Bend Area Neighborhoods collectively are the largest of the city’s advisory committees.

As there are 13 individual associations, I won’t speaking to goals of each as they are quite diverse, based on priorities and issues in their neighborhoods.

The associations meet monthly for our roundtable meeting (NART), and we did so yesterday to prepare the comments that I’ll be sharing today, which is more to our overarching purpose and functions of the associations and some shared feedback.

Our Purpose:

* To enhance the livability of the neighborhood by establishing and maintaining a line of communication and liaison between the Neighborhood, the City of Bend, and other Neighborhood Associations.
* To provide an open process by which all members of our neighborhoods may involve themselves in the affairs of their Neighborhood.
* To perform all acts related to these purposes.
* To perform only acts that will assist to serve educational, social and charitable purposes.

Our Functions:

Landuse: The Bend Development Code provides recognized associations the right to notice and comment on certain land use applications consistent with the Bend General Plan provisions on citizen involvement.

Shared Feedback from the associations: We believe that the city has been supportive in addressing concerns on livability.

Associations collectively participate and organize many community building activities: Most recently we coordinated a half day Bend Neighborhood Advance, to further engage our community in the purpose of associations, education on board basics, and communication, which I’ll speak more to in a moment.

We created and coordinate annually, the Good Samaritan Program, which assist seniors and those with limited mobility with tasks like shoveling snow and serve to assist in identifying those who may need assistance in evacuating in the event of emergency scale event.

We also created the Let’s Pull Together event, which has grown to the largest organized weed pull event in the nation and is now held statewide annually.

Three associations are also Non Profits, which allows us leverage funding and in kind donations to improve city owned lots and maximize community engagement.

Handouts:

The City provides the associations Communication Grant Funding, which allows us to communicate with our members. Currently associations receive $1.02 per tax lot and any unused monies return to the general fund.

In 2009, when the recession began to have major impacts, Eric King asked us to review our budget, if possible, to cut 5%. In this review and realizing the magnitude of the financial impacts in our entire community, we cut nearly 22% of our own budget.

These budget cuts do not reflect the dissolving of the ONA. Currently we have no designated staff at the city, although the communications department specifically, as well as many other departments, have always been incredibly supportive.

Most often our funding is utilized by way of direct mailers or postcards to our members. Although the makeup of each association is considerable, one challenge is when one of those tax lots houses a 400 unit apartment complex. We have a responsibility to communicate with all of our citizens; including businesses, renters, agencies, and faith based groups.

We also have capitalized on our funding in technology: utilizing web sites, social media, e-newsletters and other very affordable communications tools.

Shared feedback we’d like to offer is: We are looking for funds to make us more effective and opportunities that will make us more impactful.

Our Collective Goals

To improve our own effectiveness and our ability to thrive.

Policy decisions to help us meet our individual association goals.

As city staff and council assist us to be more effective, there are more effective ways that the Bend Neighborhood Associations can support you in your endeavors.

Thank you.