

Draft as of Aug. 1, 2007

City of Minneapolis

Community Engagement

Track 2 Task Force Report

to

Define roles and funding of neighborhood, community and cultural organizations as parts of the community engagement system

August 2007

City of Minneapolis
Community Engagement

Track 2 Task Force Report

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Introduction

In May 2007, the Minneapolis City Council approved a [three-track work plan](#) to bring the city's community engagement system into its next generation, including finding clear ways to support what is currently working and explore new ideas to enhance what's being done. The task Force that developed this report was assembled to work on Track 2. The Track 2 Task Force met throughout the summer of 2007 to generate options that the city could take to the broader public for input.

Track 1: Implement consensus recommendations for immediate improvements to the community engagement system.

Track 2: Define roles and funding of neighborhood, community and cultural organizations as parts of the community engagement system.

Track 3: Determine the focus, funding and governance of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and Action Plan activities after 2009.

Task Force Structure

The Track 2 Task Force was facilitated by Grey-Hall facilitators, Karen Grey and Nora Hall. Jennifer Amundson, the city's community engagement coordinator, organized the meetings.

The task force was co-chaired by Council Vice President Robert Lilligren and Task Force Member Matt Perry who was elected by the group. City Council President, Barbara Johnson, authorized the final list of task force members.

The task force met for ___ two-hour meetings at city hall. During the meetings, the task force members met as a large group and worked in small groups.

Track 2 Task Force Members

Voting Participants

Neighborhood Organizations:

Chris Morris
Elena Gaarder
Jeffrey Strand
John Bernstein
Matt Perry (co-chair)
Shirley Yeoman

Block Clubs:

Anne McCandless
Diann Anders

Ethnic/Cultural Organizations:

Jessie Saavedra
Justin Huenemann
Mohamed Ali
Xang Vang

Issue-focused Organizations:

Don Fraser
Russ Adams

Business Associations:

Diana Hawkins
Joyce Wisdom

Community Development Corporations:

David Rubedor
Mary Keefe

Community Engagement Innovator:

Repa Mekha

Civic Participation Advocate:

Jeremy Iggers

At-large residents:

Kathleen Anderson
Mark Fox

Total Voting Participants: 22

Non-voting Participants

Council Members:

Council Member Cam Gordon
Council Member Diane Hofstede
Council Member Robert Lilligren (*co-chair*)

Mayor / Mayoral representative Cara Letofsky

Staff Resources

Task Force Support

Track 2 Task Force Charge

The Minneapolis City Council approved the following charge for the Community Engagement Task Force in May 2007.

1. Identify **types of community organizations** that the City should recognize as formal participants in its community engagement system.
 - Consider all organizations that may participate in city improvement including both geographic (planning districts, neighborhoods, blocks) and non-geographic (business, ethnic, cultural, issue-specific) organizations.
2. Develop a **clear set of expectations** about what these organizations should expect from the City and what the City should expect from these organizations as participants in the City's community engagement system.
3. Describe the **connection points** between the City and these community organizations that would be needed to meet these expectations and support more effective participation.
 - Consider both systems and practices.
4. Develop alternatives for an **improved organizational structure** that supports the connection points and identifies responsibility for action.
 - Review the strengths and weaknesses of the current structure.
 - Consider national models and best practices.
5. Describe the **official support** (financial or otherwise) necessary for this organizational structure to succeed.
 - Consider national models and best practices.

Charge #1 - Types of community organizations

Charge: Identify types of community organizations that the City should recognize as formal participants in its community engagement system.

As of the current draft of this report the Task Force has brainstormed a list of possible community organizations that *could* be recognized as formal participants in the city's community engagement system however, there is ongoing discussion about the definitions of "formal" and of "community engagement" and the group had not identified which or how organizations should be recognized. Some thoughts or principles that could relate to this charge have emerged from discussions.

Additional comments related to this charge:

- By trying to be inclusive you can be exclusive by developing a list.
- Some people don't identify with their neighborhoods and should have other options for community engagement.
- Identifying different types of organizations as formal would provide the potential to reach more stakeholders and tap into the wisdom and experience of groups/individuals/institutions not organized geographically.
- Neighborhood organizations have been an effective mechanism for disseminating and engaging residents in decision-making through the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.
- Non-geographic community engagement could result in people who don't live in a community speaking for the community.
- Increased formal non-geographic community engagement could weaken the ability of neighborhood organizations to be representative.
- Increasing the number of formal participants without significantly redesigning the city's community engagement system may overwhelm the system and work against efficient and effective governance.
- Types of organization(s) should be dependent on the type of issue or opportunity that is being addressed.
- There should be a continuum—the more people a decision is expected to effect, the more formal the influencing groups must be.
- We could identify some qualitative means by which to measure the value of economy of scale and validation for an organization to be formally recognized.
- Basing community engagement on decision making is more palatable if we explain that the best way to engage people over a pending decision is to establish a habit of interaction even when no decision is pending.
- The level of engagement from a community can be dependent on the level of trust with who is doing the engaging.

