

**CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT**  
**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

*Approved by City Council MMMM DD, 2010*

**I. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM**

**A. Program Purposes**

The Community Participation Program provides funding to encourage and support participation through Minneapolis neighborhood organizations. These guidelines direct how at least \$3,000,000 per year will be provided to established Minneapolis neighborhood organizations for neighborhood-determined community engagement activities in the following key areas: (1) identifying and acting on neighborhood priorities; (2) influencing City decisions and priorities; and (3) increasing involvement.

**1. Identifying and Acting on Neighborhood Priorities**

As partners in building a better city and creating vibrant, safe, welcoming and livable spaces, neighborhood organizations and the City each have unique roles in identifying and acting on neighborhood priorities.

**2. Influencing City Decisions and Priorities**

City decision-making is improved when we involve those most affected by these decisions. The City’s core principles of community engagement state that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. Through partnering with neighborhood organizations, the City of Minneapolis can better reach—and be informed by—the people who are most affected by City decisions.

**3. Increasing Involvement**

The City and neighborhood organizations are better able to develop meaningful strategies—and successfully implement those strategies—when more people are informed and involved. The City and neighborhood organizations will work to maximize the involvement of residents and other stakeholders.

While it is understood that neighborhood organizations and the City are jointly responsible for success in these three key areas, the purpose of funding through the Community Participation Program is to help neighborhood organizations to:

- Facilitate communication and connections amongst neighborhood residents and stakeholders to:
  - Gather input;
  - Inform and educate neighborhood residents and stakeholders on pending City or neighborhood issues and opportunities that affect them and their neighborhood;
  - Identify, act on, and advance neighborhood priorities;
  - Identify emerging issues within the neighborhood;

- Build connections between neighborhood stakeholders;
  - Hold neighborhood-wide gatherings and utilize other means of increasing involvement;
  - Encourage and strive for the participation of everyone in the neighborhood regardless of their demographic group; and
  - Give neighbors a united voice.
- Collaborate with the City to establish city-wide goals, policy and budget priorities;
  - Generate new ideas to address current issues in creative ways;
  - Convene and collaborate with partners (public and private) on projects;
  - Leverage funds to increase investment in neighborhood priorities;
  - Encourage everyone to volunteer—to get involved and help accomplish outcomes that improve their quality of life;
  - Support block clubs including co-recruiting efforts and encouraging activities in addition to crime prevention.

## **B. Eligibility**

A neighborhood organization must meet all of the following criteria to be considered eligible for Community Participation Program funding:

1. Represent a geographically-defined neighborhood (in its entirety) within Minneapolis as identified by the most current Minneapolis Communities and Neighborhoods Map as amended and approved by the City Council.
2. Provide for the participation of all segments of the neighborhood, including, but not limited to, homeowners, renters, property owners, business owners, immigrants, non-English speakers, low-income residents and communities of color.
3. Organizations that primarily represent the interests of one segment of the neighborhood or concentrate primarily on one issue are not eligible (such as homeowner associations, rental property owner associations or business associations).
4. Ensure that membership in the organization is open to all residents of the geographically-defined neighborhood. Neighborhood organizations may not impose membership dues or require attendance at a certain number of meetings before voting rights are conferred.
5. Hold regular open meetings and take positive steps to encourage all interested parties to attend and participate.
6. The organization must be incorporated (or identify an appropriate fiscal agent) and have adopted by-laws. The organization must also have a grievance procedure by which its members may have their concerns addressed by the organization, a conflict of interest policy and procedure, and an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) plan and policy.
7. The organization must have a board of directors elected, at least in part, annually by the membership of the organization. Neighborhood residents must comprise a majority of the organization's board. An elected board must be in place for a minimum of one year prior to the beginning of the contract year to be considered eligible for funding.
8. The organization must have the capacity to properly manage and account for grant funds. This includes, but is not limited to, being current on all reporting on any previous Community Participation Program grants.

