Welcome to the 2007 Street Roots Annual Report. The organization has had a banner year with the support of volunteers, a record number of financial supporters, our Advisory Panel and our Board of Directors.

Street Roots set some breakthrough goals in 2007, including implementing the first stages of our strategic plan. Those goals included empowering and supporting vendors, improving the newspaper and building a foundation that allows the organization to become a sustainable asset to the region.

Some of the highlights over the past year include unveiling the newly formatted Rose City Resource Guide in cooperation with 211 Info and the City of Portland. The new guide has been met with overwhelming support from organizations and government agencies that interface with people on the streets. More importantly, the guide has allowed for people experiencing homelessness and poverty to be independent in their search for services. The guide has dramatically cut down on staff time for organizations creating their own resource lists, helped build a bridge between law enforcement and people on the streets, and allowed for individuals to cut down transportation costs and wait times accessing services. Look for an expanded version of the resource guide in 2008 along with a Spanish version of the guide.

The organization hosted the 2007 North American Street Newspaper Association biannual conference in July. More than 17 representatives from publications all over North America converged on the Rose City to network and build an international movement of professional media, advocacy and employment alternatives.

We thank the many businesses and organizations who helped sponsor the event, including the Society of Professional Journalism, the Bureau of Housing and Community Development, Peet’s Coffee, Tazo Tea, Bagel Land, and Portland State University.

More than 10 individuals became housed while selling Street Roots this year. While Street Roots is not a direct service, we are a bridge in helping individuals build self-confidence and self-worth, to have voice, and a chance to have dignity and respect while making a supplemental income. We want to give a special thanks to Northwest Pilot Project for working with many of our vendors this year to obtain housing.

With your help in 2007 Street Roots is now able to offer vendors the newspaper for 25 cents, giving individuals a 75 cent profit from each paper sold.

Street Roots was also able to hire former vendor Eddy Barbosa, a freelance journalist and a part-time grant writer with your support. We are projected to nearly double our budget from 2006, and are poised to continue to build the newspaper and organization in a way that offers something special to readers and vendors alike.

We thank you for all of your support this year, and we look forward to bringing Portland an alternative media with a social justice bent, along with employment opportunities that make Street Roots a unique and worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,

Israel Bayer
Director

Truly new and improved, the Rose City Resource

The Rose City Resource is a publication of Street Roots, and is Portland’s most comprehensive, updated list of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty. The 60-plus-page booklet serves people who may not otherwise have access to a community or social-service agency, and allows individuals the opportunity to be independent in their search for services that fit specific needs. The resource is free to individuals and organizations working with people experiencing poverty.

The pocket-size resource is made possible in cooperation with the City of Portland, 211 Info and Street Roots. The guide is published quarterly and is also available online at www.streetroots.org.

For more information on the resources, call Eddy Barbosa at 503-228-5657.

Dear Street Roots supporters,

I love Street Roots. What a job you do with intelligent, timely articles and editorials allowing us (the community) to develop our empathy and compassion. Street Roots has both head and heart.

- Lee Larson

supporter

WHO ARE OUR readers?

Street Roots conducted a reader survey in 2007 to find out the essentials: Why do individuals support Street Roots? Who reads the newspaper? How could we improve the newspaper in a way that creates social change and improves the quality of life for vendors? Nearly one in seven readers took us up on it. So what did we find out?

We found that the majority of supporters were over thirty, and with nearly 60 percent being female. Nearly 65 percent of our readers have a college degree. We found that a wide variety of individuals bought the newspaper, from corporate executives to individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty. Nearly 50 percent of supporters make more than $30,000 a year, with 30 percent making more than $50,000 a year. Still, more than a quarter of individuals who filled out the survey make between $0-15,000 a year, sending a very strong message that we are reaching individuals across class lines.

Nearly 70 percent of community members that took the survey buy the newspaper on a regular basis, with 30 percent saying they read the newspaper cover to cover and another 42 percent saying they read more than half of the content in Street Roots.

Thirty-seven percent of readers say they purchase the newspaper solely to support the vendor, while the vast majority said they buy and read Street Roots to support the vendor and to get a fresh perspective on local news. More than 70 percent of the individuals taking the survey say the best part of Street Roots is the featured articles and editorials, while nearly 30 percent purchase the newspaper for poetry, commentary and street culture.

