



Date: November 21, 2011

To: Neighborhood & Community Relations Dept  
TriTech Center Rm 220  
331 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S  
Mpls, MN 55401

Re: NCR Guidelines

#### General Comments:

Neighborhood organizations are autonomous non-profits. The NCR guidelines are written in a manner that assumes NCR/City Dept direction over neighborhood activities. And presumes and establishes the neighborhood organization is a localized branch of the city and **only** doing City work. The NRP model of oversight and management was of a benevolent monitor. The NRP model was more trusting, encouraging and productive. The NCR Guidelines seem more restrictive.

City funds require accountability, but the levels of reporting and accounting proposed by the NCR are burdensome and bureaucratic. Whether with paid or volunteer staff, neighborhood organizations do the work of the neighborhood to build a better community, respond to the residents and businesses, and are more nimble than the City. The NCR guideline recommendations for reporting, applying, reviewing, adjusting, etc, etc, etc. will take away from the real work of the neighborhood. Simplify the reporting, budgeting and –neighborhoods want to respond to their neighbors, not the City.

Stop adjusting the funding formula. If neighborhoods need to submit budgets for the funds, there has to be a dollar amount that they can count on.

Decide whether or not the NCR will provide at no charge to neighborhood organization Directors and Officers Insurance and annual audits of policies and procedures. Decide!

#### Program Purposes

#2 “.....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....”  
As a City Dept, NCR should be advocating to CPED and the City Planning dept and insisting that n’hood have the opportunity to review proposals prior to getting into the City pipeline. This is how the NCR could support the City’s community engagement commitment. It should be a Planning & Licensing dept POLICY (not a suggestion as it is now) to refer applicant for zoning changes, CUPs, variances, licenses, developments, etc to

the n'hood before an application is accepted in order for the City to fulfill their "core principle of community engagement."

Page 1 side bar 'Neighborhood Organization Activities' 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point: City Staff is not obligated to inform neighborhoods of pending or filed application. N'hoods frequently get only the public hearing date which limits the n'hood ability to review, comment, give input and collaborate with the applicant and the city for the most advantageous outcome.

#8N'hood priorities: Organize, Plan, Partner, and Implement

Organize: lighten up!!! Each n'hood knows how best to reach their populations

Partner: The language used in this paragraph sounds very controlling the NCR/city should be a resource for partnerships and have a pool of potential partners that can be accessed by neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marian Biehn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Marian Biehn  
Executive Director