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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM  
Application  
July 2012 to Dec. 2013

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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IV COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLANS

**1. Evidence of organization's eligibility:**

The boundaries of the Whittier neighborhood are Franklin Ave to the North; Lake St to the South; Lyndale Ave to the West and 35W to the East. The Whittier Alliance has been an officially recognized Citizen Participation organization for several years.

The Whittier Alliance is a 501c3 neighborhood organization incorporated by the State of MN in 1977. The Whittier Alliance operates under the guidance of the community-adopted By-Laws with supporting policies and procedures. Membership is open to all, as outlined in the organizational By-Laws.

The 15 member board serves 3 year staggered terms. Five board members are elected each year at the Annual Meeting. Board membership is open to all members of the corporation, as outlined in the By-Laws.

Monthly meetings are free and open to the public. All attending have "voice." Meetings are publicly noticed via postcard mailing, electronic mailings, website posting, door-to-door fliering, and through our Neighborhood Communication Network—residents who have volunteered to distribute information about Whittier meetings and events to others on their block.

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## 2. Community Participation Efforts:

The Whittier Alliance has fostered and will continue to foster opportunities for open communication and participation. As trends and life styles change in the community, different approaches are added or adapted to reach and engage more stakeholders.

Proposed Outreach: Whittier residents, service organizations, faith based organizations, rental property owners, and businesses are part of a broad engagement process. The Whittier Alliance facilitates, and will continue to encourage, community participation in the monthly community meetings. The agenda changes depending on the requests and influences affecting the development and/or livability of the Whittier neighborhood. These meetings will continue on their regular schedule. The meetings are open to the public and publicly noticed using several methods of communication. The broader community is invited to all meetings but areas particularly affected by an agenda topic are targeted for more intense distribution of information.

Other outreach activities and events are part of Whittier's Community Participation effort to engage and build community. Not everyone is interested in attending meetings. The Whittier Alliance builds community by sponsoring events such as: Dog Days of Whittier, the Whittier Green Fair, Art in the Park, May Day Soiree, regular meetings with the Faith Based organizations, law enforcement group meetings, block club development, National Night Out parties (14 in 2011), candidate (school board, city council, etc.) forums, neighborhood clean ups, Youth Field Day, collaboration with the Greenway and community gardens, historic preservation efforts, outreach to rental property owners and rental property owner seminars, promotion of the Whittier neighborhood Eat Street, etc.

Communication and invitation to the meetings and events is accomplished in many ways:

- Postcard mailings
- Electronic e-blasts (over 800 subscribed recipients) and Facebook postings
- Continuous updating of the Whittier website
- Fliering to hundreds of addresses with meeting notice and "Whittier Happenings"
- Communication through the recently establish Neighborhood Communication Network – resident block contacts who distribute information within an identified radius to their contact list
- Distribution of information through contacts within faith, service, housing, and institutional organizations within Whittier
- Personal telephone calls & door knocking

Our street level, storefront office is open to the public from 9-6pm M-F with a lively number of visitors and/or complainants each week.

Identifying & Acting on Neighborhood Priorities: Whittier will continue to implement the balance of the NRP Action Plan. The areas of focus are: Housing, Business & Local Economy, Safety, Youth, and Visual Identity. These priorities were identified by the Whittier

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Community and continue to be an important component of the work of the Whittier Alliance and community. Some of the on-going programs and outreach are:

- Marketing of low interest loans for single family & rental property improvements
- Additional grants made to youth serving organizations that serve Whittier youth
- Safety awareness seminars within apartments and organizations
- Maintenance and expansion of the Whittier business website as well as efforts to fill vacant storefronts.

Over the past year and a half, the Whittier Alliance and neighborhood developed and adopted a Strategic Plan for 2012-17. The Strategic Plan areas of focus are: Stakeholder Engagement, Housing, Historic Preservation, Environmental Sustainability, and further Development of the Commercial Corridor. The process was initiated by the Whittier Board of Directors and a consultant was hired to guide and keep the process on track. Over an 18 month period, the Strategic Planning Task Force:

- Identified neighborhood areas of interest and development
- Developed & posted a survey monkey for community feedback
- Made print copies of the survey available at meetings and through the Whittier Alliance office
- Held focus groups with: homeowners, renters, rental property owners, faith-based and social service agencies, businesses, the Somali & Latino communities, and general/mixed focus groups
- Formed work groups to help draft components of the Strategic Plan
- As the Strategic Plan was developed, it was presented for neighborhood review and input at Whittier meetings on: Sept 13, 2010, Dec. 13, 2010, Feb. 14, 2011, April 2011 Annual Meeting, July 11, 2011, Feb. 13, 2012
- The draft plan was presented at the April 9, 2012 Whittier Annual Meeting for final neighborhood approval and adopted by the Whittier Alliance Board on April 26, 2012.

