neighborhood Services' role and function. The Neighborhood Services' manager should convene program staff, neighborhood leaders and the City Manager to clarify the role or function of Neighborhood Services. Once the function and organizational structure have been agreed on, the team should revisit and revise Neighborhood Services' current mission statement to support and reflect the City's Core Values and Neighborhood Services' role within the city.

“The mission statement of Neighborhood Services is not good and it needs to be improved. This should be revisited as a separate process following the assessment with involvement from neighborhood associations and the NLC. This could be a relevant part of moving and restructuring the program to a different department.”

Organizational Location and Target Customers

RECOMMENDATION 3: Move Neighborhood Services to the City Manager’s Office

Moving Neighborhood Services to the City Manager’s office will accomplish both city-wide and community wide needs that exist for expanded service and enhanced communication and collaboration between the City, neighborhoods, the community at large and local agencies.

“Neighborhood Services being in Planning is not serving the entire City Organization.”

Based on the model program in Vancouver, Washington, and comments from stakeholder interviews with *both* neighborhood association members and city staff, the benefits of placing Neighborhood Services under the purview of the City Manager’s office outweigh the status quo. Neighborhood Services should be organized within the newly created division in the City Manager’s office. This division includes the Human Rights, Sustainability and Diversity programs. This change in reporting structure will:

- Provide a solution-based platform or structure for Neighborhood Services versus the issue-based platform the Planning Department currently provides. Many neighborhood leaders expressed distrust regarding city planners and managers’ perceived bias in supporting infill development, reducing sprawl, or advocating for developers.
- Create alignment and synergy with other community-based programming, such as Community Relations, Human Rights, Diversity, Public Service Officer and Sustainability. These other programs could provide additional resources for outreach and communications, i.e. Diversity program staff could assist with developing minority outreach tools, cross-fertilization with Human Rights would help to uncover the issues that neighborhoods face, helping them to generate more diverse participation and empower residents. This organization would be similar to the Community Services Division in Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Encourage synergy with the Sustainability program; which was a consistent topic of interest indicated in the online and sidewalk surveys.
- Streamline and promote consistency in outreach and public involvement citywide.
- Serve as resource for city departments planning and implementing community outreach and public involvement.
- Initiate citywide tools for interpretation and translation to non-English speaking residents. Alignment with Human Rights, Diversity and Community Relations programs will support and strengthen this cause.

“Human Rights, Diversity and Neighborhood Service programs do have a critical linkage with the community in common.”

- Broaden Neighborhood Services’ scope for programming, training, outreach and issues affecting neighborhoods. In addition to planning and land use, other issues and interests include: sustainability, parks, public safety, transportation, public arts, environmental stewardship and public works.

Figure 5.2 below highlights the staffing organizational structure associated with shift:

Figure 5.2 Recommended Neighborhood Services Staffing Organizational Chart



It will take time and collaboration by all staff within this newly created division to align missions and roles, with new concepts and fresh ideas as value-added results.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Establish a three-pronged approach to community organizing

To effectively address the proposed Core Values themes, the Neighborhood Empowerment Initiative Action Plan and the challenges identified through the assessment process, Neighborhood Services will need to expand its mission and role to serve three categories of customers (See figure 5.3 below):

1. City Departments and staff
2. Neighborhood Associations
3. Community At Large

“Neighborhood Services seems to be a subset of a larger picture

Currently, Neighborhood Services is serving two customer groups: Neighborhood associations and City departments. Services to these two groups are primarily issue-based and overlook the benefits of involving the broader community. A consistent theme

