



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

Date: October 15, 2013
To: Council Vice President Robert Lilligren, Chair, Committee of the Whole
Referral to: City Council
Subject: Two Year Report on Rebuilding Our Communities Fund
Recommendation: Receive and File

Previous Directives:

On July 17, 2011, the City Council approved the creation of the Rebuilding Our Communities Fund in an amount not to exceed \$600,000 over two years to be administered by the NCR Department. The 2011 General Appropriation Resolution was further amended to increase appropriations by \$300,000 for the Rebuilding Our Communities Fund, with remaining funds to be appropriated in future years.

The July 17, 2011 approval committed \$60,000 of the first year's \$300,000 appropriation to existing neighborhood contracts. On November 18, 2011, the City Council approved use of the remaining \$240,000 for an emergency rehab support program, as recommended by the neighborhood organizations, for immediate repair of owner-occupied housing that was not being served by other housing programs, thus committing the full \$300,000 of the first year appropriation.

On March 8, 2012, The City Council approved an additional \$196,258.72 for 2012, and up to \$103,741.28 of 2013 interest earnings on the existing fund balance of fund 01SNR to fully fund the original request for \$600,000 for the Rebuilding Our Communities Fund.

Department Information

Prepared by: Robert Thompson, Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

Approved by:

David Rubedor, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations _____

Paul Aasen, City Coordinator _____

Presenters in Committee: David Rubedor, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations
Robert Thompson, Neighborhood Support Specialist, NCR

Financial Impact

No financial impact to the 2012 City Budget.

Community Impact

Recognizing a long-term community-based recovery is essential for a vibrant community, the City Council established ROC fund in July 2011 for the purpose of building the capacity for a north Minneapolis community-led mid- and long-term recovery and rebuilding process addressing the devastating effects of the May 22nd tornado. The fund builds upon existing assets to create new opportunities for this area. The fund utilizes and supports a collaboration of north Minneapolis neighborhood organizations to organize and coordinate the effort.

The following neighborhoods are eligible for the fund:

- Willard Hay
- Jordan
- Folwell
- Webber Camden
- McKinley
- Harrison

The tornado went through one of our most diverse and economically challenged areas of the city. The recovery effort and the rebuilding process require involvement and inclusion of low-income individuals, renters, communities of color, businesses, and other stakeholders. The fund builds the capacity of neighborhood organizations for broader engagement, utilizing and engaging existing community assets and support networks, and capturing the momentum to reshape the future of their communities.

The fund supports efforts of neighborhood organizations in the following program areas:

- **Visioning, Planning, Assessment and Implementation:** the Northside Neighborhoods Council is responsible for mid- and long-term recovery and building a vision for this community. This includes working with the City and other partners to implement those plans. The collaboration also helps to hold neighborhood partners, as well as federal, state, and local agencies accountable for recovery work.
- **Capacity Building:** Increase the capacity of the Northside Neighborhoods Council and participating neighborhood organizations to work effectively on relief efforts and responding to community needs.
- **Racial and Socio-Economic Collaboration and Participation:** Funds support increased involvement of communities of color, renters, low-income individuals and other community support networks in tornado relief activities.
- **Advocacy for the Community:** the Northside Neighborhoods Council advocates on behalf of the community to federal, state and local authorities to ensure adequate and ongoing resources to support long-term recovery work.
- **Coordination:** The Northside Neighborhoods Council plays a vital role in coordination of fundraising, services delivery, planning, outreach, education, information, event planning and resource identification and development.
- **Communication:** The Northside Neighborhoods Council and eligible neighborhood organizations play a central role in providing ongoing communication and education for the community. Partnering neighborhood organizations serve as individual clearinghouses of information and be the collective voice for home owners, renters, businesses, communities of color, faith organizations, housing developers and other community organizations.

Two Year Report

It has now been two years since the ROC fund was established and this effort was undertaken. The north Minneapolis neighborhoods, supported by Neighborhood and Community Relations staff, have made significant progress in their work.

1. Rehab Support Program Emergency Relief Fund: \$240,000 of ROC funds were dedicated to emergency housing repairs. The creation of the fund followed a meeting of neighborhood organizations with a number of housing vendors in North Minneapolis. Working collaboratively, participants that many north Minneapolis homeowners were falling through gaps in existing relief programs. Neighborhood organizations requested that \$240,000 of ROC funds be used for an emergency relief fund to fill this gap. NCR worked with CPED staff to develop the Emergency Relief Fund, managed by GMHC for repair work managed by Urban Homeworks, Habitat for Humanity, and others.

Mark Anderson of CPED provided the following update on the use of these funds:

Loan Pool	\$240,000
Loans closed to date	33
Applications pending closing	0
Applications denied	8
Total dollar amount of loans closed	\$222,711.08
GMHC Admin	<u>\$17,288.92</u>
Total dollar amount of project cost	\$240,000
Program funds remaining in pool (Uncommitted funds)	\$0.00

2. Immediate Neighborhood Support: \$60,000 of the original \$300,000 was contracted to the six neighborhood organizations in the area impacted by the May 22 tornado. The Funding supported the following work:

- A multi-neighborhood cleanup effort involving more than 400 volunteers over the weekends of June 18 and June 25, 2011 from four parks.
- Additional outreach and door-knocking work. Neighborhood organizations worked with other agencies involved in recovery efforts to develop and distribute literature through direct outreach and electronic communication.
- Ability to meet with and participate in the Northside Community Recovery Team and collaborate more closely with tornado relief efforts.
- Neighborhood organizations worked collaboratively on a number of community meetings between 2011 and 2013 known as North First.

3. Current needs in 2013: On October 4, 2013, NCR staff met with representatives from four of the six neighborhood organizations, and with City staff representing NCR, CPED and Regulatory Services. The group identified two major issues that could be addressed with remaining ROC funds:

1. Trees. There are still a large number of dead and damaged trees remaining in front and back yards, contributing to a sense of blight and possibly creating barrier to home sales. This is complicated by both new growth on some trees, and the recent storm leading to damage of additional trees. Further action will include:
 - City staff will identify options for conducting a survey of damaged trees, and recommendation a process to neighborhood organizations for removing and disposing of stumps, including estimated costs for tree survey and stump removal and disposal.

- The group asked that additional disposal options be considered, such as donating stumps for local artist such as “Wood from the Hood.”
 - Explore options for funding and support for replacement trees.
2. Housing. There are a small number of houses with tornado related damage that can be addressed with these funds. There may be some continuing barriers, including foreclosures in process, or elderly homeowners who may need assistance.
- a. Reg Services staff will prepare an updated list of owner-occupied houses with orders and make recommendations to neighborhood organizations.
 - b. City staff will prepare to amend current contract to expand potential projects to address orders. This will give inspectors an additional tool when meeting with homeowners of remaining properties.
 - c. NCR staff can work with inspectors to assist with approaching seniors in some of the houses.