## II. STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

The Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) and the Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) Department encourage all neighborhood organizations to be thoughtful in their submissions for funding. While we encourage every neighborhood organization to make full use of their funding allocation, organizations should also be realistic about their organizational capacity for managing participation activities and the obligations required of community participation organizations. Organizations should be committed to full participation by all stakeholders, openness and transparency in their community participation process, and accountability to the community.

Eligible neighborhood organizations must make good faith efforts to:

- Conduct activities in an ethical manner.
- Build a sense of neighborhood identity within their communities.
- Conduct activities that promote the inclusion of all age, ethnic and economic groups in the neighborhood's community participation efforts and in the decision-making processes of the organization, including renters. Explore new methods to stimulate participation.
- Identify the issues of significance that confront their residents.
- Bring neighborhood residents and stakeholders together to create and implement a vision for their neighborhood.
- Build bridges among neighbors and diverse communities within the neighborhood.
- Work cooperatively on common issues with other neighborhood organizations.
- Encourage leaders and develop new leadership.
- Engage current members and attract new members.
- Maintain an organizational structure and election process that maximizes opportunities for all residents to become involved. The board should make reasonable attempts to make sure the diversity of the neighborhood is represented.
- Expand the organization's capacities through self-assessment and evaluation.
- Ensure that official records of the organization (including financial reports, approved minutes) are available for review by any member of the organization, consistent with State law. An organization may deviate from this rule only in case of labor and legal disputes.

## III. FUNDING ACTIVITIES

The broad description of funding activities reflects that neighborhood organizations may pursue a wide variety of community participation strategies so long as the contracting neighborhood organization demonstrates that the funding activities are consistent with program purposes and standards and expectations.

### A. Eligible Expenses

Eligible budget line items for Community Participation Program funds include:

- Staff, office space, supplies, neighborhood communications, accounting and related services, travel, training or other educational pursuits in connection with participation, and consultant fees that directly relate to participation activities.
- Community organizing and outreach programs and neighborhood planning activities.

- Other activities consistent with the purposes of the Community Participation Program to identify and act on neighborhood priorities, impact City decisions and priorities, and increase involvement.
- Neighborhood celebrations and events, if the event's purpose is to increase neighborhood awareness and involvement in the organization.
- Food and related expenditures, if they are directly related to engaging residents in community participation activities (expenditures for alcoholic beverages are prohibited). Such expenditures may not exceed 5% of the organization's allocation for community participation funds.
- Donations to other organizations on behalf of the neighborhood organization provided that the purpose of the donation is consistent with the neighborhood organization's approved community participation plan.
- Funds may be used for small equipment purchases. In the event of dissolution or insolvency of a contracting neighborhood organization, the City may reclaim equipment purchased with City funds and to retrieve copies of organizational records required to fulfill all City contracts and to help facilitate a new organization to represent the neighborhood.

**B. Ineligible Expenses**

1. Ineligible budget items include:
  - a. Undefined line items such as "miscellaneous" and "special projects";
  - b. Projects unrelated to community participation;
  - d. Costs of legal action against the City; and
  - e. Penalties and interest charges (including returned check charges).

**C. Staff**

Staff are considered to be employees of, or self-employed persons contracted by, the neighborhood organization. Each organization is responsible for budgeting an adequate amount to cover obligations in its employment agreement(s) (e.g., FICA, worker's compensation, unemployment, withholding, health insurance). Paid staff members or contractors may not be members of the Board of Directors.

**D. Funding Adjustments**

Neighborhood organizations may reallocate funds within their contract budgets following neighborhood organization Board approval, and by submitting revised budgets in writing to staff within the NCR Department administering the contract. NCR staff will review for neighborhood Board approval and consistency with the Community Participation Program Guidelines.

