Framework for the Future

Options for the focus, funding and governance of
NRP Program and Action Plan activities after 2009

Final Report of the NRP Work Group
to the City Council Committee of the Whole
July 24, 2008

Report of the **NRP Work Group**:
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The Neighborhood Revitalization Program was created in 1990 as a twenty-year program to revitalize all of the City's neighborhoods. While the program itself will not end in 2009, the authorization from the State Legislature for the funding that it provides for the implementation of neighborhood plans will expire in December 2009. To prepare for the future of the program, the City Council, on November 2, 2007, created an NRP Work Group to establish a City position on:

1. a proposed administrative structure to support community engagement activities;
2. expectations of services community or neighborhood organizations would provide through citizen participation contracts; and
3. extending or not a formal program of using discretionary funds for community-initiated projects.

The NRP Work Group began its work by identifying each member's interests related to the continuation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and outlining a program to address those interests. These interests (included as Attachment A to this report) informed the draft framework presented to the City Council's Committee of the Whole on December 20, 2007. The draft "Framework for the Future" outlined a structure for the continuation of the NRP beyond 2009 and its connection to the broader community participation work of the City. In many ways, this Framework is the culmination of the original vision of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, then titled the Twenty-Year Revitalization Plan, which called for neighborhood planning to be the basis for enhanced governmental cooperation and coordination for the planning and delivery of public services.

The key components of the draft Framework included recommendations to preserve neighborhood groups' autonomy, provide additional resources to support the administrative needs of neighborhood groups, provide for discretionary funding for neighborhood groups, restructure the City's organizational structure to create a greater focus on community participation, create more resident oversight of the City's community participation efforts, and provide for a greater alignment of neighborhoods' visions and City goals and processes.

The Committee of the Whole received the draft Framework and released it for public comment. Those comments were received and reported back to the Committee of the Whole on April 3, 2008. (The full text of the comments received is available on the City's Web site at http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/CETrack3_home.asp.)

The NRP Work Group reconvened on April 11, 2008, to begin its work to refine and revise the draft Framework. It has met eighteen times over three months to add details to the original draft proposal and to consider the input submitted by neighborhood organizations and residents. (A summary of the responses and how they have affected this report is included as Attachment B to this report.)

The framework that follows represents the culmination of the discussions of the NRP Work Group on the future focus, funding and governance of the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

CONTINUING THE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM:
A Commitment to Partnership

The City and its neighborhood organizations have long partnered to make the City a better place to live, work, learn and play. Each has a unique role to play in the improvement of our City.

The Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program has been, and will continue to be, a key component of this partnership.

The Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program is an innovative effort to bring residents into the priority-setting process of their city. Its mission is to revitalize Minneapolis neighborhoods through a cooperative and coordinated service planning and delivery process involving neighborhood residents, public agencies and private interests. It is based on the belief that the empowerment of residents and the mobilization of untapped resources, energy and creativity can make our collective desire for a better future a reality.

In its next phase, the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program will continue to be an investment program with neighborhood organizing, planning, priority-setting, and implementation at its core. Residents and other neighborhood stakeholders will create neighborhood plans that describe the neighborhood they want in the future, goals and objectives that they will need to achieve that vision, and specific strategies and actions that will help accomplish their objectives, goals and vision. Funding will be provided to each neighborhood to help implement their approved plans.

Neighborhoods also will have access to a new grant fund designed to augment their work on creating innovative approaches to the City's goals and priorities. The fund will encourage collaborations between neighborhood organizations and between neighborhood organizations and other community-based organizations.

A major focus of the program will be an enhanced integration of neighborhood-level work with the work of the City. A resident-controlled advisory board, staffed by a new department dedicated to the full breadth of this work, will provide overall direction to the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and advise the Mayor, City Council and City departments on community issues and needs related to community participation and the City's community participation system.

To support this work at the neighborhood level, the City will provide officially designated neighborhood organizations with a base level of administrative support and access to the new Neighborhood Investment and Community Innovation Funds.

Administrative Funding to Neighborhood Organizations

Resident involvement is essential to building a great city. The capacity to organize at the neighborhood level is a basic city service for which the City will provide sufficient funding to maintain or increase the capacity of neighborhood organizations.

Funding for this administrative support may be provided through the City's annual budget or funds generated through the redevelopment tax increment financing district (see page 5), or a combination of these sources. A formula (including such variables as population, housing and income) will be used to allocate these administrative funds to officially designated neighborhood organizations. Neighborhood organizations will remain autonomous organizations.

Administrative Support Allocations will be provided to those neighborhood organizations that meet certain eligibility criteria (such as those criteria recommended by the 2007 Community Engagement Task Force). The sole purpose of these allocations will be to provide base support to those qualifying organizations to provide basic outreach, communication and coordination support for the neighborhood. The City will provide administrative support allocations to only one organization per neighborhood. (An organization may represent more than one neighborhood.) This will be the officially designated neighborhood organization for community participation in that neighborhood. These allocations will replace the current neighborhood funding provided through the City's Citizen Participation Program.

While there may be inherent advantages to neighborhood organizations sharing staff, offices or other administrative costs, there will be no requirement for neighborhood organizations to do so. The funding formula, however, should be designed to ensure that it does not penalize neighborhood organizations wishing to collaborate.

Receipt of an administrative support allocation will qualify a neighborhood organization to participate in other neighborhood-based initiatives such as neighborhood planning for allocation of Neighborhood Investment Fund dollars and competing for grants through the Community Innovation Fund.

The Neighborhood Investment Fund:
Discretionary Funding for Neighborhood-Identified Priorities

A Neighborhood Investment Fund will be established to provide dedicated funds to neighborhood organizations that have qualified for administrative support funding from the City. The allocation of investment funds will be directed by neighborhoods to help address neighborhood-identified priorities.

- Funds will be available to all neighborhoods based on an allocation formula similar to the formula used by the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (which reflects neighborhood need through a combination of variables measuring neighborhood size, condition and poverty). The Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board will review the current formula and make adjustments as necessary.