Charge #2 - Clear set of expectations

Charge: Develop a clear set of expectations about what these organizations should expect from the City and what the City should expect from these organizations as participants in the City's community engagement system.

Through out the discussion of the Task Force the group flushed out expectations for how community engagement should happen in Minneapolis. Many of the expectations were included in the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Core Values of Public Participation. IAP2 is an association of members who seek to promote and improve the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, and other entities that affect the public interest in nations throughout the world. A task force member recommended this organization as a source of potential information. The group developed the following "Core Principles of Community Engagement" using [IAP2 Core Values](#) as a base and adding to them:

Core Principles of Community Engagement

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a **right to be involved** in the decision-making process.
 - Engagement should happen **early in the process** before momentum is difficult to redirect.
 - Community engagement should be a **fundamental value** and should be part of the regular culture of how things are done.
 - Community engagement should be **consistent** regardless of who you are or who is in charge at any given time.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's **contribution will influence the decision**.
 - The process must be fair—not everyone gets their way, but **everyone has a place at the table**.
 - All participants should be humble and open to different viewpoints—**all views should be "thoughtfully considered."**
 - Engagement should be **about what the community needs** not only about what the city needs input on at any given time.
 - Community engagement should include a **deliberative process** of weighing pros and cons.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by **recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants**, including decision makers.
 - Communication must be **two-way**.
 - Notifications should be **broad**.
 - **Formal and informal** relationships should be identified, recognized and valued.
 - Potential community engagers should be **creative** in their techniques as needed.
 - The city "enterprise" should **coordinate with other jurisdictions**, such as parks, schools and libraries, on community engagement.
4. Public participation **seeks out and facilitates the involvement** of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
 - Efforts should be made to identify barriers and **make the path to participation easier** for those who are least likely or able to participate.
 - **Resources** should be allocated or available to groups with community engagement mandates.

- Groups that receive resources to provide participation should have **accountability and measurable outcomes** including how the group is representative.
5. Public participation seeks **input from participants in designing how they participate.**
 - There should be **clear expectations and mutual accountability** for core principles.
 - There should be **established expectations and roles.**
 6. Public participation **provides participants with the information they need** to participate in a meaningful way.
 - There should be a **systematic way to regulate** community engagement—a clear understanding of what will be communicated and how.
 - Communication should be **well-defined, timely, fair, clear and transparent.**
 - Communities should be **made aware of how decisions will affect them.**
 - **Legal requirement** for notice should be clearly stated and understood by all.
 7. Public participation **communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.**
 - There should be two-way **follow-up to “close the loop”** about what happened and why.

Additional comments related to this charge:

- If you're strengthening silos, you're not necessarily addressing the bigger issues – schools are an example of this.
- Consider requiring positive assent for action: if an issue is not important enough to inspire a quorum of stakeholders to weigh in, the action will not be taken.
- It's not always about the number of people voting - "why disagree with the experts" (i.e. whether to replace a bridge, etc.)
- Engagement implies an interaction that is flowing more from the city to a stakeholder. Empowerment suggests giving both rights and responsibilities that the city currently has to a stakeholder.
- The city should set up a timeline for each issue the community is involved in.
- Community groups need to develop trust among their stakeholders.
- Community groups should also represent feedback that may represent minority opinions on an issue.

Charge #3 - Connection points

Charge: Describe the connection points between the City and these community organizations that would be needed to meet these expectations and support more effective participation.