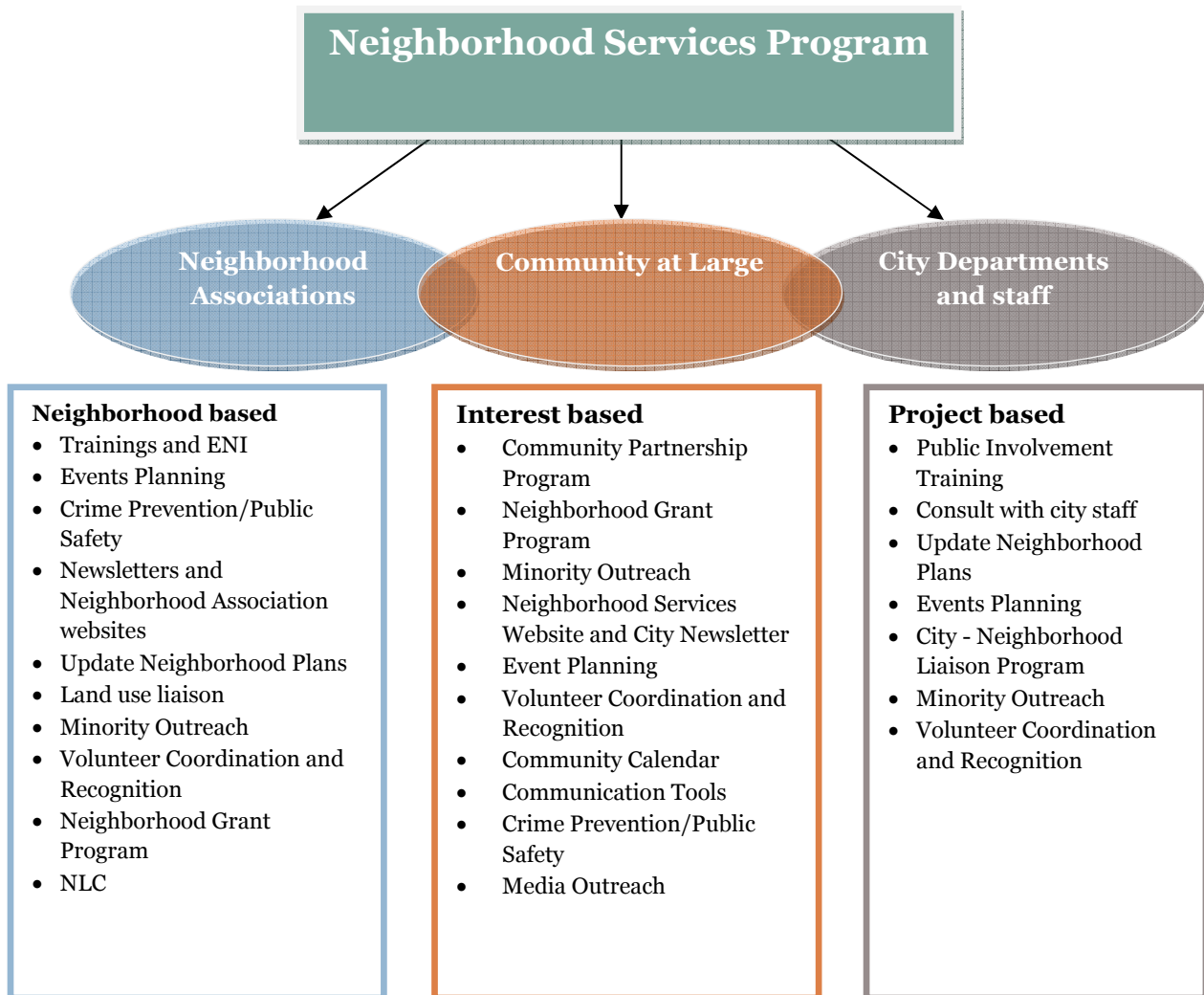
in the interviews with representatives from community and business organizations and local agencies was the missed opportunities to create partnerships and two-way communication between neighborhood associations and these stakeholder groups. In addition, many of the organization leaders offered creative ideas for broadening involvement in neighborhood associations, improving neighborhood livability and increasing communication.

As part of the online survey, more than 112 people unaffiliated with neighborhood associations provided personal anecdotes and ideas for drawing in new people to neighborhood activities. Respondents’ comments emphasized the need for reframing neighborhood association agendas around “interests” rather than “issues” and organizing social community-building events rather than defensive campaigns against the city.

These three customer groups naturally overlap. For example, city employees and city council members also live in Eugene neighborhoods. Neighborhood association members volunteer with other community groups. Residents not affiliated with neighborhood associations donate their time and resources to other community organizations. Many of these community organizations have service areas in multiple neighborhoods or span the entire city. Consequently, services to these three groups overlap as well.

Neighborhood Services currently provides a .45 FTE staff person to support newsletter layout, production and mailing. Annual budget for neighborhood newsletters for FY2009 is \$145,663, approximately \$1.86 per residential address.