- As with the current NRP process, the allocation of investment funds will be based on neighborhood plans prepared by neighborhood organizations. The City will partner with neighborhood organizations to prepare and implement these plans, including making resources, information and technical assistance available. These plans should reflect not only what the neighborhood will do to realize its vision, but also what activities the City can and should do to help make that vision a reality. Other jurisdictions (including the County, Parks and Schools) should be invited to participate fully in these discussions.

- The Advisory Board will develop guidelines for neighborhood plans to allow for updating the plans on a regular basis, provide for flexibility in implementation, and incorporate periodic review of the neighborhoods and the City activities to implement the plans.

- Organizations will be required to demonstrate inclusion of all populations and interests within the neighborhood(s) they represent. Neighborhood plans will be approved by the neighborhood, the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board, the City Council and the Mayor. Implementation of certain activities will require the participation and approval of other jurisdictions for those activities that are within their purview.

- The policies and procedures governing the neighborhood planning and implementation process will be similar to the current Neighborhood Revitalization Program process. Specifically, the program will incorporate current NRP policies and procedures. These would include current policies governing the use of funds (with the exclusion of those mandating certain types of allocations), financial policies and procedures (including the provision of advances), contracting procedures, plan modification processes, plan development requirements, monitoring systems (e.g., PlanNet NRP); and support systems (e.g., auditing and insurance). These policies and procedures will need to be revised to reflect the new organizational structure discussed below and will be continually reviewed to find ways to improve and streamline the program.

- The investment funds will be used for neighborhood priorities. There will be no mandates or reservations for specific uses by the City Council or the Advisory Board.

<u>The Community Innovation Fund:</u>
Grant Funding to Encourage Innovations for City-Identified Priorities

A Community Innovation Fund will be established as a companion fund to the Neighborhood Investment Fund. The innovation fund will provide grants to officially designated neighborhood organizations to seek out innovative and locally-relevant approaches to City-identified goals or problems.

- The City Council and Mayor will set priorities for this fund on a biannual basis. The Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board will then work with the Council and Mayor to ensure that the design of grants is accessible and relevant to localized programming.

- Guidelines for these grants should place a high priority on proposals that reflect collaboration between two or more neighborhood organizations or between neighborhood organizations and other community-based organizations.
- The Advisory Board will review proposals and recommend grant awards to the City Council and Mayor.

Sources of Funding:
Administrative Support Allocations, Neighborhood Investment Fund and Community Innovation Fund

The State Legislature has authorized the creation of a new redevelopment tax increment financing district for (1) Target Center debt reduction and (2) neighborhood revitalization purposes (Laws of Minnesota 2008, Chapter 366, Article 5, Section 37). This authorization provides the City with a mechanism for long-term funding of neighborhood revitalization activities. The City will take the actions necessary to establish such a district.

A portion of the funds captured through this district will be dedicated to the Neighborhood Investment and Community Innovation funds. A substantial majority of these funds (approximately 90%) will be dedicated to the Neighborhood Investment Fund; a smaller portion (approximately 10%) will be used to provide funding for the Community Innovation Fund. The exact percentages will be subject to the actual amounts available and the final allocation decisions made by the City Council and the Mayor.

Some of the funds captured through the district also may be used to augment funds provided through the City's budget for the Administrative Support Allocations.

Final decisions on the allocation of funds captured through a redevelopment tax increment financing district will be made when the analysis of the funds generated through such a district is complete. This analysis will be presented to the City Council and Mayor in early August 2008; decisions on the allocation of funds will be made through the normal City Council process.

Organizational Structure

The NRP Work Group is proposing an organizational structure that not only provides for the management and oversight of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, but also the City's other community participation activities. This will include the creation of a new resident-controlled Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board, and a new Neighborhood and Community Relations Department under the City Coordinator.

Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board

A newly-created Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board will comprise nine representatives directly elected by neighborhood organizations, seven representatives appointed by the City Council, and two representatives appointed by the Mayor.

The Advisory Board will:

- provide overall direction to the next phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and be primarily responsible for the review and approval of neighborhood plans;
- oversee distribution and use of administrative funds and implementation of a community participation program;
- oversee distribution and use of the Neighborhood Investment Fund;
- recommend awards of grants through the Community Innovation Fund;
- advise the City Council and the Mayor on development or improvement of community participation policies, delivery of services and decision-making processes to systematize community input into City processes;
- provide feedback to City departments as they relate to community participation and the City's adopted Community Engagement Principles and make recommendations for improvements to City departments, the City Council and the Mayor as appropriate; and
- advise the Mayor, City Council and City departments on community issues and needs related to community participation and the City's community participation system.

A more complete description of the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board is included as Attachment C to this report.

In addition to putting all of the process, procedures and systems in place for the next phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, a key task of the new board will be to define the relationship between, and expectations of, the City and neighborhood organizations. The NRP Work Group, in the course of its deliberations, has crafted a starting point for this work. This is included as Attachment D to this report.

Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

A new Neighborhood and Community Relations Department will be created within the City Coordinator's office. The department will focus on:

- nurturing neighborhood vitality through neighborhood-based priority setting, planning and implementation; providing technical support to neighborhood organizations (networking, web, grant-making); and providing assistance to neighborhood organizations with navigating through City processes;
- addressing and removing barriers to full civic participation and meaningful engagement;
- recommending and implementing improvements to the City's community participation processes including, in cooperation with community crime prevention, more collaboration and improved communication between neighborhood organizations and block clubs; and

- recommending and implementing ways in which the City should engage the community and how the community can participate in the City's decision-making processes.

A full description of the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department is included as Attachment E to this report.

The Director of the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department will be at the level of an assistant city coordinator (similar to the directors of the Finance, Human Resources and Regulatory Services departments). The Director will be hired by the City Coordinator in conjunction with a search and screening subcommittee of the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board. The hiring process to be followed is included as Attachment F to this report. An organizational chart showing the new department within the City's structure is included as Attachment G to this report.

Supervision of the Director will be provided by the City Coordinator. The annual review of the Director will be a collaborative process between the City Coordinator and the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board leadership. Similarly, the leadership of the Advisory Board will be consulted should the need arise for the dismissal of the Director.

Transition Issues

This report presents a framework for the future of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program as well as changes to the City's organizational structure and priorities. It does not purport to address every issue or to answer every question necessary to fully implement all of the proposals contained within this report. Rather, there will be much work yet to do should the City Council and Mayor adopt this framework.

