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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Organization Name:	West Bank Community Coalition
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FUNDING ACTIVITIES.

Use the following questions as a guide for your submission.

After this first funding year, neighborhood organizations will submit proposals for three years of funding from the Community Participation Program. How will your organization engage residents and other stakeholders in 2011 to develop your three-year proposal?

To ensure that residents and other stakeholders are involved, West Bank Community Coalition (WBCC) constructs coalitions of diverse groups, and agencies that have come together to work for a common goal. Through these coalitions, initiatives are taken to better the community and build an investment in the neighborhood among the participating residents.

WBCC has proven mechanisms of community engagement methodologies that have worked over the years. In 2011, we are adjusting our focus to take community involvement a step further. Our strategy in 2011 is to invigorate and revisit our mission as well as to work collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity to address issues affecting the well being of our neighborhood. These common issues of residents will be the vehicle of motivation for all people living in the neighborhood.

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In addition, the WBCC will appoint a steering committee that will create a plan to engage residents and other neighborhood stakeholders to develop a comprehensive three-years proposal.

In 2007 WBCC collaborated with City of Minneapolis and NRP to work with residents and other stakeholder to identify neighborhood goals, objectives, and strategies through a multi-year planning process. WBCC has the capacity and relationships to engage neighborhood resident and develop Community Participation Program.

## **What regular outreach and engagement activities will your organization carry out in 2011?**

Over the past few years WBCC has established meaningful relationships with community leaders, various institutions, community members, business leaders, and other stakeholders. WBCC have developed trust among community members/leaders and envisions even more effort and collaboration in 2011. These relationships are where the strongest community engagement happens and the WBCC will continue to work hard to work through these connections.

The leadership of WBCC is committed to outreach in the community to insure more participation from the members because when participation is strong throughout a program's development and implementation, long-term program viability is more likely assured. "When people share a strong sense of community they are motivated and empowered to change problems they face, and are better able to mediate the negative effects over things which they have no control."

WBCC uses following committees to outreach and engaged neighborhood residents.

- Land Use Committee: gives first level input to the city government on housing, licenses, zoning variances, permits, development and other neighborhood issues.
- Bluff Street Task Force committee: seek community input in the development of plans to transform the derelict land adjacent to the Mississippi River, Riverview Tower, and River Bluff Co-op into a neighborhood amenity.
- Riverside Park Neighborhood Task Force
- Neighborhood Relations Committee: determines goals and outcomes, plan for, and evaluate community gatherings. The committee assesses measurable outcomes and provides recommendations for improving participation in terms of numbers as well as diversity in age, cultures, etc.
- Safety Committee : decrease all types of crimes and increase the safety of the residents, visitors and businesses of the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood. This committee is organizing Block Clubs and coordinating meetings with Minneapolis Police Department SAFE officers. One product of this committee is the weekly neighborhood walks where volunteers walk through the neighborhood with vests picking up trash from the street in an effort to break up any suspicious activity by simply being present.

## **How will your organization reach out to under-represented groups in your community? Who are these groups?**

Over the past two years the WBCC have taken steps that have resulted in an increase in the involvement and the participation of the diverse populations in the community. This multicultural outreach effort is essential for building the core capacity of the neighborhood organization. In November 2005 new multicultural leadership was elected to the board whose top priority was to make the Coalition an organization that is representative of the community it serves. The first step toward that goal was achieved September, 2006 when the neighborhood voted to change the WBCC by-laws which had limited representation from Riverside Plaza (where nearly half of the neighborhood's population and most of the new immigrant households live) to just 2 out of 15

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seats on the board of directors. Once again, in 2009, the WBCC had an election in which the entire neighborhood came together and participated and decided to elect a new leadership that reflects residents and stakeholders in the West Bank. The organization is in a good position today to increase its presence in the neighborhood. The WBCC board members are a rich mix of cultures and language barriers are no longer existent due to bilingual members.

According to 2000 Census figures, forty-five percent of people living in Cedar-Riverside are foreign born. Data provided by the City of Minneapolis based on the 2000 census show that more than 500 neighborhood residents speak African languages, more than 500 speak Spanish, and more than 500 speak Vietnamese. The 500+ category is the largest grouping in these data sets. The actual number of non-English speakers is likely far greater. Cedar-Riverside is not only a neighborhood of immigrants; it is a neighborhood of many different immigrant groups. The major population groups in our neighborhood are: Somali, Oromo, Ethiopian, Hispanic, Vietnamese and Korean

Along with the great diversity of cultures and languages in Cedar-Riverside, it is a neighborhood with a high number of very low incomes residents. Census figures show that the neighborhood's median household income in 1999 was \$14,337 compared with \$37,974 for Minneapolis as a whole. That year, 42 percent of neighborhood residents, and 41 percent of neighborhood families with children under 18, lived below the poverty level.

Cedar-Riverside is a place of enormous potential and great challenges. The New American cultural groups are typically very grateful to be living in America and eager to participate in civic and community activities. The many languages, cultural practices, holiday schedules, methods of communicating/networking, and traditions of decision-making create challenges in bringing everyone together, especially given the scarcity of household and community resources, and competing demands for everyone's time.

