

Chapter 2: Snapshot of Eugene's Neighborhood Services

Introduction

Eugene is governed by a Council/Manager form of government and has a population of more than 140,000 people covering approximately 41.5 square miles. Like other cities of its size, Eugene is juggling the challenges of a growing population and a lean economy. The location of the University of Oregon plays an integral part of the community dynamics along with local school districts, businesses and other intergovernmental agencies. Eugene residents are passionately involved in a variety of community organizations, including the 19 neighborhood associations recognized by the City of Eugene.

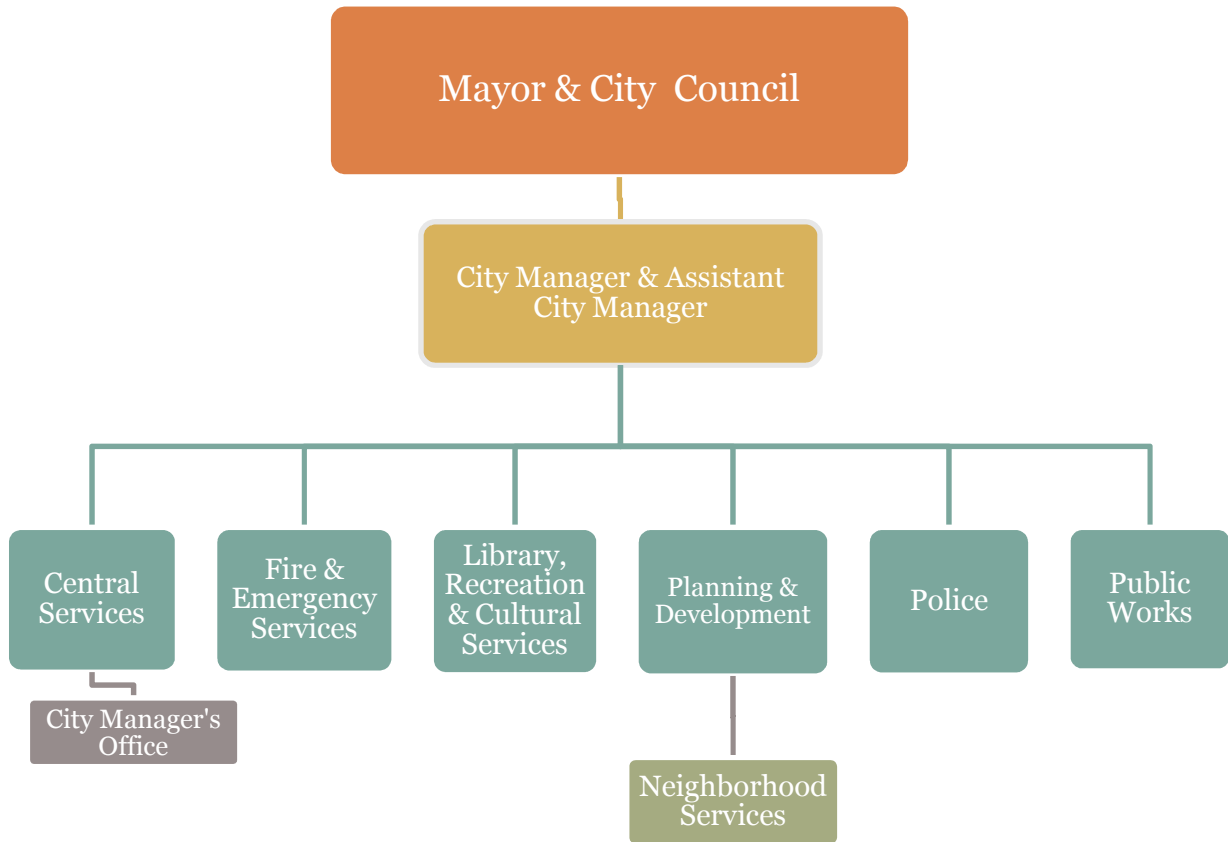
Organization within the City of Eugene

Under the direction of the Mayor and City Council, the City Manager oversees six departments that provide all city services:

- **Fire and Emergency Medical Services** – Includes fire prevention and fire fighting, emergency medical services, 9-1-1 call taking and dispatch services.
- **Police** – Includes four divisions: patrol (including special operations), investigations, operations support and technical services.
- **Library Recreation and Cultural Services** – Includes thousands of activities and programs offered year-round including recreational opportunities, cultural and performing arts and several library branches throughout Eugene.
- **Public Works** – Provides, operates, and maintains the infrastructure to support a growing community, including the airport, transportation, engineering services, maintenance, Parks and Open Space, and Wastewater
- **Planning and Development** – Includes building and permits, planning, community development and Neighborhood Services.
- **Central Services** – Includes general administration, Human Resources, City Manager's office, Municipal Court, Finance, City Prosecutor, Risk Services, Facility Management and Information Services.

Figure 2.1 below highlights city departments.

Figure 2.1: City of Eugene Departmental Organizational Chart



Organizational Context

The City of Eugene and Neighborhood Services have been in a state of transition over the last several years – caused in part by an evolving executive level and program level leadership. In order to provide recommendations regarding Neighborhood Services programming and structure, it was necessary to understand the history, context and political climate in which Neighborhood Services currently operates.