**IV. REQUESTS FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS****A. Content of Submissions (Year 1)**

For the first year of the program, the NCR Department will request written submissions from neighborhood organizations currently serving as contracting neighborhood organizations for the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program or the City of Minneapolis Citizen Participation Program. Neighborhood organizations must submit (1) evidence of the

organization's eligibility, as identified in Section I.B above; (2) a description of the process they will follow to develop a plan for outreach and involvement activities in their neighborhood to support the submission requirements in subsequent years, as identified in Section IV.B. below; and (3) a description of other community participation efforts the organization will conduct during the first year. The submission will include a budget showing how the use of Program funds will support those efforts.

#### **B. Content of Submissions (after Year 1)**

After the first year, the NCR Department will request submissions from contracting neighborhood organizations prior to each three-year funding cycle. Neighborhood organization submissions will be for the full three-year funding cycle, and should review the organization's community participation activities for the past year and describe the organization's plans for the coming years. Submissions will be due by October of the year prior to the three-year funding cycle (extensions of the deadline may be approved by NCEC). Reviews of past year activities and any proposed changes to the submission will be submitted for each of the following two years of the funding cycle. These annual reports will be due by the end of the year. (See Section IV.D. Contracting and Reporting, below.)

The following areas must be addressed in an organization's submission:

1. Evidence of the organization's eligibility, as identified in Section I.B. above.
2. Community participation efforts. Organizations should discuss: (1) the proposed outreach activity in the neighborhood, and (2) the proposed methods to involve residents and other stakeholders in one or more of the three key areas (from Section I.A. Program Purposes, above):
  - Identifying and acting on neighborhood priorities. Organizations should discuss their proposed efforts to (1) identify the priorities of the residents and other stakeholders of their neighborhood and (2) act on those priorities.
  - Impacting City decisions and priorities. Organizations should discuss their proposed efforts to (1) review and comment on City decisions and priorities that affect their neighborhood and (2) involve those residents and other stakeholders most affected by those decisions in the decision-making process.
  - Efforts to increase involvement. Organizations should discuss their proposed efforts to maximize the involvement of residents and other stakeholders in the organization's decision-making processes and other activities.
3. Building organizational capacity. Organizations should discuss their needs to: (1) provide opportunities for the direct involvement of members, (2) build their membership and volunteer base, (3) encourage and develop new leadership, and (4) expand the organization's capacity through self-assessment and other activities.
4. Building neighborhood relationships. Organizations should discuss their proposed outreach, networking, and inclusivity efforts to: (1) build a sense of a whole neighborhood among residents, (2) build bridges among neighbors and diverse communities within the neighborhood, (3) work with other neighborhoods and organizations on issues of common interest, (4) build partnerships with private and public entities, and (5) benefit the neighborhood as a whole.

5. Submissions should include a budget showing how Community Participation Program funds will support the organization's community participation work.
6. If an organization was not funded in the previous year, a report for the previous year's activities will be required.

### **C. Evaluation/Recommendation**

Evaluation of submissions from neighborhood organizations will be conducted by the NCR Department. The City will fund only one organization to provide community participation services for a neighborhood, however, organizations that represent several neighborhoods may apply for funds for all of the neighborhoods that they represent. Submissions will first be evaluated to determine eligibility as in Section I.B above. If more than one submission should be received for any neighborhood, the NCR staff will review and evaluate all submissions.

All submissions from organizations determined to be eligible will be evaluated based on how well they meet Community Participation Program guidelines. The formula discussed in Appendix B: Determining Funding Levels will determine the maximum funding level for each neighborhood.

The Department will make its recommendations for funding to the NCR Director by October prior to each three-year funding cycle. Submissions for the three-year funding cycle will then be transmitted to the NCEC for approval.

An organization not approved for funding may file an appeal with the NCEC. Such an appeal must be received within thirty calendar days of the notice of the decision. The NCEC may recommend to uphold the original decision, change the decision, or request additional staff analysis. Recommendations of the NCEC to deny funding will be sent to City Council for final approval.

Challenges to existing organizations will be considered only in the context of the current request for submissions. This in no way hinders any organization or individual from filing a grievance concerning the contracted neighborhood organization in accordance with the grievance procedure outlined in Section VI. below. Such a grievance may be filed at any time during the year.