Figure 5.3: Neighborhood Services Three Pronged Approach



Customer Group #1: Neighborhood Associations

The focus would be on neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Leadership Council, mirroring many of the programs and tasks that Neighborhood Services currently provides, such as:

- Sponsoring neighborhood improvement projects and social events;
- Providing a forum to identify, discuss and resolve neighborhood issues;
- Establishing two-way communication between neighborhoods and the City, and between neighborhoods and other external agencies;
- Educating neighbors on issues, public process, City services, and elections, and;
- Identifying and advocating the Neighborhood Association's position on issues such as land use, transportation, public safety and social services.
- Providing financial and technical support for publishing neighborhood association newsletters.

- Providing financial and technical support for neighborhood improvement projects through the neighborhood matching grant program.
- Coordinating and participating in Neighborhood Leadership Council meetings.

Customer Group #2: City Departments

The nature of Neighborhood Services’ work is primarily project-related, where staff serves as an advisor to city staff from the various departments, including Planning, Parks, Police and Public Works. Currently, Neighborhood Services staff work with project staff to develop and implement public communication and involvement plans and apply best practices.

Neighborhood liaisons are every neighborhood’s “inside connection” to city information and resources.” - City of Bellevue website

In figure 5.3 above, Neighborhood Services would provide an additional service to this customer group in the form of training for city employees. Training topics would include: Communication with community, public involvement planning, minority outreach, and presentation skills.

Customer Group #3: Community at Large (NEW)

This new category of customers would include everyone and anyone who was interested in or is potentially impacted by city projects, program and decisions. Serving this broader community, which is not currently a primary customer for Neighborhood Services, will require establishing new programs which also will benefit city departments and neighborhood association members. Ideas for new programming that would generate broader community involvement and awareness include, but are not limited to the following:

- Training for the general public – “City University”
- Training for City Staff/Liaisons – Public Involvement and Community Outreach
- Multi-generational and family-friendly events that promote neighbor-to-neighbor networking and community learning
- A citywide clearinghouse for outreach techniques and tools to minority groups and non-English speaking residents

RECOMMENDATION 5: Develop New Name for Neighborhood Services

To reflect the expanded customer service function of Neighborhood Services, the program director and staff should develop a list of possible new names for their program. This list should be vetted internally with the City Manager and executive directors to ensure that it is aligned with the City’s Core Values and reflects the program’s mission statement and programming.

The new name should take into consideration it is serving the city and two external audiences, city-recognized neighborhood associations and the broader community that may not be

affiliated with neighborhood associations, but are impacted by city programs, projects and decisions.

Programming for Target Customers

This section lists the programming recommendations for the three target customer groups. The chart below (figure 5.4) categorizes existing programs and recommended new programs by the customer groups to be served. As the chart shows, many of the programs stretch across the chart, showing that many programs would provide services to all three customer groups, i.e. minority outreach, event planning and training. Please see Appendix H for a chart outlining Neighborhood Service Programming recommendations.

“The relationship between the City and neighborhoods is valuable and it needs to be strengthened. Not enough city staff are aware of neighborhood associations’ role and value to citizen involvement.”

RECOMMENDATION 6: Establish a Neighborhood Liaison Program

To create a consistent and reliable feedback loop and promote better communication between city staff and neighborhood associations, many other cities, such as Bellevue and Vancouver, Washington, have established a Neighborhood Liaison Program. Neighborhood liaisons are city employees who are managers and supervisors specifically appointed by the City Manager to be responsible for and accountable to a city-recognized neighborhood association. Liaisons also coordinate ongoing communication with the City Manager and other department staff, which will address the current lack of a consistent feedback loop.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Increase neighborhood association training opportunities

To address the disparity among the 19 neighborhood associations in the areas of leadership, governance, rate of participation and outreach capacity, Neighborhood Services will need to expand its range of training topics to address:

- New electronic communication tools, e.g. blogs, e-newsletters, online surveys
- Meeting Management
- Event Planning
- Community Organizing
- Outreach to Minority Groups
- Creation of Online Surveys
- Newsletter Layout and Design
- Website Design and Navigation
- Neighborhood Non-profit through the Eugene Neighbors Inc.

“Neighborhood Leaders Need Community Organizing training. They need to identify the gaps and learn tools for addressing them.”