This framework represents a consolidation of several existing functions and the organizations performing those functions. Every effort must be made to inform and consult with all those who are directly affected by the actions to be taken. This includes, at a minimum, City staff, NRP staff, neighborhood organizations and the NRP Policy Board.

To this end, the City Coordinator will create a transition team to work on the details required to begin implementation of this framework. The team will include those staff necessary to fully inform this process.

NRP Work Group
Themes and Shared Interests

As stated above, the NRP Work Group began its discussions by identifying each member's interests related to the continuation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. These interests focused on five broad themes. These themes and the Work Groups' shared interests are presented below.

A. Support the Administrative Needs of Neighborhood Organizations and Help to Build the Capacity of Neighborhood Organizations

Shared Interests:

1. Neighborhood groups will remain autonomous organizations.
2. Ongoing financial support is necessary to maintain capacity.
3. We need to help build the capacity and leadership development of neighborhood groups through training and educational opportunities.
4. We need to encourage and support the involvement of diverse populations in neighborhood organizations.
5. Create, support and maximize opportunities for the empowerment of residents. (More people will be involved if they feel they have some control.)
6. The City should enhance its professional support to neighborhoods from City staff (i.e., area planners, Public Works/Traffic, Police, Inspections, etc.). Teams of City staff should be explored.
7. Alternative methods and models for involvement should be encouraged and taught.

B. Strengthen the Relationship between City and Neighborhood Activities

- Improve the Integration of City and Neighborhood Activities
- Create a Structure within the City to Support Neighborhoods

Shared Interests:

1. Increase efforts to integrate neighborhood priorities and plans into City plans, goals, programs, projects, and activities. Priorities or programs supported by many neighborhoods should be considered for adoption as citywide goals, guidelines, principles, programs or activities.
2. Increase efforts to integrate City plans, goals, programs, projects, and activities that impact neighborhoods into the priorities and plans of neighborhoods.
3. Expand efforts to inform neighborhoods and residents about current City goals, processes, policies and services.
4. Increase efforts to expand collaboration and coordination between neighborhoods and between neighborhoods and local government jurisdictions, departments of the City, non-profits, and community-based organizations.
5. Improve responsiveness of City to neighborhood plans, projects, programs and activities.
6. Strengthen the direct relationship between the City and neighborhoods.
7. Create a structure within the City to support neighborhoods.
8. Ensure that the services currently performed by NRP staff (e.g., plan development support, contract development and management, etc.) continue to be performed in a cost effective and efficient manner

- Improve City Service Delivery

Shared Interests:

1. Find new ways of doing business and encouraging creativity and innovation (e.g., demonstration projects and employee suggestions for improvement).
2. Increase professional support to neighborhoods from the City (i.e., area planners, Public Works/Traffic, Police, Inspections, etc) and consider creating staff teams to support and collaborate with neighborhoods (also noted in A above).
3. Establish systemic and consistent expectations of City employees.
4. Provide training to City staff about neighborhoods, their history and organizations. This training should also include reviews of approved neighborhood action plans.
5. Work with NRP and neighborhoods to include a “City Department” orientation as part of a training curriculum.

C. Create a Neighborhood Investment Fund

Shared Interests:

1. There should be some funding for neighborhood activities (discretionary funding) over which neighborhoods have control.
2. Funding should be flexible to allow for shared priorities (money for neighborhood priorities and City priorities).
3. Access to resources needs to be universal (available to all neighborhoods), but funding does not need to be equally divided; allocations should be need-based and consider other sources that are available.
4. Ensure accountability (while recognizing neighborhood organizations’ independence) by monitoring financial and contractual activities generated by program funding.
5. There should be flexibility in the use of funds to address unforeseen needs in the future and to reflect the specific needs of each neighborhood.

D. Identify and Commit Sources of Funding

Shared Interests:

1. The method and sources of funding must be consistent with the City’s adopted budget principles.
2. Every effort should be made to identify and commit funding source(s) that are stable, predictable and available for a significant period of time.
3. Every effort will be made to develop a legislative agenda that addresses neighborhood needs, stabilizes future funding for neighborhood initiatives, and can be supported by the City, NRP and the neighborhoods

E. Update the NRP Governance Structure

Shared Interests:

1. Modify the NRP governance structure so that it recognizes financial contributions as a basis for membership on the governing board.

Summary of the public's comments to the draft Framework for the Future

A draft Framework for the Future report was presented by the NRP Work Group to the City Council's Committee of the Whole on December 20, 2007. In early 2008, the public was invited to comment on this draft report; a summary of the input was presented to the Committee of the Whole on April 3, 2008. The NRP Work Group then reconvened to consider this input and to revise and refine the Framework.

Below is a summary of the public input along with a brief description of the NRP Work Group's response to that input.

Please note: This is not intended to outline the full proposal from the NRP Work Group, nor is it intended to be a complete listing of all of the input received. Rather, this summary is intended to share ways in which the public's input was a key component of shaping the completed Work Group proposal.

Administrative Funding

- **Important component of a program**

  Response: The NRP Work Group agrees that funding the administrative activities of neighborhood organizations is essential. The Framework states that the work of neighborhood organizations is a basic city service. (See page 3 of the report.)

- **Proposed $2 million is insufficient**

  Response: The final Framework states that the City will provide sufficient funding to maintain or increase the capacity of neighborhood organizations. (See page 3 of the report.) Additional work is required to establish the amount and source of this funding. Neighborhood organizations will be able to augment the base allocation through their allocation of Investment funds based on neighborhood-identified priorities.

- **Should use allocation formula similar to current NRP formula**

  Response: The revised Framework states that a formula (including such variables as population, housing and income) will be used to allocate administrative funds to eligible neighborhood organizations. (See page 3 of the report.)

Discretionary Dollars

- **Neighborhood Investment Fund, without a secured source, is insufficient**

  Response: As the Framework states, the State Legislature has authorized the creation of a new redevelopment tax increment financing district specifically for the purposes of (1) Target Center debt reduction and (2) neighborhood revitalization purposes (Laws of Minnesota 2008, Chapter 366, Article 5, Section 37). This authorization provides the City with a mechanism for providing long-term funding of neighborhood revitalization activities. The City will take the actions necessary to establish such a district. (See page 5 of the report.) Financial projections for the funds that could be generated from such a district are not yet available.