If an organization is applying for first-time funding in a neighborhood that does not have an existing neighborhood organization, the NCR Director may recommend for NCEC approval waiving portions of the eligibility criteria in Section I.B. above to allow for funding of the new organization.

### **D. Contracting and Reporting**

Following NCEC approval of submissions, NCR staff will prepare appropriate contracts with each neighborhood organization based on the organization's three-year submission. City standard form contracts consistent with these program guidelines will be used and the scope of services will delineate neighborhood organization responsibilities consistent with the approved program guidelines and their submission for funding. Contracts may be originated, extended and/or amended on an annual basis within each three-year funding cycle (i.e., for the second and third years of the funding cycle).

Prior to extension, NCR staff will confirm that the neighborhood organization has submitted an annual report and a budget for the upcoming year.

Upon approval of contracts, each neighborhood organization will receive an advance on its allocation of up to \$10,000, but not more than 25% of the approved allocation. An organization may request a waiver on advances in extraordinary circumstances. A request must be approved by the neighborhood organization board and submitted in writing to NCR and approved by the NCR Director.

Reimbursement requests for Community Participation Program related expenses may be submitted on an as-needed basis. Reimbursements are requested by submitting a standard Community Organization Report Form.

Annual reports to NCR will include a final accounting of use of Community Participation Program funds (using the standard Community Organization Report Form) and a narrative report of the neighborhood organization's Community Participation Program activities. The annual report should include an account of efforts the organization made to meet the Standards and Expectations outlined in Section II above. The neighborhood organization may additionally choose to submit a report documenting its experiences working with the City of Minneapolis. NCR shall make an annual summary report and assessment of Community Participation Program activities and outcomes to the NCEC, as well as make all neighborhood reports available to NCEC.

The NCEC shall prepare and distribute an annual report of Community Participation Program activities that will be distributed to neighborhood organizations, the City Council, City Departments, and the general public.

## **V. SUPPORT AND MONITORING OF CONTRACTING NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS**

The NCR Department will monitor organizations' compliance with the contract and provide support in the following ways:

- A. Maintain regular communication with neighborhood organizations.
- B. Provide support and assistance to neighborhood organizations in preparing submissions and reports, on an as-needed basis.
- C. Provide technical assistance to contracting neighborhood organizations as necessary to help guide and support their efforts in carrying out the community participation services.
- D. Attend neighborhood meetings to answer questions about the Department, the NCEC or funding programs of the Department on an as-needed basis.
- E. Provide support with appropriate documents, templates and training, on an as-needed basis.
- F. Provide relevant news and information to neighborhood organizations regarding NCR neighborhood program development, and to share information about successful neighborhood organization activities and practices.
- G. Receive Community Organization Report Forms on a regular basis and approve the release of funds within the terms and conditions defined by the contract.
- H. Conduct annual performance reviews to determine:
  - Adherence to the terms and conditions defined by the contract; and

- The organization's assessment of City performance.

## **VI. GRIEVANCES AGAINST CONTRACTED NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS**

A grievance against a neighborhood organization may be filed with the City if the following conditions are met:

- The grievance is within the jurisdiction of the City's community participation contract with the neighborhood organization;
- The grievance is regarding the process used by the neighborhood organization (but not about decisions or outcomes), or the grievance is regarding the management or use of Community Participation Program funds in a manner that is inconsistent with the program's Standards and Expectations (see Section I.B. above);
- The person filing the grievance is a member of, or eligible for membership in, the organization, or is otherwise directly affected by the actions of the organization;
- The person filing the grievance has formally brought the issue to the attention of the neighborhood organization in a timely manner and the grievance has been addressed through the neighborhood organization's grievance procedure, or if the neighborhood organization has failed to respond to the grievance in a timely manner as addressed in the neighborhood organization's bylaws (but not to exceed 120 days); and
- The person filing the grievance agrees to accept the decision of the NCEC as final.