What we present as our Strategic Plan can be viewed as the Neighborhood Priority Plan. A copy has been submitted with this document. The process the Whittier Alliance used in gathering feedback was effective in creating a Plan that reflects a broad vision of the Whittier community that will engage and benefit everyone at many levels.

This method of neighborhood engagement will continue with the implantation of the Strategic Plan. At the Annual Meeting and at subsequent community meetings, sign-up sheets have been circulated, inviting interested parties to be on a Task Force addressing one or more of the components of the Strategic Plan. The Task Forces continue to be open to additional participation.

It is anticipated that a portion of our budget for 2012-2013 will be dedicated to retaining the services of paid interns, professionals, or consultants to help gather data, assess baselines, do research, and consult on the portions of our Strategic Plan that deal with implementation.

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**Impacting City Decisions & Priorities:** Both the Community Issues and Business Association meetings address changes and proposals that affect the Whittier neighborhood. These meetings invite community stakeholders to express their opinion and impacts on issues that have the potential to physically change their environment. The meeting agendas clearly identify the location and the issue under discussion so Whittier stakeholders understand the gravity and implications of a proposal. Some of the current and future the areas of focus are:

- The 35W Access Project
- The Nicollet and Greenway Streetcar Studies
- the Washburn Fair Oaks Park master planning process
- The reopening of Nicollet Ave
- The City's proposed recycling changes
- An amendment to the Franklin Nicollet Pedestrian Overlay
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund applications
- Unknown neighborhood-changing proposals, such as the last year's Ice House development
- Conditional Use Permit, variance, liquor license, and zoning requests, etc.

The persons most impacted by any proposal are targeted for notification, but the broader neighborhood is encouraged to attend and speak up. This is done by methods outlined above.

The Whittier Alliance receives City Public Hearing notices, which it communicates to the broader community. Individuals also receiving the notices are encouraged to attend and speak on their own behalf. Based on our community meeting input and board discussion, a neighborhood position is adopted, communicated to the appropriate governing body, and advocated for on behalf of the Whittier neighborhood.

Unfortunately, the impacts of city decisions on the neighborhood cannot always be framed within the required "findings" language. It would benefit the City to allow the more subjective aspects of an issue to be allowed into testimony. If neighborhoods are truly to have voice in City decisions, the comments must be considered more than "advisory." The NCR might be of service in helping to shape City decisions that are more satisfying to and reflective of the position and impacts to the immediate neighborhood.

### **3. Building Organization Capacity:**

The Whittier Alliance proposes that beyond the continued effort to increase attendance at meetings and events, the following action will be taken to expand capacity:

- The Neighborhood Communication Network will be expanded from the current 12 nodes to 20 nodes
- The Network will be utilized to help gather data from residents and business to facilitate implementation of the Strategic Plan, distribute block and neighborhood information, and assist the Whittier Alliance with building Whittier awareness
- Sign-up sheets, establishing Task Forces to assist with the initial implementation steps for each of the Strategic Plan components, have been circulated and additions will continue to be made

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- Leadership within the task force will be identified to build buy-in and move the implementation forward
  - The Whittier Board will continue to act as ambassadors of the neighborhood
  - The Whittier Board and staff will monitor the Strategic Plan implementation steps, seek interns, specialists, or professional assistance as needed to assure volunteers are receiving the needed support and build capacity
  - Opportunity to contribute will be open to all capacity levels
  - Additional opportunities for youth involvement will be explored
  - Bi-lingual volunteers will be utilized to welcome, inform and encourage participation

#### **4. Building Neighborhood Relationships:**

The Whittier neighborhood tag is “The International Neighborhood.” “International” has many attributes: ethnicity, culture, diversity, and lifestyle. We do not only measure our diversity by ethnicity—we include culture, age, race, profession, educational background, economic, housing, lifestyle, etc. The 2010 Wilder Report outlines the Whittier neighborhood as having 13,689 residents. Our information indicates approximately 1/3 of the residents move each year. The Whittier Alliance staff of 2 has a large challenge to get people involved and keep them involved -- if they remain in the neighborhood.