Look for a new reader survey in the summer of 2008, and if you were one of the many individuals that took part in this year’s survey – we thank you!

WE HAVE THE BEST volunteers

Over the course of 2007 Street Roots had more than 100 volunteers working with the newspaper. From individuals working with the vendor program and in the office to writers, artists and editors working with the newspaper to our web hosts and web designers – Street Roots couldn’t function without the support of our great volunteers. Street Roots also relies on companies volunteering with the newspaper, including Rare Heron web design, Quik Internet of Portland, and the Aveda Institute of Portland.

We would like to give a special thanks to Kelly Bryan, who works tirelessly to keep Street Roots updated on-line, Virginia Krakowiak for working to help organize the NASNA conference, and Sarah Johnson, who organized the first Street Roots readers survey in 2007.

Thanks to all of the volunteers that helped make 2007 a banner year for Street Roots!
**Our Vendor Program**

Our vendors, those men and women out selling the paper, rain or shine, are at the heart of Street Roots’ mission. More than 70 active vendors sell Street Roots in the Portland metropolitan area and Vancouver. Through them, approximately 14,000 copies of Street Roots are sold or distributed every month.

Vendors purchase papers for 25 cents each and sell them for $1. The 75 cents that a vendor nets from each paper sold helps him or her meet basic housing, food, clothing and hygiene needs. Many vendors support themselves primarily through the sales of the paper. The 25 cents from each paper that remains with Street Roots is used to cover printing costs of the paper itself.

Vendor applicants must attend a one-hour training orientation to earn a badge certifying them as a Street Roots vendor. The orientation outlines the rules and regulations of Street Roots, while offering vendors sales techniques and empowerment tools for getting involved in the organization.

We are a low-barrier organization, giving new vendors the opportunity to start from scratch and develop their own sales schedule. New vendors receive 10 papers to sell, on the house, to kick-start sales.

To help our vendors, we work to provide an engaging newspaper every two weeks. And vendors are a key part of the process, offering suggestions and support for the continued improvement of the newspaper’s presentation, as well as the operation of the vendor program itself.

The popularity of our vendors has created many new friendships within and beyond our community. Many have made connections that have lead to employment, housing and a new opportunity. And on a day-to-day basis, they are changing the paralyzing stereotypes directed at the streets.

So the next time you see a vendor, say hello and buy a paper – and stop and chat if you have the time. You can find vendors selling the paper 365 days a year, in all kinds of weather, waiting for you to come along.

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*Street Roots tells stories that other media outlets don’t. It’s what anyone who cares about the realities of being poor in Portland should be reading.*

– Nick Budnick
The Portland Tribune

*“Supporting Street Roots means supporting vendors. And for a lot of people that means staying out of the cold at night and being able to take care of yourself. Selling Street Roots means that I can take care of myself.”*

– Milard Guffee

*“I love selling Street Roots. I’ve met so many people and made a lot of friends. I just moved into housing after being on the streets, and without Street Roots that wouldn’t have been possible. I love this place.”*

– Donna Bacon

*“Street Roots helps to supplement my income. It pays for my bills and lets me go down and buy a pizza now and then. It means more than most people can imagine.”*

– Bob Eckerson

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– Bob Eckerson
Dear readers,

Not too long ago, callers periodically rang us up to ask a common question. It went something like: “I saw this guy selling your paper: What is Street Roots?” Today, those calls have been replaced by a more enlightened query: “Where can I buy a copy of your paper?”

It’s a question that’s coming from not only Portlanders, but people in surrounding communities, such as Beaverton and Gresham. Callers ask for specific editions, but also regular access to a paper unlike any other in the city. It’s a welcome demand, and one that is guiding our future investment in the newspaper, with more reporters, wider coverage and a new look in 2008.

Last year, your support enabled us to purchase new technology to improve the paper. This summer, we intend to put the 21st century to good use, with a fresh new look of the paper, and expanded capabilities to bring more people from the community into the writing and publication process.

In 2007, the Rose City Resource, the city’s most comprehensive guide of services for the poor and homeless, became its own publication. The move not only created a far superior resource guide for all members of the community, but also opened four full pages inside the newspaper. That newly freed space has let us expand our local, national, and international coverage, with the potential for larger projects that engage the community. We hope to launch a collaboration this year with youth programs to not only present the creative insight of young adults, but also expose youths to the world of journalism and desktop publishing.