Through out the discussion of the Task Force the group flushed out several potential and existing connection points. It was noted that not everyone had the same definition of what a connection point is. While some consider connection points as where in the process engagement happens other see connection points as how connections are made:

- City departments/staff
- Policy decisions
- Neighborhood organizations
- Block clubs
- Ethnic groups
- Opportunities for engagement should happen at various times and at various locations (not necessarily at city hall in the middle of the day)
- City's Web site
- WIFI
- Existing media
- Interactive media such as a blogs, online forums
- Ombudsperson
- Grass roots groups
- Use existing resources, CCP/SAFE, virtual block clubs
- A place in the community - go to where people are already meeting and gathering
- Non-meeting formats
- Internet information that is enable for cell phones
- Political organizations
- City Council
- Mayor's office
- Events (parades, etc.)
- Community meetings
- Newsletters
- Social/cultural groups
- Business Associations
- Approved NRP plans
- 311
- When a decision is pending or it is a staff priority

Additional comments related to this charge:

- The connection points should reflect the type of issue or opportunity that is being addressed.
- Fix broken connections such as between block clubs and neighborhood groups.
- There should be a policy relationship between neighborhood groups and city zoning and planning decisions.
- The city should connect with the approved NRP Action Plans when establishing citywide plans.
- Community engagement should reflect that not everyone has a computer.
- Meetings at city hall can make the building, which is a community building, feel more accessible.
- Technological communication is not a replacement for face to face relationship building.
- Consider impact: citywide, community, local.
- The city needs to identify situations that require affirmative outreach.

Charge #4 - Improved organizational structure

Charge: Develop alternatives for an improved organizational structure that supports the connection points and identifies responsibility for action.

Charge #5 - Official support

Charge: Describe the official support (financial or otherwise) necessary for this organizational structure to succeed.

Appendix A - Background Material

Several pieces of background material were handed out or referenced at task force meetings including:

[Community Engagement Report](#), prepared for the Minneapolis City Council Nov. 8, 2006_
[Council Presentation on Community Engagement work plan](#), summary presentation prepared by the Office of the City Coordinator, April 2007

[Track 2 Task Force Work Plan](#)

[Memo from Robert Miller, director, NRP](#), March 2007

[Report on the Community Engagement Process Review](#) March 2007

[Neighborhood Revitalization Primer](#)

[Levels of Engagement Continuum](#): Tamarack: An Institute for CE, 2002

[International Association for Public Participation core values](#)

[Community Manifesto: Valuing Australia's Community Groups – a report by Ourcommunity.com](#)

[Minneapolis School District note](#) reference from [Destination Excellence](#)

[Reference from CE FAQs](#)

[Models of participatory governments](#)

Appendix B – Bios

Bios for each task force participant will be included here.

Chris Morris

Christopher (Chris) Morris is a resident, former elected Board member and now Executive Director of the McKinley Community in North Minneapolis. A resident since 1990, Chris Morris arrived as a student at the University of Minnesota and has lived in seven different neighborhoods of Minneapolis.

Morris is married with two children, both of whom attend Minneapolis Public Schools and extensively use both the Minneapolis Public Library and Minneapolis Park & Recreation systems.

Elena Gaarder**Jeffrey Strand****John Bernstein****Matt Perry**

Matt Perry has been actively involved building community in both the public and private sectors for most of his adult life – building private sector organizations in the technology start up area and in helping community and neighborhood groups solve challenges during their early stages of organizing in the public sector. He has successfully worked with several neighborhoods in south Minneapolis on projects that cross neighborhood boundaries and is an advocate for greater involvement of the private sector in developing the fabric of both commercial and residential neighborhoods.

Perry is the chair of the East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association and a co-leader of a block club. He is also the president of Nicollet-East Harriet Business Association in Kingfield and East Harriet neighborhoods. He is active in a Great City Design Team, with the Walker Task Force (as co-chair), the Minneapolis Zoning Board of Adjustment (vice-chair) and is currently president and CEO of Twin Cities PC MD, Inc.

Shirley Yeoman

Shirley Yeoman is a transplanted Kansan who made South Minneapolis her home in 1975. Yeoman began actively working in the community by joining Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association in 1996, just as the NRP Full Plan work was getting underway and has been active in the community ever since.

Most of Yeoman's professional and community work has been with non-profits, large and small. She has served on boards of Harriet Tubman Shelter and Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. Yeoman has degree in education and has completed the coursework for an M. S. in Management.

Anne McCandless

Anne McCandless is a retired Minneapolis police sergeant and an active resident of the Jordan neighborhood of Minneapolis. McCandless serves on the Jordan Area Housing Committee and is a block leader. McCandless works hard to keep the neighborhood involved and fights to prevent blight and crime in the neighborhood.

McCandless enjoys gardening and is a Hennepin County Master Gardener.

Diann Anders is a proponent of building community and has been working at it for most of the 37 years she has been a resident of Minneapolis. Anders currently works on this goal by serving on the Seward Neighborhood Group board. As a board member, she actively works on community policing, block club organizing and developing sustainability indicators for Seward.