The following factors and events create an important foundation for understanding the current organizational context:

- **New City Manager** – In 2008, the City hired a new city manager to oversee Mayor/City Council Support and interdepartmental affairs.
- **Recent Neighborhood Services Program Manager Change** – In 2007, Neighborhood Services hired a new Program Manager after a somewhat turbulent transition period following the previous manager’s resignation in July 2006. In November 2008, the Program Manager accepted a new position with the City’s Parks and Open Spaces Program.
- **Economy** – The U.S. recession has resulted in budget shortfalls for most Oregon communities and the State of Oregon. This has caused the City to find efficiencies and creative and new ways of doing business.
- **City Reorganization Efforts** – Eugene is currently moving forward with strategic reorganization. The city’s new City Manager is leading this effort to realign city’s services and programs, such as the Sustainability, Access and Equity Team as well as establish a new budgeting process that is intended to align services with outcomes related to Council Goals and Visions.
- **Development** – The City has several high profile development efforts on the horizon. The University of Oregon plans to develop a new basketball arena and baseball stadium, which has sparked mixed feedback from Eugene residents. Growth Management efforts have created tensions between development and no development.
- **Non-Active Neighborhood Associations**– Several areas within the city had a turnover in leadership at the neighborhood association level, and have in turn witnessed a decrease in community participation.

Neighborhood Services Organizational Structure

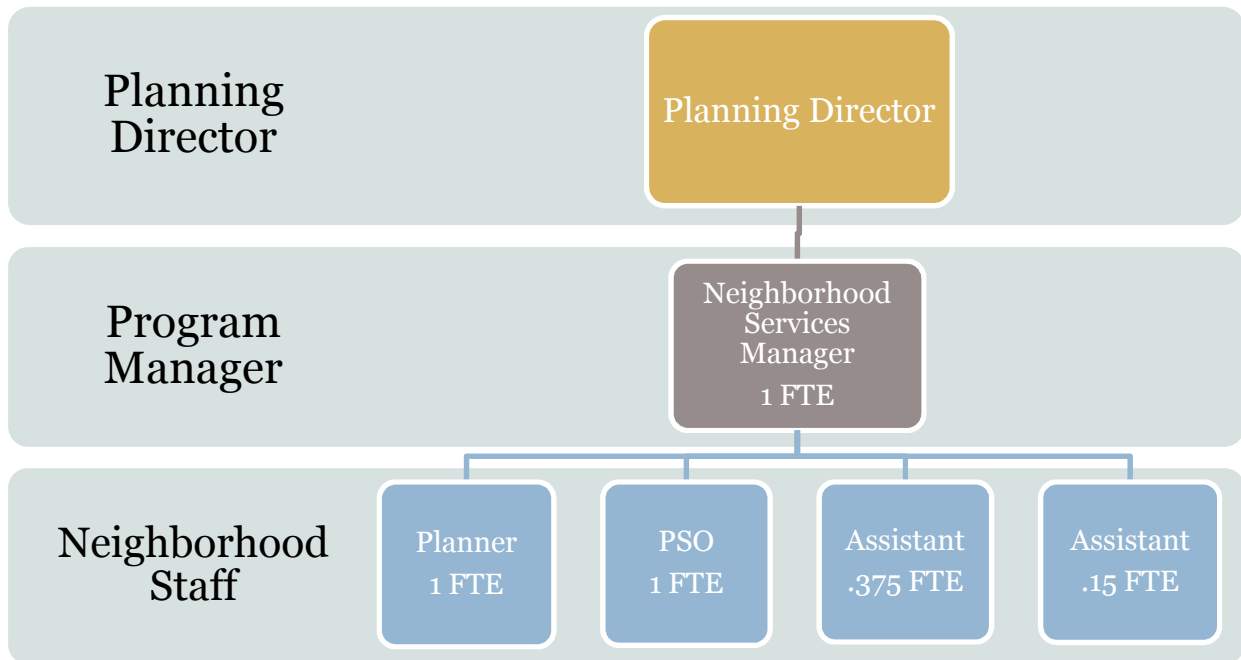
The City’s Neighborhood Services strives to support community building at the neighborhood level through a variety of outreach tools and neighborhood programs. The goal of Neighborhood Services is to help improve the livability of the City’s neighborhoods through the direct support of neighborhood associations and community organizing. This is achieved through the following actions and services:

- 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 and organizations;
- Educating neighbors on issues, public process, city services and elections; and
- Identifying and advocating for neighborhood associations’ positions on issues such as: land use, transportation, public safety and social services.

Structure and Staff

At the start of the assessment process, Neighborhood Services employed 3.525 full-time employees, including one Public Service Officer (PSO) on loan from the City Manager's Office. Figure 2.2 below highlights the staffing structure and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) distribution within Neighborhood Services at the start of the assessment process.

Figure 2.2: Neighborhood Services Structure and Staff



Programs, Services and Roles

Below are Neighborhood Services current program areas:

- Neighborhood Land Use Outreach (Neighborhood Planner)
- Neighborhood Matching Grant Program (Neighborhood Planner)
- Neighborhood Newsletters and Public Information (Neighborhood Assistant)
- Neighborhood Empowerment Initiative - not a service, but rather a goal (Neighborhood Services Manager)
- Neighborhood Leaders Council - support via meeting packets and meeting attendance (Neighborhood Services Manager)
- Advisor to city staff regarding neighborhood and community outreach (Neighborhood Services Manager)
- Information and referral and complaint resolution (Public Services Officer)
- Ad hoc training opportunities (Neighborhood Services Manager)
- Neighborhood Leader Packet mailing (Neighborhood Assistant)

During the course of the assessment process, the PSO moved back to the City Manager's Office after working approximately one year in Neighborhood Services. In addition, the City hired another .80 FTE neighborhood planner and combined two part-time assistant positions to create one .875 FTE in Neighborhood Services. When JLA finalized the Report and Recommendation in December 2008, Neighborhood Services employed 3.675 FTE.