



# Northside Tornado Recovery Update

City of Minneapolis – May 2012

The area struck by the May 22, 2011 tornado is home to about 7,000 properties. Of those, about 3,700 were damaged by the storm. In the year since the tornado, the City, many government and non-profit partners, and thousands of volunteers have worked together to help people get back on their feet and rebuild a stronger north Minneapolis.

## Rebuilding and reinvesting

By the end of April 2012, residents and property owners had made repairs and improvements to the vast majority of properties. So far:

- 2,891 repair permits have been issued
- \$28.7 million in repairs have been made or are under way
- About \$2 million in assistance has been provided to people affected by the storm through loans and other help from the City, state and federal governments, as well as many non-profit organizations involved in the tornado recovery
- 96 percent of properties that suffered major damage in the tornado have since been repaired or demolished, or that work is in progress. There were 206 properties with major damage, and so far:
  - 149 were repaired or are in the process of being repaired
  - 48 were demolished or demolition is pending
  - Nine still have unrepaired damage
- 81 percent of properties that received orders from the City to make structural repairs have resolved those issues. Of the 1,030 properties with orders, 834 have been resolved.
- Four homeowners who lost their homes in the tornado are building new homes from the ground up

## Helping with repairs

Following the tornado, many residents who didn't have insurance, or whose insurance didn't cover their damage, received help from multiple government, nonprofit, and foundation partners who worked together to help make repairs. These efforts were coordinated through the Northside Community Response Team Housing Committee, which teamed up with the City and neighborhood organizations to door-knock at hundreds of properties to connect with residents, learn about their needs, and provide connections to these resources. So far:

- Locally, more than \$894,000 in loans and free assistance have been given out by a range of partners, helping 185 households and repairing 57 roofs. Key programs and partners include:
  - Quick Start Disaster Recovery loans closed (Minnesota Housing) - \$269,265 to assist 19 households, including repairing 12 roofs
  - RSP Emergency Relief Fund loans closed (Northside Neighborhoods Council/City of Minneapolis) - \$117,551 to assist 17 households, including repairing 17 roofs
  - Habitat for Humanity Twin Cities - \$195,000 to assist 32 households, including repairing 17 roofs
  - Wells Fargo (through Urban Homeworks, Northside Neighborhood Housing Services, and the Minneapolis Urban League) - \$80,000 to assist 10 households, including repairing 8 roofs
  - Community Action of Minneapolis - \$136,600 to assist 35 households
  - Rebuilding Together Twin Cities - \$4,084 to assist three households, including repairing two roofs
  - Emergency tarping, electrical restoration, and boarding assistance (Urban Homeworks and Star Community Partners) - \$91,869 to assist 41 households
  - Debris removal and garage repair or demolition (Urban Homeworks) - assistance to 48 households
  
- The U.S. Small Business Administration provided more than \$1.1 million in low-interest loans to residents and businesses affected by the tornado. As of May 10:
  - 55 residents received loans for a total of \$893,900
  - Seven businesses received loans for a total of \$231,600
  
- Local architects have also volunteered their services. Rebuilding It Right, a group of architects advocating for quality and appropriate design for buildings damaged in the tornado, provided no-cost design services for homeowners. Specifically:
  - 40 homeowners received free design assistance at a value of more than \$50,000

Rebuilding It Right is continuing to work on longer-term rebuilding plans and designs for the area.

## Work still in progress

Although significant progress has been made in rebuilding and improving Northside neighborhoods since the tornado, not all property owners have repaired their tornado damage. City Inspectors worked closely with residents and property owners in the months following the tornado, giving people time to work with insurance companies and make repairs. After several months, inspectors began writing orders to property owners to take care of unrepaired damage. As of the end of April 2012:

- About 19 percent of properties that received orders from the City for structural repairs have yet to complete those repairs, leaving 196 properties with open structural orders. Inspectors have granted extensions as needed to allow people time to work with insurance and contractors.
- 103 Northside properties still have roof damage, which can be broken down into several categories:
  - 47 of these properties have repairs in process or have been granted extensions
  - 44 of these properties are vacant. A coalition of residents, architects, developers, and City staff is evaluating these properties to identify high priorities for rehabilitation.
  - 12 properties may be occupied, and the owner has not responded to orders to make repairs. Of those, three properties are rental, and nine are owner occupied.

All property owners with open orders for tornado damage have been contacted about the availability of resources to help them complete repairs, and a number of property owners are still working through the insurance process.

## Help with housing

Heading Home Hennepin, the City/County plan to end homelessness, provided short-term rental and mortgage assistance to individuals and families affected by the tornado in order to help them retain housing. Specifically:

- About \$215,000 in assistance has been provided to 214 households for housing needs

This assistance included \$100,000 from the Minneapolis Foundation/United Way Tornado Recovery Fund, in addition to funding from other foundations and donors.

## Replanting trees

The May 22 tornado caused extensive damage along a 3.5 mile path in North Minneapolis, destroying thousands of trees. In total, about 6,000 park and boulevard trees were destroyed, along with many trees on private property. To help reestablish our urban tree canopy:

- The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is planting 3,100 new trees on boulevards in front of homes this spring
- The City, Tree Trust, and State Farm Insurance partnered to make 400 free trees available this spring to property owners who lost trees in the tornado
- With the help of donors and volunteers, the Park and Recreation Board planted 275 new trees last fall in Folwell Park, which was hit hard by the tornado

## Assisting businesses

Following the tornado, the City's Community Planning and Economic Development Department worked with community partners to immediately assess the damage to business and connect business owners to resources. The City created the Business Recovery Loan Program, to provide financing for building repairs, insurance deductibles, and business losses. The City and its partners also reached out to the owner of each commercial property that was damaged by the tornado. So far:

- \$139,167 in loans has been made to 33 affected businesses through this program

Since the tornado, the City has adopted the Penn Avenue North Redevelopment Plan and project area. The goal is to support redevelopment in line with the community's vision for a rebuilt North Minneapolis and to rebuild bigger and better, rather than just replacing what was there previously. For example, instead of simply rebuilding Broadway Liquor Outlet, which was destroyed by the tornado, Dean Rose and partner Lupe Development are developing multi-family rental housing and new ground floor retail space.

## Repairing infrastructure

The tornado caused damage to public infrastructure in north Minneapolis, including sidewalks, streetlights, traffic signals, and signs. Most of the repair work to that infrastructure occurred throughout the summer of 2011, and was completed by the end of the year. Specifically:

- Traffic signal repairs were made at about 25 intersections
- Streetlight repairs were made at approximately 75 locations
- About 350 traffic signs were replaced
- Repairs were made to around 1,600 sidewalk panels and 600 feet of curb