- Fundraising and Grant Writing
- Sustainability
- Land Use
- How to access city decision-makers and influence decisions
- Asset-Based Community Building
- Neighborhood Planning
- Conflict Resolution

This recommendation is based on input from a number of neighborhood association members who participated in interviews and responded to a questionnaire or the online survey. This advances the recommendations from the Neighborhood Empowerment Initiative Action Plan and supports the conclusions from the best practices research. The model programs from Bellevue, Washington, and Raleigh, North Carolina, have robust neighborhood leadership training and community education programs for Neighborhood Services to emulate.

“Getting information out to neighborhood leaders and prospective leaders about how the program [Neighborhood Services] works and how to access government is a most valuable service.”

RECOMMENDATION 8: Continue the Neighborhood Matching Grant Program and Share Success Stories

The Neighborhood Matching Grant program was identified as an asset to neighborhood associations, residents and community groups both for promoting neighborhood improvements and for offering a solution-based community building opportunity. This would be a worthwhile program for the City to continue, with increased outreach beyond city notices to neighborhood association leaders. To broaden outreach, Neighborhood Services could post notices in the local newspaper, pitch stories to local media representatives to highlight successes from past grant recipients, and partner with local community and business organizations to post announcements on their websites and newsletters.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Implement Neighborhood-based Planning

Neighborhood Services should implement a Neighborhood Action Planning Program with neighborhood associations similar to the programs in Vancouver, Washington, and Madison, Wisconsin. This program would increase community participation, improve community building and promote neighborhood identity. Neighborhood association members can communicate to city government their desires and priorities for their neighborhoods through the development and adoption of neighborhood plans.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Formally Recognize the Neighborhood Leadership Council

The City should formally recognize the NLC and provide city staff support at meetings to report back to the City Manager and Executive leadership on topics of interest and issues raised by neighborhood association leaders. This will improve two-way communication and establish a feedback loop between neighborhood associations and the City. Formalization of the NLC and communicating its role to the City will create a shared understanding amongst staff and neighborhood associations. The NLC should serve as an effective method for the City and local agencies to communicate information that impacts all neighborhoods in an efficient and effective way. Consistent City staff presence at NLC meetings will also help to close the feedback loop with neighborhood associations. Participating in the NLC should serve as an information resource for both new and seasoned neighborhood leaders through mentoring and cross-fertilization of information and success stories.

“Providing coordination and participation of the NLC is valuable. This provides an opportunity for cross fertilization of information between neighborhood leaders.”

The operating policies and procedures for the NLC may need to be reviewed and revised in order to effectively represent the role it plays in relation to the City if formally recognized.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Establish a Community Partnership Program

“Communication is the first step in collaboration, partnership and relationships. There needs to be more organizational relationships.”

Community leaders from local non profits and business groups, as well as managers from local agencies emphasized the importance and benefits of promoting collaboration among each other. Several neighborhood association members echoed this opportunity when they recalled community events, such as the public art program and park clean-up events, as improving neighborhood involvement and livability. To take advantage of this untapped resource, Neighborhood Services would need to create and manage a Community Partnership Program. The primary goal of the program would be to match up the needs and goals of neighborhood associations and residents with the mission and resources of local non-profit organizations and regional utilities and agencies. Neighborhood Services would facilitate bringing the two entities together to develop common goals and scope

partnership opportunities.

The program would also address some challenges identified in the online survey, interviews and sidewalk survey:

- Local non-profit organizations, regional utilities and agencies have resources and information that neighborhood residents need or would take advantage of if made available. Examples include energy efficiency assistance and food assistance programs.
- Organizations can partner with neighborhood associations to design and coordinate volunteer events, such as park clean-ups, adopt-a-stop programs, bike safety classes and distribution of food to low-income areas.
- Many of these organizations would like to partner with neighborhood associations to help host or participate in social events that are family friendly, promote cross cultural sharing, encourage neighbors to talk to one another and provide information about their services and projects.
- Representatives from these organizations are also interested in contributing articles and announcements to neighborhood association newsletters to increase awareness about their services and volunteer opportunities.

A key component of this proposed program would involve compiling information about the demographics of individual neighborhoods and residents. Information relating to residents' ages, incomes and ethnicity; size or type of households; or native language would be useful information to neighborhood association leaders to design better outreach methods to broaden or diversify involvement. It would also be useful information for community organizations to target their resources where there is need and interest.