Building a livable neighborhood of engaged residents representing all sectors is the desired inclusivity and wholeness, yet our successes are often inconsistent and dependent on the meeting topic or event. People turn out for meetings that affect them directly or events that interest them. The Whittier Alliance will continue to work toward a whole and inclusive neighborhood by:

- Implementing the stakeholder engagement components of our Strategic Plan
- Promoting civic awareness and engagement through a voter education, registration efforts and candidate forums
- Working with housing providers and rental property owners to communicate opportunities and events to residents
- Networking with service providers, parks, and libraries to identify programs and opportunities that encourage community interaction
- Offering food at meetings & events for mutual hospitality
- Strengthening communication with service providers to build trust and mutual support of goals
- Offering events like the Youth Field Day, Dog Days of Whittier & Clinton Field Ice Cream Social, and provide a comfortable and spontaneous format for fun, games and interaction
- Working with the active and diverse retail and commercial businesses in Whittier, as well as developers and real estate professionals, to strengthen the commercial corridors and fill vacant store fronts with neighborhood preferred services
- Expansion of the Whittier Business Directory and the For Sale/Lease component of the directory [www.whittierbusiness.org](http://www.whittierbusiness.org)

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The Whittier Alliance will extend and accept invitations to collaborate with other organizations and neighborhoods, and partner with private and public entities.

Collaborations and partnerships that will be continued or introduced are:

- Lyndale, Lake St. Council, Midtown Greenway Coalition, Central Neighborhood and Phillips West: 35W Access Project, reopening of Nicollet Ave and Lake Street commercial corridor, Greenway & Nicollet Ave Streetcar study
- Stevens Square and Loring: Nicollet – Franklin Pedestrian Overlay amendment, Franklin Ave & Franklin Ave Bridge visioning and renewal
- Lyndale Neighborhood and Walker Library: Expansion of English language instruction
- Hennepin County Medical Center-Whittier Clinic: Health, nutrition and exercise instruction to the elderly and immigrant population
- Minneapolis Park and Rec: Washburn Fair Oaks Park master plan
- Realtors and Leasing Agents: Filling vacant storefronts with neighborhood preferred business
- Private developers and the City of Minneapolis: Develop a long-term, environmentally-friendly resolution to parking demand along the commercial corridor
- Minneapolis Institute of Arts & Minneapolis College of Art and Design: Collaborate on cultural and creative projects and links to Eat Street
- 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct Police Law Enforcement Group (LEG): Our on-going collaboration with the LEG has resulted in longer sentencing for offenders and a more informed, safer neighborhood

The Whittier Alliance will work to strengthen partnerships at all levels to improve livability and respect for diversity, facilitate better civic decisions, and build awareness and appreciation of the Whittier and Eat Street brands.

#### **5. Involvement of Under-Engaged Stakeholders:**

As much as we try, we know there is work to be done to fully engage the neighborhood. Acknowledging that, the Whittier Alliance Strategic Plan 2012-17 outlines plans and goals for engaging stakeholders.

However, as is typical throughout the City, the groups least active in neighborhood “meetings” and decisions are the Somali and Latino communities and young adults 18-25. The Whittier Alliance will continue to offer participation in ways that have been successful in the past. We have seen growing participation in events such as neighborhood clean ups, community gardening, and Youth Field Day by Latino and Somali families. The Whittier Alliance has also provided grant funding through the NRP Youth funds to youth-serving organizations who work with minority youth and families. For example, in 2011 the Whittier NRP Youth Funds subsidized swimming lessons for 80 minority youth from the Whittier neighborhood. We’ve also found that the Green Fair and environmental discussions draw the 18-30 year old population.

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Much of the education and support that would benefit the immigrant community is beyond what a neighborhood staff can provide. We can strengthen our list of resources but we do not have the capacity to provide life skills or improved incomes. Many families are working 2-3 jobs to make ends meet which limits their time. We are seeing higher participation by 2<sup>nd</sup> generation immigrants and welcome their involvement. We will work with those housing providers who serve a concentration of immigrant residents to assure they are receiving information and invitations to neighborhood events.

The NCR department has been responsive in supplying translated materials for our Strategic Planning Focus Groups and also for a recent meeting with the Karmel business owners. The availability of this service is priceless and one that we will avail ourselves of more frequently. It would also be helpful occasionally to have access to a NCR staff person with East African or Spanish skills at gatherings. It would help to build bridges and diffuse trust issues on volatile topics. To the disappointment and misunderstanding of some in the immigrant community, the Whittier Alliance has had to defer issues that are not within our ability to resolve.

