

Registered Neighborhood Organizations: Equity and Funding Mechanisms

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Purpose

To explore:

- Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO) best practices for increasing equity, diversity, accountability, and fairness.
- How peer cities in the US fund their RNO equivalents

Denver's RNO Structure

Legislative intent:

- To increase access to city agencies and departments and improve the flow of information between RNOs and the City (D.R.M.C. §12-91)

Powers of RNOs:

- No specific powers or authority given to RNOs
- RNOs may organize to advocate for their communities' interests
- RNOs must be notified on certain matters affecting areas inside of or within 200 feet of their boundaries
- Wield soft powers in city planning initiatives, exploratory committees, or neighborhood advisory groups on city projects and initiatives

Denver's RNO Structure (cont.)

How to become an RNO:

- 1) Gather a group of residents and/or owners of real property within a prescribed boundary
- 2) Register with CPD during registration period
- 3) Hold at least one meeting a year that is open to the public and noticed, where all members may vote, and that has at least 12 members in attendance

How to become a member of an RNO:

- 1) Own real property and/or be a resident located within the boundaries of the RNO and attend your RNO's meeting(s)

Denver RNO Structure (cont.)

- There are 197 Registered Neighborhood Organizations in the City and County of Denver.
 - This includes BIDs, HOAs, and RNOs
- There is no official audit of RNOs to ensure they are abiding by the requirements in the DRMC
- There are no dedicated funds specifically for RNOs; however, the city offers numerous grant funding opportunities for RNOs and other organizations.
- There are no city-sponsored trainings for RNOs in civic engagement, leadership, organization, fundraising, or recruitment

New York, NY

RNO Structure

Community boards and Block Associations

Community boards are local representative bodies

- Comprised of 50 unsalaried members
- Half of the members are nominated by their district council members and half are appointed by the Borough President

Community Board Purpose:

- Consulted on placement of municipal facilities
- Review zoning and variance requests
- Make recommendations to agencies during City budget process
- No legitimate authority over a City agency or official

New, NY (cont.)

Block Associations

- Make up Community Boards
- Historically have been comprised of homeowners, however, this trend is shifting as renters become more involved in community building

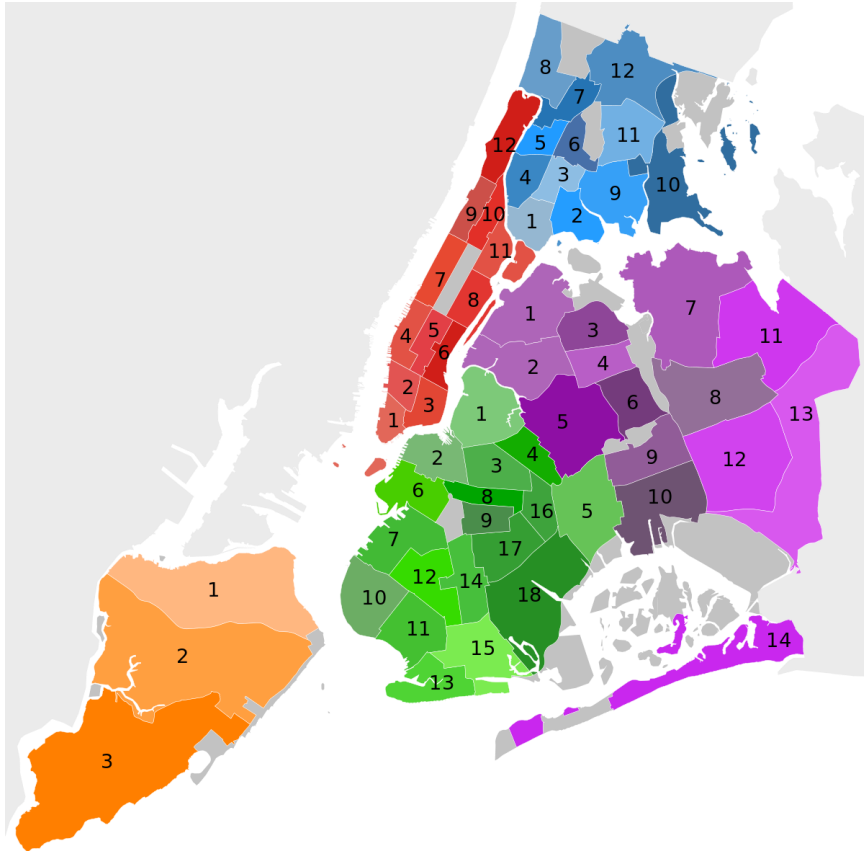
Bed-Stuy Case

- 75 Neighborhood Associations have created an alliance to combat gentrification and displacement



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New York, NY (cont.)



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Funding Opportunities

- New York City provides funding for Community Boards and their District Managers to, “establish offices, hire staff, and implement procedures to improve the delivery of City services to the district”
- The purpose of these offices is to receive complaints from constituents as well as process event permits and coordinate service deliveries
- Community Boards provide the City with their own list of budgeting priorities during the City’s budgeting process
- Each board can prioritize its own interests

Portland, OR

RNO Structure

District Coalitions and Neighborhood Associations

- The City is divided into 7 District Coalitions which comprise of Neighborhood Associations
- District Coalitions are under the Office of Neighborhood Involvement
- District Coalitions are run by non-governmental agencies, and have an Outreach Specialist to liaise with the City

Funding Opportunities

- The Office of Neighborhood Involvement supports District Coalitions with funds to assist in efforts to provide technical assistance and train community members in leadership and community organizing skills
- Neighborhood Associations have previously had funding earmarked by the coalitions for communications.
- This funding is no longer ear-marked, but DCs still provide NAs with funding for communications

Portland, OR (cont.)