The City of Eugene may wish to consider a stronger partnership with the University of Oregon similar to the Community Liaison program that exists in Fort Collins, Colorado. Collaborative opportunities with the University of Oregon could include involving interns in community organizing, training and technology-based communication initiatives.

The implementation of this recommendation would raise awareness and promote partnerships with Eugene organizations that have not been tapped to meet some of the needs identified in the assessment, such as Eugene Neighbors Inc. and Community Mediation Services.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Establish Crime Prevention and Public Safety Programs

Public safety and crime prevention were identified as high priorities in both the online and community sidewalk surveys. To address these community priorities, Neighborhood Services should partner with the Eugene Police Department and expand the current Neighborhood Watch program to raise awareness and create a more comprehensive crime prevention program that includes coordination between the Eugene Police Department, neighborhoods, businesses and non-profits. This could be facilitated by Neighborhood Services through the City Neighborhood Liaison Program and the Community Partnership Program.

Crime Prevention and Public Safety programs in Vancouver, WA and Portland, Oregon, are good models to consider.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Volunteer Coordination and Recognition Program

Neighborhood Services should serve a strong supporting role to the Eugene Police Department in order to assist the City in promoting volunteerism and the contribution those efforts in improving community livability.

Neighborhood Services should implement a volunteer recognition program that promotes contributions made in the community by residents, businesses, non-profits, etc. Staff might consider non-traditional forms of recognition, such as sending honored volunteers to conferences, workshops or trainings as the City’s ambassador.

“There is a volunteer effort to fill potholes and seal cracks in neighborhood streets. This improves the relationship between the City and the community and saves the City money.”

Model volunteer recognition programs in Raleigh, North Carolina (Neighborhood Recognition Awards), and Vancouver, Washington, (Vancouver Sparkles), and Portland, Oregon (Spirit of Portland) are good examples to reference.

Staffing and Organizational Structure

RECOMMENDATION 14: Move Public Service Officer to Neighborhood Services

Shifting the Public Service Officer, currently under the Community Relations Director, to Neighborhood Services will establish a point person to focus on communications among Neighborhood Services three customers: City/city department staff, neighborhoods and the community at large. In Neighborhood Services, the role of this person would be to oversee all communications, including the city and Neighborhood Services websites, city and neighborhood newsletters, media management and online surveys. This shift will facilitate increased efficiencies and improved coordination among city departments and neighborhoods for media and community outreach.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Assign Environmental Justice issues to Human Rights Office

Environmental justice issues are affecting some of Eugene’s neighborhoods, such as Trainsong and River Road. However, the serious issues affecting residents and their neighborhoods may be beyond the context of community organizing. Therefore, forming an active neighborhood association could be unrealistic at this point in time. For this reason, formally placing environmental justice issues with the Human Rights Program will provide the expertise, network and resources needed to address the underlying livability issues affecting these areas.

RECOMMENDATION 16: Coordinate Minority Outreach with Diversity Office

Neighborhood Services should assign a staff person to coordinate directly with the newly formed Diversity Office to improve the minority outreach on behalf of the city and neighborhood associations. The Diversity Office is currently undergoing a strategic planning process through the University of Oregon. Therefore, its mission, function and programs are not yet clear. However, in the interim, Neighborhood Services should tap into this resource to discuss how the City and neighborhood associations can improve its outreach efforts to minority stakeholders (ethnic minority, non-English speaking, senior citizens, gay/lesbian, etc).

The City should revisit this recommendation to see if there are additional opportunities to streamline functions or combine positions once the Diversity Office's strategic planning process has been completed.

Communication

The needs for improving existing communication tools and developing innovative electronic-based methods were highlighted in the sidewalk and online surveys, internal and external interviews, questionnaires, best practices research and the review of City and Neighborhood Services' website and newsletters. Consequently, improved communications resolves a number of identified needs:

- Broaden and diversify involvement in neighborhood associations
- Create and promote partnerships between community and business organizations and neighborhood associations
- Inform residents unaffiliated with neighborhood associations about recreational activities, social and family friendly events and volunteer opportunities

Respondents from the online and sidewalk surveys offered a variety of ideas to broaden involvement and improve communication with residents who are not currently involved with their neighborhood association. Some of these ideas are detailed below as formal recommendations:

- Create "New Resident Welcome Packet" that includes information about how to get involved in local neighborhood associations and what services Neighborhood Services provides to residents. The model Program in Fort Collins, Colorado, provides "Welcome Bags" for new residents.
- Assign Neighborhood Association greeters for the meetings and to reach out to new residents at their homes.
- Host regularly scheduled neighborhood tours, sponsored by Neighborhood Services and local neighborhood association. Develop topics for each tour, post schedule in neighborhood association newsletter.
- Host family-friendly events and activities in the local park or school; Co-sponsor volunteer events

- Convert neighborhood association newsletters from hard copies to electronic versions that can be sent via email, posted on neighborhood association websites and forwarded on to other interested residents
- Provide childcare or childcare stipends to residents attending neighborhood association meetings. Model program in Portland, Oregon – Office of Neighborhood Involvement
- Host online community forums.

RECOMMENDATION 17: Partner with Neighborhood Associations to host online surveys

In order to effectively address feedback indicating that neighborhood association meeting agendas didn’t include items of interest to some respondents, Neighborhood Services should facilitate annual online surveys for each of the active neighborhood associations to identify issues of interest to residents.

While having agendas mainly centered on conflict has drawn large crowds in some neighborhoods, most people not involved in their neighborhood associations were interested in seeing positive-focused agenda, such as community building, livability, sustainability and event planning.

To capitalize on this task and support addressing annual performance measures, Neighborhood Services could use the surveys to collect input on whether neighborhood associations and Neighborhood Services are meeting residents’ needs, and request suggestions for improvement when applicable.

RECOMMENDATION 18: Serve as the City’s point person for Event Planning

This recommendation is a culmination of ideas suggested by respondents from the sidewalk and online surveys, anecdotes from interviews with neighborhood association leaders and representatives from non profit organizations and regional utilities and agencies, and best practices from model programs in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Fort Collins, Colorado.

This recommendation has four focus areas:

1. Partner with community organizations to help organize and promote volunteer opportunities to improve community livability. Lead staff should work closely with Community Partnership Program person to coordinate efforts.
2. Consult with city department staff to help coordinate project-related events, i.e. open houses, charettes, community forums and site tours.

“Annual picnics have been successful with 200 to 300 people in attendance. We host them in the neighborhood park, with live music, which is a good draw. Parks and Recreation sends staff to provide kid activities. Gets people involved. Our neighborhood association hosts an information booth at the events

3. Serve as the City’s point person to organize and host citywide events, i.e. roundtables, town halls and community resource fairs.
4. Assist neighborhood association leaders to plan neighborhood-based events that promote communication between neighbors, neighborhood improvement, public safety and community cohesion and pride. Events might include block parties, picnics, music in the park and neighborhood clean ups.

Centralizing this function will ensure that opportunities to promote events are streamlined and provide event planning expertise. Neighborhood Services’ can ensure that all city-sponsored events incorporate best practices and “lessons learned.” Examples: Advising on outreach to hard-to-reach stakeholders, ensuring event sites are wheelchair accessible, providing transit information for meetings and keeping sustainability in mind when providing refreshments and preparing project displays.

RECOMMENDATION 19: Streamline Production and Distribution of Neighborhood Newsletters

To implement this recommendation, Neighborhood Services would support neighborhood association newsletter editors by:

1. Converting hard copy newsletters to e-newsletter formats to reduce paper consumption, mailing costs and staff time/labor and to facilitate residents’ abilities to forward e-newsletters to friends, colleagues and other organizations.
2. Providing biannual training to newsletter editors on newsletter layout, graphics, editing and RSS (rich site summary) Feed access. This training would also show editors how to create e-newsletters and post them on the neighborhood association website.
3. Establishing an Online Neighborhood Newsletter Toolbox with newsletter templates, best practices’ reference guides, links to city staff directory, map of the city, City of Eugene census data, frequently asked questions (FAQ) on city programs, budgets and projects. The model programs in Vancouver, Washington, and Fort Collins, Colorado, can provide guidance in creating this resource.
4. Creating an additional RSS Feed in the Online Neighborhood Newsletter Toolbox for city department staff, community and business organizations, regional utilities and agencies to post announcements for upcoming events, projects and volunteer opportunities. This format will deliver regularly updated web content to newsletter editors via an email alert when new content is posted.
5. Posting contact information for all neighborhood association editors so city department staff and representatives from community and business organizations can contact newsletter editors directly.