This year saw the dawn of Street Roots’ special editions. In April, the entire issue of the paper focused on the ongoing crisis facing the survivors of Hurricane Katrina, both in New Orleans and Portland, where many now live. In November, the focus was on food, from the concept of urban gardening to the globalization and capitalization of our food supply. More special editions are planned for 2008, and we hope they will educate and inspire readers to get more involved in the issues that impact all of our lives.

We listened when you said you wanted to know more about the vendors. With each edition we are bringing you news about our vendor program and the men and women who sell the paper. We’ll continue to expand our local coverage of topics large and small, drawing on a growing pool of contributing volunteers and writers. And through our Act Now section, launched in 2007, we have mobilized readers to shape the policies that affect our lives, including the fight for transparency and oversight with private security forces, identification rights, environmental justice, and housing rights in New Orleans and beyond.

This year, look for an expanded online component connecting readers to new ways to take action.

This year, we also plan to compile a poetry anthology, drawing on nine years of prose and amazing writers, poets and artists; as a solid and effective model for free speech, empowerment and poverty and homelessness. It has always been a core value of this organization to have people from all classes working together, and the pages reflect that mix in our amazing writers, poets and artists; homeless and housed alike, both here and abroad.

Worldwide, the street newspaper movement is gaining momentum and often overlooked that most needs our city’s help. A media outlet directly representing the community that most needs our city’s help allows for an often overlooked voice at the table to be heard.

March on friends!"

Sincerely,

Joanne Zuhl
Managing Editor

Street Roots has come a long way from when I first picked up a Buick Special years ago. The writing is more relevant and readable. The design is sharp and engaging. And, best of all, its business fundamentals are solid.

— MARSHALL BURNO,
Bureau of Housing and Community Development

I feel that Street Roots is one of Portland’s ‘must haves’ in order to solve her homelessness crisis. A media outlet directly representing the community that most needs our city’s help allows for an often overlooked voice at the table to be heard. March on friends!

— PATRICK NOLEN
Sisters Of The Road

Network Affiliates

Street Roots is part of an international movement of Street Papers. We are active members of both the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers.

The North American Street Newspaper Association exists to support and build effective, self-sustaining street newspapers that promote power and opportunity for people living in poverty. NASNA offers technical assistance to new and growing street newspapers, content sharing with the Street News Service, and an annual conference featuring skills-building workshops and other topics of common interest. The mission of the North American Street Newspaper Association is to support a street newspaper movement that creates and upholds journalistic and ethical standards while promoting self-help and empowerment among people living in poverty. Learn more about NASNA at www.nasna.org

The International Network of Street Papers is a global organization set up to promote the concept of the street paper as a means to address homelessness, social exclusion and poverty in our society. INSP is a network of 80 street paper members situated across 27 countries. INSP’s head office is in Glasgow, Scotland. INSP offers support and developmental opportunities to its members and provides advice to individuals or projects seeking to develop street papers. ItlobbysonbehalfofthestreetpapermovementandonbehalfofhomelessandsociallyexcludedpeopleinoursoCIety.Thenetworkhasbeenbuiltonthebackoftheincrediblesuccessofstreetpapersthroughouttheworld. They operate mainly as small non-profit businesses, which give homeless vendors the opportunity to earn a living through their own efforts.

Learn more about the INSP at www.streetpapers.org

The paper is delivered to our office two days after it is sent to the press. Vendors volunteer to help unload the truck and stack the office with between 7,000 and 8,000 copies of Street Roots. On a daily basis, vendors volunteer to manage and maintain the office.

Roger Gates, vendor

Street Roots is open for paper sales 365 days a year, and sales are vigorous on the first weekend of a new paper.

Vendors buy the papers for 25 cents each and sell them to the public for $1 a piece. By 10 a.m., and often earlier, vendors grab the last cup of coffee of the morning and head out to the sales locations where customers are waiting.

Kelvin Turner, vendor
Every month more than 70 vendors experiencing homelessness and poverty earn money they need while working to help build a community we all live in.

Our biweekly newspaper brings you community voices you can’t find anywhere else, and professional journalism on the issues Portland cares about. We offer you the information you need to take action, and make a difference in the world.

Street Roots is reader-supported. Last year, thousands of people helped make Street Roots a better paper by supporting the work we do.

Won’t you join us?