#### **6. Housing Activities:**

According to the 2010 Wilder Report, Whittier has 7446 housing units, 772 of which are single family homes. The yearly median income for a Whittier resident is \$32,000, and the average rent is \$700 per month.

Housing has long been a primary issue in Whittier. Again, our Strategic Plan outlines goals for housing in Whittier for the next 5 years and targets single family homes, zoning, multi-units, historic preservation, and affordable housing.

Single family homes and housing are limited in the Whittier neighborhood. We accept that it will never be a single family home neighborhood. However, we have lost families and residents who prefer to live in Whittier to other neighborhoods because they could not buy in Whittier. Families support a neighborhood school, and the neighborhood school stabilizes and strengthens a community. In order to stabilize the neighborhood, provide in-neighborhood options for residents wanting to purchase, and to increase the inventory of single family homes, the Whittier Alliance is or proposes to:

- Retain the services of an intern or housing specialist to do an inventory of single family homes that have been converted to duplexes and encourage the return to single family living
- Work with the City to down zone areas and incorporate R1 zoning (no R1 zoning exists in Whittier)
- Market the single family home improvement loan to improve livability and curb appeal
- Work with realtors to promote the Whittier neighborhood to potential buyers from within and outside of the Whittier neighborhood
- Assure that the commercial corridors provide neighborhood amenities and the parks are safe

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- Work with CPED and Hennepin County to secure and purchase vacant lots (funds in place)
  - Work with MCAD, private owners, and builders to purchase and move vacant homes on to vacant lots, rehab homes, and sell to owner occupant (funds in place)
  - Work with the City on boarded and vacant buildings to rehab and sell to owner occupants
  - Have 2-3 Whittier homes on the Minneapolis-St Paul home tour in each year

Whittier has long been a rental neighborhood and that will not change. Work within the rental community has been and will continue to be an important aspect of Whittier housing choice. Work in the area of multi-housing includes and will continue to include:

- Marketing the Rental Rehab & Renewal Loan for code compliance, tenant livability, and curb appeal
- Working with identified problem properties to improve management practices
- Safety seminars for residents
- Sponsoring quarterly rental property owner seminars
- Continue building a directory of rental residents for communicating neighborhood events and amenities

The Whittier Alliance has been in the process of raising the awareness of the commercial and residential historic assets throughout the Whittier neighborhood. In 2011 the Whittier Alliance published the 2012 Whittier Historic Preservation Calendar featuring homes and buildings in Whittier that have been restored, are in need of restoration, or have been appropriately repurposed and reused. The calendar was distributed to 7800 addresses in Whittier and received a 2012 Minneapolis Historic Preservation Award for Outreach and Advocacy.

Whittier' Washburn Fair Oaks Historic District is prized by those who are aware of it, but it can be a surprise to those who are unaware of Whittier's rich history or have a home in the district and want to make changes. The Historic District protects those assets to some extent, but homes with historic value outside of the district have been threatened. To preserve the integrity of architectural history, and Whittier's social and economic history, the Whittier Alliance and the Strategic Plan Preservation Task Force will:

1. Reference the Historic Context Study completed in 2009
2. Define the qualities and specifics of a historic asset
3. Retain the services of a professional to do an inventory of the historic assets in Whittier and create historic guidelines for the Whittier neighborhood
4. Work with the City of Minneapolis to redo the Washburn Fair Oaks Historic District Guidelines
5. Retain the services of a professional to explore further historic designations, broaden the district, or create a conservation district
6. Create a loan program for historic preservation and restoration

Whittier is an affordable neighborhood. Over the past several years several properties have either come forward to renew affordable housing covenants or to be designated affordable

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in order to receive advantageous tax credits. This concentration of affordable, supportive, and transitional housing is one of the highest in the City. It is our experience that the “designated” affordable units have management issues that put them on the problem property list within the neighborhood and absorb excessive staff and police time. This problem erodes a block and a neighborhood. With this type of impact on the community, the Whittier Alliance will:

- Work with the City’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund to evaluate funding process and awards, and explore application or policy changes to balance distribution
- Until housing equity is achieved, discourage the addition of designated affordable, supportive and transitional housing in the Whittier neighborhood
- Encourage properties with expiring Affordable Housing Covenants to return to market rate
- Work with housing organizations to inform them of housing goals for the Whittier neighborhood

Housing and housing related programs, discussions, and activities account for approximately 50% of the work of the Whittier Alliance. We have purposefully integrated all aspects of the Strategic Plan. An engaged and informed community supports a healthy commercial corridor which supports healthy housing, etc.