What planning activities would your organization like to carry out in 2011? (This could include strategic planning, land use planning, NRP planning, etc).

CRNRP held a neighborhood wide election in which for the first time the board members reflect residents and other stakeholders in the neighborhood.

The newly elected CRNRP board members and WBCC board will be working together very closely. Some of the Board members of the two organizations had a preliminary meeting and discussed various things including how to develop trust among leaders in this neighborhood & share resources. WBCC is ready to take the lead as the community voice to the city as the NRP phases out and NCR takes over the NRP projects. WBCC is planning to share staff with CRNRP and jointly complete phase-I of Neighborhood Action Plan. Also, both the WBCC & the CRNRP will plan together phase-II of NRP as two organizations merge in the near future.

How does your organization provide information to the community?

WBCC disseminates and provides information to the neighborhood in a various ways.

- a. Workshops that engage communities and promote best practices to keep the neighborhood crime free.
  - b. WBCC participates and co-sponsors public engagement events and festivals that are part of a larger effort to effect community change.
  - c. Through our monthly board meeting where neighborhood stake holders and residents regularly participate.
  - d. Through e-democracy forum & our mass distribution list where WBCC utilizes whenever we're making announcements.
  - e. Through other partnership initiatives and meetings where we also announce any new updates and developments.
  - f. WBCC has members and attends regularly Business Association monthly meetings and distributes flyers
  - g. Through the Land Use & Safety Committee monthly meetings
  - h. Also, WBCC participates other initiatives including University Alliance meeting, District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis and the Central Corridor Project on the West Bank.
- All aforementioned avenues are our vehicles to share information to the community.

How do you gather information from the community?

WBCC engages regularly diverse groups of neighborhood leaders. There are core groups who are regularly attending our monthly meetings. We also use community organizations, other nonprofit organizations, business associations as well as other committees. "When people share a strong sense of community they are motivated and empowered to change problems they face, and are better able to mediate the negative effects over things which they have no control."

Our volunteer Executive Director outreaches and meets with the elders committee, the safety committee, crime prevention officers, the land use committee and number of other groups in the neighborhood to increase cross-sector collaboration and shared resources. The WBCC seeks to increase access to funding opportunities for organizations and promote long-term, organizational commitment to social and crime-related issues.

### What festivals and events will your organization host or support in 2011?

The WBCC collaborates with many community entities and supports many efforts through these partnerships. One example of this is the West Bank Music Festival. The West Bank Business Association hosted an all day music event on the West Bank to promote the rich culture the West Bank has to offer. Many other events proposed and hosted by groups as diverse as our community youth groups to local arts events are sponsored the WBCC throughout the year. This is something the WBCC is particularly proud of because these types of festivals and events are a prime example of community members taking the initiative to get involved with their community and become leaders.

### What else would you like the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission know about your organization?

According 2000 census West Bank neighborhood is considered the poorest neighborhood in Twin Cities. The medium income is \$14,337. The majority of the residents are new Americans. The WBCC board struggles to serve the neighborhood without having a paid staff. Board members volunteer their time to conduct organizations official work and tasks. The WBCC believes that with this funding, we can collaborate with the CRNRP and hire a paid staff member to keep momentum from the board meetings and committees rolling into even more actionable projects and results. This full time person will undertake day-to-day activities that will enable our organization to be more visible in the neighborhood.

### Besides funding, what are some other ways that the NCR and NCEC can help your neighborhood organization?

As NRP is phases out, we need the support of NCR and NCEC to facilitate WBCC and CRNRP as we begin to share staff and other resource to strength our neighborhood. In the next few months both WBCC and CRNRP will declare joint resolutions and we will need your support.

### ESTIMATED BUDGET

	NCR
Staff Expenses	\$ 41,000
Employee Benefits	\$ 3200
Professional Services	\$ 1500
Occupancy	\$ 1,450
Communications/Outreach	\$ 600
Supplies and Materials	\$ 450
Festivals and events	\$ 2450
Food and refreshments	\$ 700

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Development	\$ 3353
Fundraising	\$ 750
Other Services	\$
TOTAL:	\$ 53,153.00

Notes:

- Staff expenses should include payroll, FICA, and withholding, or staff contractors.
- Employee benefits should include any health insurance, retirement, or other benefits.
- Professional services should include the cost of temporary contractors, bookkeepers, accountants, etc.
- Occupancy should reflect costs related to rent, utilities, phone, websites and email expenses, and other similar expenses.
- Communications/Outreach should include costs of publications, printing, postage, delivery, flyers, etc.
- Supplies and materials should include office supplies as well as expenses for supplies related to ongoing programs such as block patrols, etc.
- Festivals and events can include any costs related to community events and festivals.
- Food and refreshments can include the cost of any food or refreshments related to your organization's community engagement efforts (may not exceed 5% of your organization's CPP allocation).
- Development expenses could include costs related to training, education, recognition, or orientation for board, staff and volunteers.
- Fundraising could include any costs related to fundraising for your organization (hiring of consultants, costs of materials, postage, events, etc).