- **"Weighted formula" should reflect neighborhood population and need**

  Response: The revised Framework for the Future states that "funds will be available to all neighborhoods based on an allocation formula similar to the formula used by the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (which reflects neighborhood need through a combination of variables measuring neighborhood size, condition and poverty). The Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board will review the current formula and make adjustments as necessary." (See page 3 of the report.)

- **Competitive funding**
  - **The process itself will skew funding**
  - **Neighborhoods reactive not proactive**
  - **Forces negative competition**

  Response: The NRP Work Group had a number of conversations around these issues acknowledging that many of the responses from the public expressed concern about a competitive funding structure. The revised Framework proposes that the vast majority of the discretionary funds (approximately 90%) be distributed to neighborhood organizations for neighborhood-identified priorities; the remaining funds (approximately 10%) will be allocated to the Community Innovation Fund to provide grants to neighborhood organizations to seek out innovative and locally-relevant approaches to City-identified goals or problems. (See page 5 of the report.)

  To allow for neighborhood organizations to be more proactive in their response to the priorities set for the Community Innovation Fund, the NRP Work Group is proposing that the City Council and Mayor set these priorities for this fund on a biannual basis. The Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board will then work with the Council and Mayor to ensure that the design of grants is accessible and relevant to localized programming. (See page 4 of the report.)

Funding in general

- **"Regular, committed funding" more than annual basis**
  - **Not part of City's political budgeting process**
  - **Not adequate time for planning**

  Response: Funding through the City's budget process constitutes an annual commitment. Funding administrative allocations through the redevelopment tax increment finance districts offers a longer timeframe for commitment of administrative dollars. It also reduces the pool of dollars available for the investment and innovation funds. Recognizing these trade-offs, the allocations could be funded through both sources to mitigate some of the impacts of annual budgeting processes.

- **Funding should be flexible**
  - **Neighborhood-identified priorities**
  - **No mandates**

  Response: The Neighborhood Investment Fund is solely for neighborhood funding of neighborhood-identified priorities. The Framework states that this funding should not be subject to program mandates or reserved for specific uses. (See page 4 of the report.)

- **Neighborhoods should not have to compete with basic services such as police, fire, public works, etc**

  Response: The authorization from the State Legislature to create a redevelopment tax increment financing district presents a unique opportunity to (1) identify a dedicated funding source for the continuation of the NRP, and (2) reduce the debt related to Target Center. This debt reduction has the potential to offer relief to those funds that do fund the police, fire and public works departments. (See page 5 of the report.)

Other viewpoints on funding

- **Only neighborhood organizations should be eligible for funding (administrative and discretionary)**

  Response: The revised Framework reserves eligibility for the Administrative Support Allocations, Neighborhood Investment Fund and Community Innovation Fund to officially designated neighborhood organizations. (See pages 3 - 5 of the report.)

- **Administrative dollars without discretionary funding has limited use**

  Response: The revised Framework provides for resources for both administrative support and discretionary funding. (See page 5 of the report.)

- **Funding for NRP is not a good use of public funds**

  Response: The NRP Work Group was unanimous in its belief that the NRP has been a valuable tool in maintaining and improving the vitality of the City.

Governance

- **Independent from City Council**

  Response: There have been many discussions about maintaining the current level of independence of the NRP Policy Board or bringing the governance of the program into the City governance structure. Indeed, the NRP Work Group was not unanimous on this point. However, the majority of the Work Group agreed that it was preferable to make the program fully part of the City as the way to support and strengthen the integration of City and neighborhood priorities and activities.

- **Composition**
  - **Neighborhood-elected representatives that constitute a majority**
  - **Other appointments limited or prohibited**

  Response: The NRP Work Group believes that the membership that it is proposing for the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board strikes the right balance between those representatives elected directly by neighborhood organizations (9) and those appointed by the City Council (7) and the Mayor (2). Further, all members of the Advisory Board, whether elected or appointed, must be residents. (See page 5 of the report and Attachment C.)

- **Direct oversight and enforcement responsibilities**
  - **Director & staff**
  - **Budget**
  - **Long-term strategic planning**

  Response: The Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board will play a direct role in the selection of the director of the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department. (See page 7 of the report and Attachment F.) The Advisory Board's involvement in the budget and business plan for the department is an issue to be discussed later once the Board and the director are in place.

Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

- **Not cost effective**
  - **33% of total administrative costs**

  Response: The budget and source of funding for the new department will be determined through the normal budget process. However, the responsibilities of the new department go far beyond the management of the funds distributed to neighborhood organizations. (See page 6 of the report and Attachment E.) Therefore, it is not accurate to view the department's budget solely as a percentage of the funds provided to neighborhood organizations.

- **Reporting to City Coordinator removes a valuable buffer from political environment**

  Response: As noted above, there were many discussions about maintaining the current level of independence of the NRP and creating a new structure within the City to focus on a greater integration of City and neighborhood activities. A majority of the Work Group agreed that it was preferable to make the program fully part of the City as the way to support and strengthen the integration of City and neighborhood activities.

- **Unnecessary addition of bureaucracy**

  Response: The creation of a new department is not creating a new level of bureaucracy; rather it is combining similar and complementary functions into a single department created to focus on issues of community participation. These functions are currently performed by several City departments and the NRP office. To be successful, the City will need to ensure that its processes adequately allow for innovation and creativity.

Other viewpoints on new department

- **Support improvements to the City's administrative structure**
  - **opportunity for neighborhoods to interact with the City**
  - **better support to community participation efforts**
  - **streamline common services**

  Response: It is for these very reasons that the NRP Work Group is proposing the creation of a new Neighborhood and Community Relations Department. (See page 6 of the report.)

Neighborhood organizations

- **Effectiveness achieved through their independence**

  Response: The Framework is not proposing any changes that would affect the independence of neighborhood organizations; they would remain autonomous organizations governed by their own bylaws and locally-elected board of directors. (See page 3 of the report.)