**7. Unused Funds:**

Unused funds will not go unused. Current unused funds indicates that we have been more efficient than anticipated; were able to use volunteer help rather than pay for the services of a consultant; or an initiative was postponed due to another issue taking priority. The newly adopted Strategic Plan calls for levels of expertise that will have to be contracted and we anticipate an accelerated use of the allocated funds.

**8. Budgets:**

The budget for the Whittier allocation of \$195,900 is part of this submission. The budget will reflect expenses that are associated with things that happen to the neighborhood to which we need to respond, such as: the 35W Access Project; Streetcar studies; development proposals; and unanticipated livability, safety, human rights or natural disasters. It will also reflect expenses initiated by the neighborhood in the Whittier Strategic Plan that Whittier stakeholders have identified as important to neighborhood development.

**9. Comments:**

Whittier Vision: A World Class Neighborhood

Mission: The Whittier Alliance is dedicated to building a flourishing and distinctive neighborhood

The Whittier Strategic Plan was designed to push the limits and vision of the Whittier neighborhood. Many of the goals are ambitious but are so intentionally. The Whittier neighborhood wants to be an innovative example to other neighborhoods and the City of Mpls.

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## ESTIMATED BUDGET

1-Staff Expenses	\$92,000
2-Employee Benefits	\$15,000
3-Professional Services	\$ 30,400
4-Occupancy	\$ 17,000
5-Communications/Outreach	\$ 20,000
6-Supplies and Materials	\$ 9,000
7-Festivals and events	\$ 3,800
8-Food and refreshments	\$ 1,200
9-Development	\$ 2,000
10-Fundraising	\$ 3,500
Other Services	\$ 2,000
TOTAL:	\$195,900

### Notes:

- 1-Staff expenses should include payroll, FICA, and withholding, or staff contractors.
- 2-Employee benefits should include any health insurance, retirement, or other benefits.
- 3-Professional services should include the cost of temporary contractors, bookkeepers, accountants, etc.
- 4-Occupancy should reflect costs related to rent, utilities, phone, websites and email expenses, and other similar expenses.
- 5-Communications/Outreach should include costs of publications, printing, postage, delivery, flyers, etc.
- 6-Supplies and materials should include office supplies as well as expenses for supplies related to ongoing programs such as block patrols, etc.
- 7-Festivals and events can include any costs related to community events and festivals.
- 8-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).
- 9-Development expenses could include costs related to training, education, recognition, or orientation for board, staff and volunteers.
- 10-Fundraising could include any costs related to fundraising for your organization (hiring of consultants, costs of materials, postage, events, etc.)

# Whittier Alliance Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017

Updated 2/12/12

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## Whittier Alliance History

The Whittier Alliance, the citizen participation organization for the Whittier neighborhood, has led the Whittier neighborhood for over thirty years. Through those years, the organization has successfully engaged Whittier stakeholders in planning and implementing initiatives that have steadily improved the commercial viability, the housing stock and the overall livability of the Whittier neighborhood.

In the early years, funding came from foundations, and the neighborhood's goals focused on addressing deteriorating housing and commercial properties and high crime. In the mid 1990s when the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Phase 1 was introduced, Whittier had sufficiently stabilized to inspire active stakeholders to set visionary goals. At that time, restoring a delinquent Nicollet Avenue and building a neighborhood school were broadly regarded as impossible, but through the Whittier Alliance's vision and strong leadership, Eat Street and the Whittier Elementary School and gym were realized and are now central to the neighborhood. The Whittier Alliance also ensured further stabilization of housing by establishing low-interest loan programs that are still available today.

## A New Strategic Plan for 2012-2017

The Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (a program of the City of Minneapolis) gave Whittier its “strategic plan” for the past 15 years. In 2010, as the NRP plans and funding were winding down, the Whittier Alliance commenced a new strategic planning process by asking, “What is the next impossible thing to ask for that would make Whittier a unique, desirable destination and place to live? What are we bold enough to ask for or what do we dare to dream to make Whittier a World Class Neighborhood?”

A strategic planning committee of the Whittier Alliance Board of Directors worked together for over one year to collect the input of neighborhood stakeholders, including residents, property owners, business owners, and community organization leaders. Eleven focus groups with targeted groups of stakeholders took place, and a survey in English and Spanish was completed by 159 people. Initial results from these processes were presented at the Whittier Alliance Annual Meeting on April 7, 2011, and additional reactions were collected.