Project Type: 443 projects funded to date. 55% (244 unduplicated of 443) projects addressed outreach to or engagement with underrepresented organizations defined as people of color, immigrant/refugee, low-income, youth and people with disabilities.

Project Type	Number of Applicants	Percentage *	Funds Awarded	Percentage *
General neighborhood projects	224	51%	\$417,319	50%
Youth or school projects	126	28%	\$209,548	25%
People of color projects	106	24%	\$235,283	28%
Low-income projects	91	21%	\$161,323	19%
Environmental projects	89	20%	\$153,020	18%
Arts and culture projects	72	17%	\$134,606	16%
Immigrant/refugee projects	51	12%	\$126,093	15%
Business projects	27	6%	\$44,289	5%
Crime prevention projects	21	5%	\$44,677	5%
People w/Disabilities projects	13	3%	\$29,078	4%
Elders/Seniors projects	8	2%	\$17,756	2%

Funding Opportunities Cont.

- Community and Civic Engagement Small Grants Programs
- \$100,000 available for neighborhood and community engagement projects
- Funding allocations are based on the percentage of the city's total number of households living in poverty within each coalition.
- Grants can be awarded to neighborhood associations, community organizations, grass roots organizations, etc.

Seattle, WA

RNO Structure

- In 2016 Seattle's Mayor issued an Executive Order to terminate its relationships with its 13 district councils.
- This decision was based on data showing that councils were not truly representative of the populations

Department of Neighborhoods

- Comprised of 3 commissions:
 - - Community Involvement Commissions
 - - Seattle Renters Commissions
 - - Seattle Youth Commission
- Department of Neighborhoods Organizational Structure
 - - Community Engagement Coordinator



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Seattle, WA

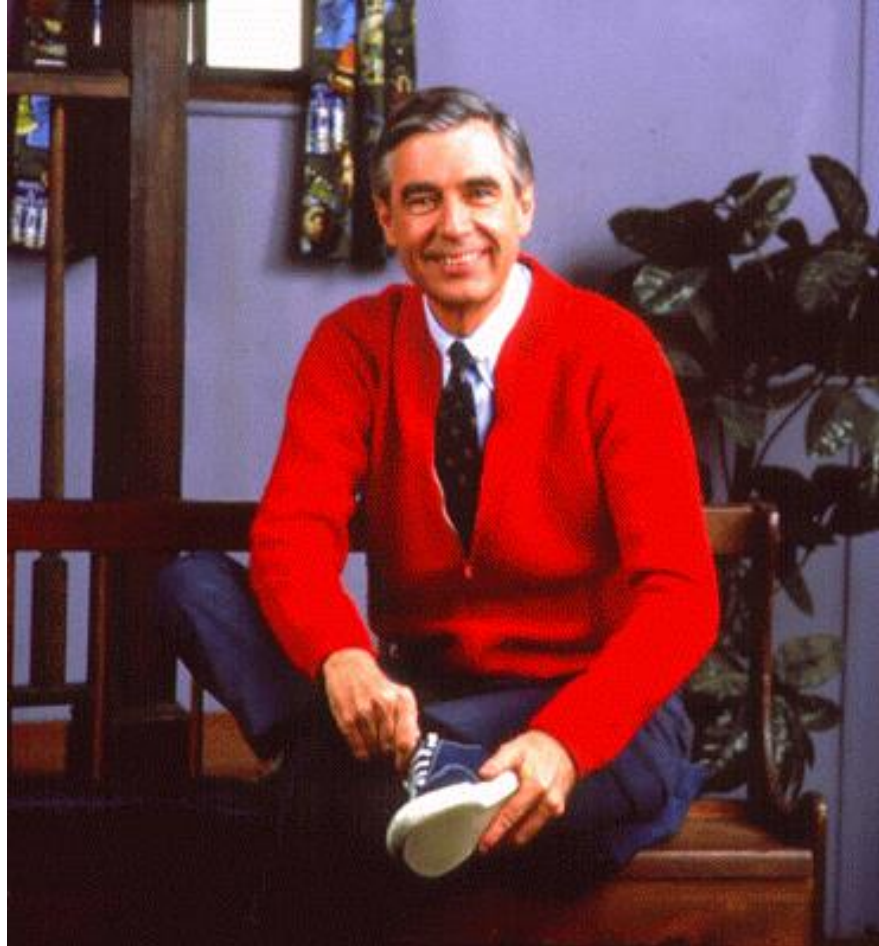
RNO Funding Opportunities

- Department of Neighborhoods recently began a participatory budgeting program
 - Provides \$2m to go towards a small-scale park or street improvement project
- The City of Seattle also has small neighborhood grants programs:
 - Neighborhood Park and Street Fund
 - Neighborhood Matching Fund

Ideas for Further Consideration

- RNOs can act as gatekeepers of information from the City. It may be beneficial to create the opportunity for individual residents of Denver to sign up for a list of notifications to receive from the City regarding zoning and licensing*
- Agency outreach efforts with neighborhoods live in several different departments: CPD, Office of Neighborhood Engagement, Excise and License, HRCP, DEDO, and City Council Offices
- Increase resources available to RNOs to reduce barriers to participation: leadership training, recruitment training, inclusiveness training, translation services, etc.

Questions?



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