- **Should not be penalized or rewarded for partnering or consolidating**

  Response: The revised Framework states that there will be no requirements for neighborhood organizations to consolidate. It also states that the funding formula used to provide administrative support allocations should be designed to ensure that there are no penalties for neighborhood organizations wishing to collaborate. (See page 3 of the report.)

Other viewpoints

- **Should be more accountable for work and representation**

  Response: The revised Framework states that neighborhood organizations will be required to demonstrate inclusion of all populations and interests with the neighborhood(s) they represent. (See page 4 of the report.) It will be a key task of the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department and the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board to develop policies and procedures related to these issues.

City Service Delivery

- **Variety of responses; a few examples:**
  - **Include neighborhood relations in City staff members' job descriptions**
  - **Ensure City staff is cross-departmentally informed**
  - **Evaluate – projects & staff**
  - **Training to neighborhood employees or volunteers on City functions**

Response: The NRP Work Group did not make recommendations on specific initiatives to improve the City's work in the community; rather this work is left to the Neighborhood and Community Relations department and the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board. The Work Group did develop, as a starting point for this work, a draft of City and neighborhood organizations roles and responsibilities; this draft does include these suggestions. (See page 6 of the report and Attachment D.)

Comments on the draft Framework

- **Too many open issues**
  - **percent of competitive funds within discretionary funds**
  - **timeline of funding commitment**
  - **Allocation formulas**
  - **Organizations eligible**

  Response: The draft Framework presented in December 2007 did leave many issues unaddressed. The NRP Work Group attempted to address many of those issues in its final report. Many of the details necessary to fully implement this framework are left to be resolved by the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board.

- **Proposes a new program, not continuing NRP**

  Response: The revised Framework leaves intact the major components of the NRP. The Neighborhood Investment Fund represents a dedicated source of funding for neighborhoods to allocate based on neighborhood-identified priorities. The major changes proposed in the Framework relate not to the allocation of those funds, but to the governance of the program and to the City's organizational structure to support that neighborhood-level work.

Other viewpoints

- **Did not include community in development**

  Response: The final report of the NRP Work Group is based, to a large degree, on the input it received from the public in response to its initial draft report.

Comments about NRP

- **Nationally/Internationally recognized**
- **Promotes collaboration**
- **Prioritizes neighborhood needs**
- **Engages and empowers residents**

  Response: The NRP has been an important tool in our collective work to maintain and improve the vitality of our City. It has been effective because of many of the reasons cited above. The revised Framework attempts to maintain and build upon these strengths.

Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board

Purpose:

- Provide overall direction to the next phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and be primarily responsible for the review and approval of neighborhood plans;
- Oversee distribution and use of administrative funds and implementation of a community participation program;
- Oversee distribution and use of the Neighborhood Investment Fund;
- Recommend awards of grants through the Community Innovation Fund;
- Advise the City Council and Mayor on development or improvement of community participation policies, delivery of services and decision-making processes to systematize community input into City processes;
- Provide feedback to City Departments as they relate to community participation and the City's adopted Community Engagement Principles and make recommendations for improvements to City Departments, the City Council and the Mayor as appropriate; and
- Advise the Mayor, City Council and City Departments on community issues and needs related to community participation and the City's community participation system

No. of Members: 18

Term Length: 24 months (staggered) **Term Limits**: 3 two-year terms

Compensation: None (re-imbursement for parking during meetings, childcare may be provided)

Public Hearings on Appointments: Yes **Residency Requirement**: Yes

Selection Procedure:

- 9 neighborhood organization representatives selected through neighborhood-defined process
- 9 resident appointments by elected officials [City Council (7), Mayor (2)]
  - Solicit recommendations for nominations from Hennepin County, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Minneapolis School Board
  - Appointments should reflect the diverse interests and perspectives of the Minneapolis community. The recruitment process should be designed to ensure diversity of representation and ideas and take into consideration the City's commitment to civil rights, affirmative action and geographic distribution wherever possible.
- Chair to be selected annually by 18 members
- Annual Selection of Members:
  - *Odd years:* 1 Mayoral and 3 City Council appointments, 5 selected by neighborhood organizations
  - *Even years:* 1 Mayoral and 4 City Council appointments, 4 selected by neighborhood organizations

Meeting Schedule: Monthly two-hour meeting; may meet more frequently as needed

Attendance Requirements: Three unexcused absences from regular meetings during a calendar year may result in termination of membership.

Department: Neighborhood and Community Relations

CITY and NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP
Roles and Responsibilities

A key task of the new Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board is to oversee implementation of—and make recommendations to improve—the City's community participation policies and procedures. Fundamental to this work is defining the relationship between the City and neighborhood organizations.

The purpose of this document is to serve as guidance for the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department and the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board. This document outlines an initial set of roles and responsibilities for both the City and neighborhood organizations that can serve as a starting point for the Advisory Board's discussions with neighborhood organizations and City staff to shape a final definition of their respective roles and responsibilities.

The City and its neighborhood organizations have long partnered to make the City a better place to live, work, learn and play. Each has a unique role to play in the improvement of our City.

As with all partnerships, there are always opportunities to improve our cooperation and collaborations. The City and neighborhood organizations will strive to strengthen our partnership efforts to be a catalyst for vigorous community participation in revitalization efforts.

This partnership is the basis for the administrative support allocations that the City will provide to neighborhood organizations. This document outlines the expectations of the City and neighborhood organizations within this partnership.

IMPACTING 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.

To this end:

Neighborhood Organizations will:

- Facilitate communication and connections amongst neighbors by:
  - Providing a forum to gather input from residents and advancing neighborhood viewpoints on existing and proposed programs, policies, plans, projects and activities
  - Informing and educating residents on pending issues and opportunities that affect them and their neighborhood
- Facilitate communication and connections between the City and residents by being a contact point between the City and residents
- Through the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board, collaborate with the City to establish city-wide goals and policy and budget priorities
- Generate new ideas to address current issues in creative ways
- Involve all demographic groups within the neighborhood in the work of the neighborhood organization

The City will:

- Facilitate communication and connections with neighborhood organizations by:
  - Sharing information needed and requested by neighborhoods in a timely and complete manner and seeking input from neighborhood organizations about existing and proposed programs, policies, plans, projects and activities
  - Listening to neighborhood organization input and being open to other perspectives
  - Providing feedback to those who submit input on how their input was used
- Dedicate City staff to assist neighborhood organizations with navigating City processes
- Through the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board, collaborate with neighborhood organizations to establish city-wide goals and policy and budget priorities
- When possible, hold community meetings on key issues at relevant locations and at times convenient for affected residents

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.

