

Get to NOMI

A new grass-roots neighborhood campaign is encouraging house hunters to buy and live in north Minneapolis.

By [LYNN UNDERWOOD](#), Star Tribune

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When Blake Norby decided to buy a house, he wanted affordability and a sense of community. So Norby, who was a renter in Minneapolis' Bryn Mawr neighborhood, explored some of the nearby north Minneapolis neighborhoods by going to a couple of porch parties and talking to residents.

Before long, he closed on a spacious 1904 four-square-style house in the Near North neighborhood. He paid \$30,000 for the house, which had been in foreclosure, and got a \$55,000 rehab loan from Neighborhood Housing Services of Minneapolis to fix it up.

"My perception of north Minneapolis as an unsafe place to live dissolved after walking around and meeting some of the neighbors," he said.

North Minneapolis neighborhood groups, residents and local real estate agents are ramping up efforts to attract such buyers with a grass-roots marketing campaign.

"Get to NOMI" (stands for north Minneapolis) promotes the city's arts, parks, businesses, affordable housing and other amenities. Residents also want prospective buyers to know that many of its 13 neighborhoods, which are bordered by Glenwood Av. on the south, 53rd Av. on the north, Mississippi River on the east and Xerxes Av. on the west, have homeowners that are involved in making improvements.

This branding campaign is also aimed at focusing attention on the positive attributes of the neighborhood rather than on pockets of crime and a concentration of vacant foreclosed homes.

"NOMI is pulling neighborhoods together under a single banner and giving north Minneapolis a valuable identity," said Roberta Englund, who lives in the Folwell neighborhood and is executive director of the Folwell and Webber-Camden neighborhood organizations.

The concept and logo, inspired by North Hollywood's NOHO neighborhood, was designed by graphic designer Desiree Fernandez, who owns a 1923 bungalow in the Webber-Camden neighborhood.

"I wanted to demystify the area," she said. "Once people get to know north Minneapolis, they'll find it's quite lovely."

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