Anders edited the Seward Profile for more than five years. She is a strong believer in strong citizen engagement as a way of nurturing communities and feeling empowered to take actions. She has also worked with the Minneapolis Public Schools in trying to engage the neighborhoods.

Jessie Saavedra

Justin Huenemann

Mohamed Ali

Mohamed Issa Ali was born and raised in Mogadishu, Somalia. He immigrated to the United States in 1993 after the Somali civil war, lived in New York, Ohio and Tennessee before moving to Minnesota in 1997.

Issa Ali is actively involved in the Somali community and is a member of, or serves on the boards of the West Bank Community Coalition, the Confederation of Somali Communities in Minnesota, the Somali Intellectual League and the Somali-American Political Engagement Committee. He has also served on the board of the West Bank Community Development Corporation and serves as a consultant to the Somali Mai Community of Minnesota and the Somali American Media Association.

Issa Ali currently is an Employment Counselor with EMERGE WORKFORCE, an affiliate of Pillsbury United Communities a non-profit community based organization, at its North Minneapolis office Job Bank. He is also host/writer and editor for Somali American Media Association Television (SAMA TV).

Issa Ali has nine children and two grandchildren.

Xang Vang

Don Fraser

Donald M. Fraser was born in Minneapolis, educated in the Minneapolis Public Schools including University High School and went on to receive his BA in 1944 and LLB in 1948 from the University of Minnesota .

After serving in the Pacific on active duty with the US Naval Reserve from July 1942 through June 1946, he served in the Minnesota Senate (1954-1962) and in the U.S. House of Representatives (1963-1978). He returned to Minneapolis and served as Mayor of Minneapolis from 1980 through 1993.

While in Congress, Fraser successfully sponsored a provision in Washington D.C. charter calling for elected advisory neighborhood councils and required financial support for the councils. Fraser also successfully sponsored a measure calling for emphasis on building local democratic institutions in countries receiving U.S. foreign assistance.

Fraser is currently active in the community. He helped organize the SouthEast Minneapolis Council on Learning, served as co-chair of the Board of Ready4K, and is now the convener of a committee on the achievement gap authorized by the Minnesota DFL Education Foundation in January 2007.

Russ Adams

Russ Adams has been the Director of the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability since 1995. Adams has worked as a nonprofit advocate and community organizer for over 22 years building community coalitions in support of economic and racial justice, sustainable & equitable development, renewable energy practices, better land-use and urban growth policies, and challenged public officials to address environmental justice concerns. The Alliance and its partner groups have secured millions of dollars in public investments for transit, affordable housing, "digital inclusion," and brownfield clean-up.

Adams also served as the field director for the successful Keith Ellison for U.S. Congress campaign. He has also previously served with All Parks Alliance for Change, worked as a Housing Specialist for the Harrison Neighborhood Association, and served as a volunteer with the Sierra Club *Northstar Chapter*, Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota, Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association, Sustainable Resources Center, and the Community Solutions Fund.

Adams' work with the Alliance on advanced innovative strategies like Inclusionary Housing measures and Community Benefits Agreements received the National Neighborhood Coalition "Communities Leading the Way" award in 2000.

Diana Hawkins

Diana Hawkins has been in the cable industry since 1994. In her current position she is a Government Affairs Professional. Before coming to Comcast Cable, Hawkins was employed for 12 years with Time Warner Cable and served 10 years with Carlson Companies in various positions. Hawkins is best known for her work with the City of Minneapolis Code Four, lobbying for a new school in the Nellie Stone Johnson Community School and is the co-founder of the Hawthorne Huddle Organization.

Hawkins has also been recognized for her involvement in many community programs. She was responsible for implementing a Minneapolis National Association of Multi-Ethnicity in Communications chapter as well as being responsible for the Time-To-Read Literacy/Mentoring Program for Time Warner Cable. Hawkins serves on many organization boards representing both her community in which she lives and is employed.

Hawkins has a Bachelor of Science in Management, and a Certificate in Human Resource Management. She recently completed a dual-Master's Degrees in Business Management and Project Management.

Joyce Wisdom

Joyce Wisdom is the current executive director of the Lake Street Council. She has been active in the community as a private business owner and in a professional capacity with neighborhood associations and community institutions.

Wisdom was formerly associate director of the Green Institute and has served as president of the Hiawatha-Lake Business Association and chair of the Empowerment Zone Strategic Planning and Lake Street Council Marketing committees. In her role as the executive director of the Lake Street Council, she engages, serves and represents the many diverse voices of the Lake Street business community and maintains open communication for the business community and with the many neighborhood associations that border Lake Street.