To this end:

Neighborhood Organizations will:

- Facilitate communication and connections amongst neighbors by:
  - Providing a forum for neighborhood residents to identify and act on neighborhood priorities
  - Informing and educating residents on pending issues and opportunities that affect them and their neighborhood
  - Gathering input from residents and advancing neighborhood viewpoints on current and emerging issues and opportunities
- Involve all demographic groups within the neighborhood in the work of the neighborhood organization
- Facilitate communication and connections between the City and residents by being a contact point between the City and residents
- Identify emerging issues within the neighborhood
- Through the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board, collaborate with the City to establish city-wide goals and 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

The City will:

- Facilitate communication and connections with neighborhood organizations by:
  - Sharing information with neighborhood organizations about existing and proposed programs, policies, plans, projects and activities
  - Providing information needed and requested by neighborhoods in a timely and complete manner
  - Responding to neighborhood-identified priorities and being open to other perspectives
- Dedicate City staff to assist neighborhood organizations with navigating City processes
- Develop multi-disciplinary teams of departmental representatives who provide information to neighborhood organizations, work with neighborhoods to respond to neighborhood-identified priorities, serve as advocates for neighborhood organizations within the City, and work to implement the strategies in approved neighborhood plans
- Support and inform neighborhood goal-setting processes
- Use neighborhood plans and priorities to shape City plans and policies
- Through the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board, collaborate with neighborhood organizations to establish city-wide goals and policy and budget priorities
- Provide funding, to the extent possible, for the implementation of neighborhood plans

INCREASING INVOLVEMENT

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.

To this end:

Neighborhood Organizations will:

- Facilitate communication and connections amongst neighbors by:
  - Providing a forum for neighborhood residents to identify and act on neighborhood priorities
  - Informing and educating residents on pending issues and opportunities that affect them and their neighborhood
  - Gathering input from residents and advancing neighborhood viewpoints
  - Holding community-wide gatherings and utilizing other means of increasing involvement
- Represent, and strive for the participation of, all demographic groups within the neighborhood
- Encourage residents to volunteer—to get involved and help accomplish outcomes that improve their quality of life
- Mobilize residents for action on behalf of the neighborhood
- Support block clubs including co-recruiting efforts and encouraging activities in addition to crime prevention

The City will:

- Include an element relating to community participation and neighborhood partnerships in departmental business plans
- Analyze operations and identify opportunities for involvement of residents and neighborhood organizations in the early stages of program development decisions
- Analyze operations and determine those areas in which neighborhood organizations might be better able to provide a service (such as graffiti removal or community inspections)
- Communicate how neighborhoods and individuals can get involved City decision-making processes
- Provide resources and training to City staff to continue improving community engagement work and to understand neighborhood processes
- Provide training and support to neighborhood organizations on City processes; City department responsibilities, activities, processes and access channels; and developing organizational capacity for involving people
- Provide communication on information that might be of interest to neighborhood organizations
- When possible, hold community meetings on key issues at relevant locations and at times convenient for affected residents

NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS

The Neighborhood and Community Relations Department will be housed in the broader department of the City Coordinator and both serve residents directly and support all other City departments with enterprise guidance in the realm of strong neighborhood and community relationships. The department will be charged with strengthening our City's quality of life through vigorous community participation, resident involvement in neighborhood and community organizations, and supporting clearly defined links between the City, City services and neighborhood and community organizations.

The department will be assisted in achieving its mission with the help of the Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board, a group of eighteen residents appointed to oversee the City's relationship with neighborhoods, community organizations and the crucial link between City services and its residents.

The following descriptions outline the broad functional outcomes for the department. The functions are not mutually exclusive and the aspirations will be achieved through the creative definition and use of both personnel and financial resources.

Neighborhood Vitality

The City's "connected communities" goal prescribes that there be "thriving neighborhoods" in every corner of Minneapolis. Neighborhood vitality has been both a constant aspiration and a trademark of our identity throughout the City's history. So, too, has the City's partnership with neighborhood groups in defining the opportunities and challenges that face us in achieving, maintaining and enhancing truly livable neighborhoods.

Neighborhood groups exist as independent organizations. Each has their own priorities and processes. The City contracts with these organizations to provide a forum for participation of residents and other stakeholders. Our work with neighborhood groups, however, extends beyond this contractual relationship; we share a common goal of creating a better City for all our residents. To achieve this goal, the City and its neighborhood groups must work to forge and foster strong partnerships that respect each other's roles and responsibilities.

The most remarkable fruit of this partnership began in 1990 with the creation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). For the past two decades, the NRP process has worked to make the city's residential areas better places to live, work, learn and play. NRP is an investment program based on bringing residents into the priority-setting process of the City and on the belief that the mobilization of untapped resources, energy and creativity can make our collective desire for a better future a reality.

This department will focus on nurturing neighborhood vitality through neighborhood-based priority setting, planning and implementation; and the integration of this work with the work of the City.

Neighborhood Organizational Infrastructure

Community participation is a basic City service. The department will administer a new, enhanced community participation program to include:

- neighborhood organization administrative support allocations;
- technical support to neighborhood organizations to help build the capacity and leadership development of neighborhood groups through training and educational opportunities;
- assistance to neighborhood groups in navigating City departments;
- support for the involvement of diverse populations in neighborhood organizations, including alternative methods and models for involvement;
- enhancement of the professional support available to neighborhoods from City staff; and
- a forum where best practices can be shared and peer support can be coordinated among community organizations.

Neighborhood Investment Fund & Community Innovation Fund

The Neighborhood Investment and Community Innovation funds are proposed to provide dedicated funds to neighborhood organizations. The Investment fund is proposed to be allocated by neighborhoods to help address neighborhood-identified priorities; the Innovation fund will be awarded to neighborhood organizations for specific projects that foster innovative responses to citywide challenges.