A grievance must be submitted in writing to the NCR Department. Upon receipt of the grievance, NCR will undertake an investigation of the complaint and prepare a report of its findings for the NCR Director, and will report the grievance to the NCEC at its next meeting. The NCR Director will issue a formal response to the grievance within 45 days of its initial receipt. This response will include the findings of the investigation and a proposed resolution to the grievance.

If the person filing the grievance or the affected neighborhood organization is unsatisfied with the Director's findings or resolution, they may appeal the matter to the NCEC within thirty days of the official response. The NCEC will convene a grievance committee to review the grievance. The decision of this grievance committee will be final and will be reported to the full NCEC.

## **VII. UNUSED FUNDS**

Community Participation Program funds that are uncontracted within the previous or current funding cycle, or contracted funds that are unspent and not rolled-forward by neighborhood organizations (see Appendix A below), shall be retained by NCR to fund special requests from a neighborhood organization for distinctive projects that are above and beyond the scope of the organization's community participation contract, but still contribute to the organization's participation efforts. Unused funds also may be rolled-forward into the general pool of dollars to be available for future cycles of funding for the Community Participation Program. The NCEC shall review and approve reallocation, special requests or roll-forward of unused funds to future funding cycles.

## **VIII. ADMINISTRATION**

Administration of the program will be the responsibility of the NCR Department of the City of Minneapolis. The NCR Director will report annually to the NCEC about the activities of the Program. The NCEC shall review changes to the guidelines and make recommendations to the City Council.

**APPENDIX A: CORE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The City Council adopted the Minneapolis Core Principles of Community Engagement on December 7, 2007. The seven Core Principles of Community Engagement are essential to meaningful public participation and engagement between the City and neighborhood organizations and all segments of the entire community. City decision-making can be improved when we involve those most affected by decisions. Through partnering with neighborhood organizations, the City of Minneapolis can better reach, and be informed by, the people who are most affected by city decisions. As partners in building a better city and creating vibrant, safe, welcoming and livable spaces, neighborhood organizations and the City each have unique roles in identifying and acting on neighborhood priorities. The City and neighborhood organizations are better able to develop meaningful strategies—and successfully implement those strategies—when more people are involved. It is incumbent on the City and neighborhood organizations to maximize the involvement of residents and other stakeholders. The social, health and economic needs of neighborhood communities and the City's goals are best met when they inform and support each other.

The Core Principles of Community Engagement are:

1. Right to be involved – 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.
2. Contribution will be thoughtfully considered - Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will be thoughtfully considered.
3. Recognize the needs of all - Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.
4. Seek out involvement - Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Participants design participation - Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Adequate information - Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Known effect of participation - Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

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## APPENDIX B: DETERMINING FUNDING LEVELS

### A. Funding Cycles (Year 1)

For 2011 only, there will be a one-year annual funding cycle for neighborhood organizations. A portion of the funds available for the Community Participation Program will be held back in order for the NCEC to consider adjusting allocations to neighborhoods in mid-2011 upon release of 2010 Census information. The purpose of this adjustment is to increase the allocation for those neighborhoods in which extraordinary changes have occurred since the 2000 Census.

**During the 2011 Program Year, the NCEC will review the allocation formula and guidelines, recommending revisions informed by the availability of up-to-date information.**

### B. Funding Cycles (after Year 1)

For subsequent years, allocations will be based on a three-year funding cycle.

- The allocation formula will be revised for each three-year cycle, using the most complete and current data available.
- Final allocations based on the three-year funding cycle will be approved by the NCR Director.
- After Year I, neighborhood organizations may submit a proposal for funding for the three-year period as described in Section II of the Community Participation Program guidelines.
- Contracts will be initiated or extended on an annual basis within any three-year period. Balances on contracts may be rolled over to subsequent years within a three-year funding cycle, subject to review of performance by NCR staff.
- Unused funds may be accrued past the three-year funding cycles if the contracting neighborhood organization provides a plan for use of accrued funds.