David Rubedor

David Rubedor is a resident of north Minneapolis, living in the Jordan neighborhood for the past six years. Before living in the Jordan neighborhood, he lived in the Powderhorn Park neighborhood for 10 years.

Rubedor currently works for Powderhorn Residents Group (PRG), Inc, a non-profit affordable housing developer where he has been the Executive Director since 2004. PRG currently has housing development projects underway in both north and south Minneapolis. Prior to PRG, he worked as the Executive Director of the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association from 1998 - 2004.

Rubedor also serves on the Juxtaposition Arts board of directors, a youth arts organization in north Minneapolis.

Mary Keefe

Mary Keefe is the Executive Director of Hope Community, Inc., a community development corporation with a history of 30 years in the Phillips Community. In addition to significant neighborhood revitalization, Hope is known for extensive community engagement that involves hundreds in leadership and learning opportunities each year. Over 1400 diverse adults and youth have been involved in community dialogues through Hope's *Community Listening* strategies.

Keefe began her work at Hope in 1994 after over 20 years of related experience. She directed two broad-based, multi-cultural community organizations in the Twin Cities and New York City. She was a contributing editor writing for a New York City magazine about low-income issues. She also coordinated the strategic planning phase for a multi-sector St. Paul Children's Initiative.

Repa Mekha

Jeremy Iggers

Jeremy Iggers recently left the Minneapolis Star Tribune after more than 22 years as a staff writer. Iggers is currently the executive director of the Twin Cities Media Alliance, a non-profit organization that brings together media professionals and engaged citizens to improve the quality, accountability and diversity of the local media, and to give citizens the tools they need to become more active participants in the emerging media environment.

Iggers has a PhD in philosophy from the University of Minnesota; his doctoral dissertation was published in revised form as "Good News, Bad News: Journalism Ethics and the Public Interest (Westview Press, 1998). He lives in CARAG with his wife, Carol Bouska, and two cats.

Kathleen Anderson

Since returning to Minneapolis 25 years ago, Kathleen Anderson has been increasingly interested in the city, its government and the immediate community she lives in. She follows City policies for growth and prosperity closely and monitors its programs for maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for our citizens.

A resident of a historically designated building, the North Star Blanket Factory, Anderson serves on the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board and other community organizations. She is also a member of the Lawyers Board of Professional Responsibility.

Mark Fox

A lifelong resident of Minneapolis, Mark Fox grew up in the Kenny neighborhood and is currently a resident of Northeast Minneapolis. Fox started working in advertising design and was soon drawn into neighborhood activism.

Fox has served on the Audubon Neighborhood Association's board for 7 years, and is a two-term treasurer and president. Three years ago Fox helped found the Northeast Citizen Patrol, a volunteer group that offers walking patrols in nine Northeast neighborhoods. More than 100 walkers participate in these patrols.

Fox believes that his NECP experience has redefined his expectations of community engagement and wants to preserve community empowerment while expanding engagement beyond the limits of the current circle of activists to create a better balance between neighborhood and citywide interests.

Greg Simbeck (Staff Resource)

Greg Simbeck works as a Project Coordinator for the Department of Regulatory Services. One of his principal responsibilities is to assist residents, the City Council and the Mayor's Office on housing inspections and regulatory issues. Prior to his work in Regulatory Services, Simbeck served as a Council Aide to Council Members Paul Zerby and Diane Hofstede. He has also served as the Neighborhood Coordinator for Southeast Como neighborhood.

CPS Luther Krueger (Staff Resource)

Crime Prevention Specialist Luther Krueger has been with the Minneapolis Police Department since 1995. CPS Krueger is a member of the International Association of Crime Analysts, the Minnesota Crime Prevention Association, and the American Society for Public Administration.

Krueger has moderated the Virtual Block Club (VBC) for the 1st Precinct for twelve years. Through his crime prevention work with the MPD, Krueger received the Hennepin County Chiefs' Crime Prevention Practitioner of the Year for 1999. He was also awarded the MPD Chief's Award of Merit with his partner, Officer Craig Williams for their development of the "Virtual Block Club," an email crime alert system which includes community participation.

Krueger holds a B.A. in English and Theatre Arts from the University of Minnesota (1985) and a Master of Public and Nonprofit Administration degree from Metropolitan State University (2005), where he is also a community faculty member. Krueger writes a regular column for the Southwest Journal and book reviews for the Journal of Urban Affairs. Krueger is an avid solar chef and lives in south Minneapolis with his wife Jo and two cats.

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