Department staff will work with neighborhood organizations on the allocation and implementation of Investment funds and the integration of these activities with other City resources and initiatives. Department staff also will work with neighborhood organizations on the continued planning and implementation of their Phase I and Phase II NRP activities.

Department staff also will work with neighborhood organizations on developing an understanding of the City-identified priorities for the grants to be allocated through the Innovation fund and facilitate connections with other community-based organizations interested in developing collaborative responses to these priority issues.

A Strengthened Link

An original goal of the City's neighborhood program was to assure that neighborhood perspectives were appropriately reflected in the broad resource allocation decisions of the City. Still an important goal, it is hoped that a new structure can strengthen the link between neighborhoods and City departments, and simultaneously get us closer to this goal.

The Coordinator's Department provides planning and management support and services throughout the City enterprise, including the coordination of departmental business planning and oversight of performance goals. With strong leadership expectations regarding strengthened relationships with residents and neighborhoods, there will be every opportunity to not only formalize the expression of departmental work and plans with neighborhoods, but a mechanism is already in place for monitoring progress and working toward meaningful performance in this area.

Block Clubs

Block clubs are an essential civic building block of neighborhoods. Department staff, in cooperation with community crime prevention, will promote more collaboration and improved communication between community organizations and block clubs where their respective goals in community participation align.

Access and Outreach

The City's "One Minneapolis" goal prescribes "equal access, equal opportunity and equal input" for all residents of the City. These aspirations have been important throughout the City's history and development, but become even more pertinent as we experience rapidly changing demographics and welcome a growing population and new and diverse residents everyday. The City will remain strong if our residents are engaged in civic life and understand fully their opportunities for community involvement.

To close race and class gaps and assure that City services are understood, obtainable and equitable, this department will focus on addressing and removing all barriers to full civic participation and meaningful engagement. In the recent past, the City has made substantial headway in assuring that all language barriers are removed through a comprehensive approach on limited English proficiency planning and implementation. In addition, we are noted as a City that is accessible to those with physical disabilities. That said, the coordination and communication effort to assure all barriers are removed can be renewed and re-energized through a matrixed effort in this new department.

Finally, multicultural barriers exist today that didn't twenty years ago. Because of our strong belief that we all benefit from a population who understand civic responsibility and the value of contributing to community strength, it is important that we look anew at ways to bridge cultural differences and embrace new definitions of what real community means.

Multicultural Services & Outreach

The department will strengthen the ability of diverse cultural communities to participate fully in the civic and economic life of our community through sustainable outreach strategies, coordination with other governmental jurisdictions and their services, and education about community-based programs aimed at increasing the self sufficiency of minority and immigrant groups.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan Implementation & Interpretation Services

Current interpretation and translation activities will continue while the department pursues the integration of this work into all City departments. Department staff will finish the implementation of departmental LEP plans focused on the removal of language barriers.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

The department will provide a point of contact and communication for people with disabilities. Department staff will serve as a supportive link to all City departments in removing all barriers to employment, movement throughout the City, and full and complete participation and compliance with federally-prescribed (ADA) mandates. The department will work closely with the City's Commission on People with Disabilities to address concerns and seize opportunities for change and improvement in our environment.

Welcoming & Orienting New Residents

The City of Minneapolis has experienced extraordinary growth in the past ten years. Downtown population has soared and the number of residents arriving from foreign countries has exploded. We have an expectation of community responsibility that is unique from many parts of the country or world, and we should not be timid about providing good information regarding civic opportunities for participation and contribution. From education about the services offered by Minneapolis 311 to an invitation for participation in neighborhood organizations or block clubs to assistance with library services or access to technology, proactively welcoming new residents will go a long way to assuring community strength and vitality.

Community Participation and Engagement

Community participation and engagement serve to strengthen Minneapolis. The City's formal adoption of core principles for community engagement reflects the shared beliefs of the Mayor and City Council on how the City should engage the community and how the community can participate in the City's decision-making process. The principles serve as a guide for community engagement and establish a foundation for expectations that the Mayor and City Council hold of City staff, department leadership and elected officials.

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.

Not only do these principles help to capture the viewpoints and concerns of those who are potentially affected, they also foster communities that are involved in the business of government and should lead to more sustainable policies, programs and services which take into account diverse community needs and views.

Connection to Neighborhood & Community Organizations

All City officials and departments will continue to have multiple points of contact with neighborhoods and community organizations. That said, there is room for better coordination of multi-department efforts, support for resident initiatives, and assistance to external stakeholders who are experiencing a breakdown in meaningful engagement activities.

This department will not only organize the breadth of information about neighborhood and community partners, but also help inform people of the various avenues and resources available for participation and serve to troubleshoot when conflicts or problems arise.

Boards & Commissions: Mission-Driven, Well-Oriented, Quality Public Service

The City utilizes the volunteer efforts of hundreds of residents who serve on more than fifty advisory boards and commissions. These board and commissions represent the key core of community engagement activity, especially in regard to City actions and decision-making. Residents should have good information about service opportunities and be well-oriented once selected to serve. In addition, the missions of our boards and commissions should be clear and relevant to the City's need for meaningful input. Finally, staff that supports this component of community engagement should be trained and supported in their efforts.

Civic Participation Academy

In cooperation with the Clerk's division on elections and all departments of the City, Minneapolis should do more to educate those interested in the activities of a municipal corporation, the partnership goals we have with City residents, the expectations of civic responsibility, and the opportunities available for community participation.

City Staff Education & Training

Coordinator departments provide assistance to all City departments in the key areas of business planning & performance management, finance, personnel, technology, intergovernmental relations and more. In addition, Coordinator staff serves as consultants around enterprise initiatives such as sustainability, community engagement, enterprise information management and others as needed. It will be valuable to have a team of staff who can be helpful throughout our organization on matters of meaningful resident connection and communication.

Services to the City

The department will serve as a resource to all City departments on the incorporation into their work of community participation practices.

Data & Information Management

The department will keep comprehensive and updated database and contact information about all neighborhood and community organizations for use by all City departments. Department staff will work to establish systems for use of communications tools.

Two-Way Communications

Department staff will research and identify tangible ways to communicate to residents and expand opportunities for the City to hear from Minneapolis residents. The department will work to address the "feedback loop" that is desired by those who provide input and is frequently missing after decisions get made.