This recommendation would enhance a current strength of Neighborhood Services and neighborhood associations, incorporate suggestions from survey respondents to improve this communication tool, reduce the City’s and neighborhoods’ carbon footprint, and streamline staff time and paper resources currently invested in the production and distribution of neighborhood newsletters.

RECOMMENDATION 20: Website Innovations/improvements

The City's website was a topic that arose throughout the assessment process during interviews and through the online survey. In JLA's review, the City's website was found to be difficult to navigate and lacked a welcoming and eye-catching format. Use of new technology and more dynamic formatting could increase the level of use the City's website receives; in-turn making it a more effective communication tool for providing vital information to the community. As a result, the following recommendations for improvement should be considered by the City of Eugene:

- Add movie/video clip on front page from recent event or interview with a neighbor or neighborhood leader, and/or city manager. Animate the page, make it more dynamic.
- Make the community calendar a scrolling constant on the City of Eugene or Neighborhood Services' home page. This is usually what people are looking when they go to the page.
- Include head shots of Neighborhood Services staff – more human face to a bureaucratic government.
- Provide a department and city staff directory on the City's homepage or NS homepage
- Website content on some neighborhood association websites may be disenfranchising others from participation either through list-serves that only involve a small group, lack of information about identified issues, no contact information for current neighborhood association leaders or even a lack of information about upcoming neighborhood association meetings.
- Contract a website consultant to conduct a review of all neighborhood association websites. The review should include recommended guidelines and requirements for all neighborhood association websites, such as:
 - Posted neighborhood association meeting summaries
 - Neighborhood history and demographics (census data)
 - Map of neighborhood identifying local landmarks such as, parks and schools
 - Contact information and photos of neighborhood association leaders
 - Electronic version of the newsletters
 - A business and services directory
 - Local bus schedule
 - Scrolling event calendar
 - Contacts for local government
- Provide link to bylaws and other technical information, rather than putting information on front page. City should pursue a grant for this consultant service.
- Consider having the neighborhood association websites open to public comment rather than just comment from "neighborhood association members", i.e. River Road website

RECOMMENDATION 21: Develop a Community Calendar

To support other programs and services outlined in this section, Neighborhood Services should consider creating a city-wide neighborhood calendar that could be posted on the City's website, circulated monthly through the register guard and be distributed via the neighborhood list-serve

to all interested parties. It would raise awareness for partnering opportunities and inspire community involvement.

RECOMMENDATION 22: Newspaper Media

Neighborhood Services, in partnership with the Community Relations Director, should pursue a monthly insert or paid advertisement with the *Eugene Register Guard* spotlighting neighborhood associations and their activities, and distributing a community calendar of events.

Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures are recommended for further assessment following the City’s consideration of this report.

- The Neighborhood Organization Recognition Policy (NORP) –This may need to be updated and revisited. Many stakeholders when interviewed mentioned the lack of governance and requirements for neighborhood associations. This review and revision process should be separate from this report/recommendation and involve neighborhood associations and city staff (possibly through the Neighborhood Empowerment Initiative Committee, which is comprised of both neighborhood representatives and city staff). In the meantime, the existing policies should be made available on the Neighborhood Services website.
- Consider changing the size of some of Eugene’s larger neighborhood association to create more, smaller neighborhood associations.

“Updating the NORP and the model charter would confirm the expectations and working agreements between the neighborhood associations, Council and the City Organization.”
NEI Action Plan

Conclusion

These recommendations provide a foundation for Neighborhood Services to move forward by preserving some services, enhancing and adding others on a priority basis. The next chapter will outline a process for staff to consider for implementation.

The solutions offered by JLA to address challenges and identify needs have been determined through the assessment process, best practices research and a review of the Neighborhood Empowerment Initiative Action plan. The Neighborhood Empowerment Initiative Action Plan does point out several tasks that will need further analysis and coordinated community outreach as described above and others that were not directly addressed as part of this assessment process, such as #12 Increase Density in Neighborhoods Thoughtfully, #13 Preserve Residential Zoning, #16 Make Parks Safer, and #18 Ensure Safe Routes for Walkers.