### C. Allocation Formula

Eligible neighborhood organizations will be allocated community participation funds according to the following formula.

#### **Neighborhood Size (30%)**

**Population** – 20% of a neighborhood’s total allocation will be based on the population of the neighborhood. The total number of people residing within all neighborhoods will be divided into the funds allotted to this variable to determine a per capita allocation. The population of each neighborhood will be multiplied by the per capita allocation. **Source: U.S. Census Bureau**

**Housing Units** – 10% of a neighborhood’s total allocation will be based on the number of housing units in the neighborhood. The total number of housing units within all neighborhoods will be divided into the funds allotted to this variable to determine the per unit allocation. This per unit allocation will be multiplied by the number of housing units within a neighborhood. **Source: Minneapolis Assessor’s Office**

#### **Under-represented Groups (40%)**

**Non-Homesteaded Housing Units** – 10% of a neighborhood’s total allocation will be based on the number of non-homesteaded housing units in the neighborhood divided by the total number of housing units in the neighborhood (the “non-homesteaded housing ratio”). The total number of

the non-homesteaded housing ratios within all neighborhoods will be divided into the funds allotted to this variable to determine the per non-homesteaded housing ratio allocation. This per non-homesteaded housing ratio allocation will be multiplied by the non-homesteaded housing ratio for each neighborhood. **Source: Minneapolis Assessor's Office**

**Index of Racial/Cultural Diversity** – 20% of a neighborhood's total allocation will be based on an index of the racial and cultural diversity within the neighborhood. The Shannon Diversity Index is a statistical formula commonly used in population and biology studies to weigh the relative diversity of a community. The source data is the U.S. Census classes for race (White, Black, American Indian, Asian/Native/Hawaiian and Other, Some other race alone, and two or more races). A neighborhood with equal numbers of individuals from each class would have a higher score than a neighborhood with a large number of individuals from a single class. **Source: U.S. Census Bureau**

**English as a Second Language (ESL) Students** – 10% of a neighborhood's total allocation will be based on the number of Minneapolis Public School students in the neighborhood for whom a language other than English is the primary language spoken in their home. The total number of ESL students within all neighborhoods will be divided into the funds allotted to this variable to determine the per ESL student allocation. This per unit allocation will be multiplied by the number of ESL students that live within a neighborhood. **Source: Minneapolis Public Schools**

**ESL data will be replaced by the "non-English language spoken at home" data from the American Community Survey once that data becomes available.**

#### **Income (10%)**

**Low-Income Residents** – 10% of a neighborhood's total allocation will be based on the number of persons in a neighborhood with family incomes less than two-times the poverty rate divided by the population of the neighborhood (the "income ratio"). The total of the income ratios for all neighborhoods will be divided into the funds allocated to this variable to determine the per income ratio allocation. This per income ratio allocation will be multiplied by the income ratio for each neighborhood. **Source: U.S. Census Bureau**

#### **Neighborhood Livability (20%)**

**Crime Statistics** – 10% of a neighborhood's total allocation will be based on the average number of Part 1 crimes that were committed in the neighborhood over the most current three-year period. These crimes include homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft and arson. The total average number of these Part 1 crimes committed within all neighborhoods will be divided into the funds allotted to this variable to determine the per crime allocation. This per crime allocation will be multiplied by the average number of these crimes committed within a neighborhood over the most current three-year period. **Source: Minneapolis Police Department**

**Foreclosures** – 10% of a neighborhood's total allocation will be based on the average number of foreclosed properties in the neighborhood over the most current three-year period divided by the total number of structures in that neighborhood (the "foreclosure ratio"). The total of the foreclosure ratios within all neighborhoods will be divided into the funds allotted to this variable to determine the per foreclosure ratio allocation. This per foreclosure ratio allocation will be multiplied by the foreclosure ratio for each neighborhood. **Source: City of Minneapolis Healthy Housing Indicators**

**APPENDIX C: NEIGHBORHOOD MAP**