Accountability and Performance Measures

The department will establish measurement and evaluation tools for use by all City departments related to community participation. The department will offer a forum through

which City departments can share lessons learned from their respective community engagement activities.

As with all City departments, a strong set of outcome measures will be established against which progress will be measured. Department leadership will appear at *Results Minneapolis* progress conferences to discuss trends, progress on goals, and departmental programs and practices that are producing the greatest results or determine and eliminate problems getting in the way.

Staff Collectives and Coordination Teams

Staff teams from across the enterprise should be organized to support the achievement of neighborhood development, board and commission vitality, accessibility goals, and specific initiatives related to community connectedness.

Training and Resources

Department staff will aid in the planning and implementation of community participation activities and enhance the community engagement skill sets by coordinating training sessions, cross-departmental collaboration, up-to-date contact information and meeting resources.

Analysis of Community Participation Practices

The Department will conduct ongoing analyses of City processes to foster dynamic community participation practices that are responsive to the changing needs and interests of the City, residents, and business owners. Some examples include:

- Increasing two-way integration of neighborhood and City goals, priorities, plans, programs, projects and activities.
- Supporting City departments and staff to adapt practices that involve residents early in projects through communication about upcoming projects and identifying ways in which resident input can be solicited and incorporated into the planning processes of upcoming projects.

Hiring Process for the Director
Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

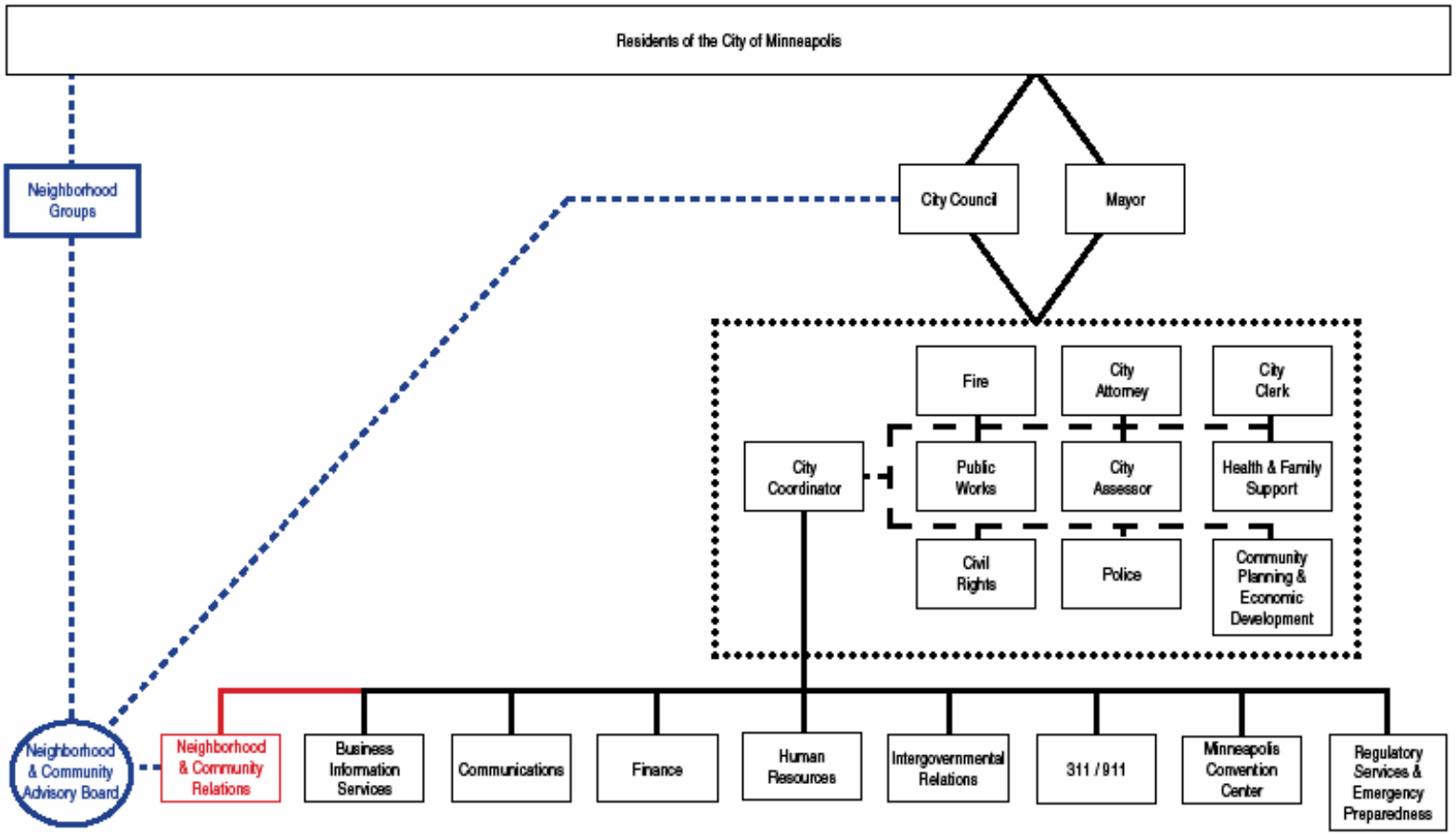
The Director of the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department will be hired according to the following process:

1) Search Committee. Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board will appoint a five-member search and screening subcommittee from the Advisory Board membership.

2) Leadership Characteristics and Criteria. The search and screening subcommittee will develop, with input from the City Coordinator, a set of leadership characteristics and selection criteria to guide the search.

3) Human Resources Support. The City's Human Resources staff will provide the search and screening subcommittee with administrative support and guidance as requested, including but not limited to, narrowing the original applications to a manageable pool for subcommittee consideration based on the leadership characteristics defined above.

4) Slate of Candidates. An unranked slate of no fewer than three candidates will be forwarded to the City Coordinator by the search and screening subcommittee for final consideration and appointment.

5) Appointment. The City Coordinator will select and appoint the Assistant City Coordinator and Director of the Department of Neighborhood and Community Relations from the slate of candidates presented by the search and screening subcommittee.

City of Minneapolis