It is the hope of the Whittier Alliance Board of Directors that the new plan presented here reflects the vision, hopes, ideas, values, and realities of the neighborhood.

## Becoming a Model of Neighborhood Environmental Sustainability

- Comprehensive Vision: Become a model of a mixed-income neighborhood committed to an urban, green lifestyle.
  - Environmental Sustainability Goal: The Whittier neighborhood is committed to environmental sustainability. Through innovation, education, and engagement of all stakeholders, the Whittier neighborhood will increase neighborhood self-sufficiency and significantly reduce its carbon footprint by 2016.
1. Residences and businesses in the neighborhood will conserve more energy and generate more energy locally by 2016.
  2. Residences and businesses in the neighborhood will reduce waste and the consumption of natural resources by 2016.
  3. Neighborhood transportation infrastructure will change to support increased reliance on walking, biking, car-sharing and transit as alternatives to single-occupancy cars.
  4. Green space will be increased and improved by 2015.
  5. Water quality and water conservation will increase.
  6. Partnerships will be developed with innovative environmental institutions and organizations.

## Improving Housing Quality and Choice

- Comprehensive Vision: All homes and residences contribute to the vitality and beauty of the neighborhood.
  - Housing Goal: Whittier will expand housing quality and choice for residents.
1. Improve the condition, aesthetic and curb appeal of housing stock in Whittier.
  2. Preserve and increase single-family and owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood.
  3. Create housing equity through a balance of entry-level and market-rate housing.
  4. Make Whittier an attractive and affordably priced place for senior citizens to live.

## Ensuring Organizational Sustainability

- Comprehensive Vision: The Whittier Alliance is an effective, efficient, well-respected organization that thrives and succeeds in its goals.
- Organizational Sustainability Goal: In 2012, the Whittier Alliance will create a plan that leads to long-term organizational sustainability and financial stability.

A committee will be formed to work on this “internal” strategic plan for the WA, finalizing the mission/purpose and defining value of the Whittier Alliance to the neighborhood, values, core competencies, and resource development plan.

- League of Women Voters
- Cultural leaders
- Secretary of State
- Public Relations consultant
- Whittier Schools and PTAs
- Get Out the Vote organization

## Promoting Historic Preservation

Comprehensive Vision: The Whittier Neighborhood will be well known for its achievements in historic preservation which will become a draw for future residents and property owners.

Historic Preservation Goal: **Historic preservation will increase in the Whittier neighborhood in order to preserve historic assets, maintain a sense of neighborhood history, and increase neighborhood pride.**

<i>This goal will be accomplished in the following ways.</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
<p><b>1. Whittier stakeholders will be educated and inspired to support and participate in historic preservation.</b></p> <p>a. Complete the Historic Preservation Guidelines for external preservation of residential structures. (2012)</p> <p>b. Define qualities and specifics of a historic asset. (2012)</p> <p>c. Explore methods and avenues to achieve local, state and national levels of historic designation. (2012)</p> <p>d. Develop a plan to distribute accurate historic preservation information and guidance to comprehensively reach and inspire historic preservation by property owners and stakeholders. (2013)</p> <p>e. Develop a resource library for exterior historic preservation that includes material to inspire, inform, and support the practical work of historic preservation. These materials will supplement the existing Whittier Historic Context study and guidelines. (2013)</p> <p>f. Offer seminars and information sessions on historic preservation. (2013-2014)</p>	<p>All documentation will be completed and accessible in the Whittier Alliance Library and on the Whittier Alliance website.</p> <p>There will be an active and engaged task force or club of Whittier preservationists.</p> <p>A resource library will exist and be accessed regularly.</p> <p>At least 50 stakeholders will access the library or participate in a seminar or information session on historic preservation.</p>
<p><b>2. Work with the City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Committee to rewrite and strengthen the Washburn-Fair Oaks Historic District guidelines and expand the period of significance in the district, by 2013.</b></p>	<p>Expand the period of significance through the Modern era.</p>
<p><b>3. Historic designations will be extensively expanded throughout the Whittier neighborhood by 2016, working toward the long-term goal</b></p>	

## Strengthening the Nicollet Commercial Corridor

Comprehensive Vision: A robust, world-market-style corridor.

Nicollet Commercial Corridor Goal: **The Whittier Alliance is committed to strengthening Nicollet Avenue as a vibrant commercial corridor serving Whittier and the Metro Area.**

<i>This goal will be accomplished in the following ways.</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
<p><b>1. Foster a more diverse mix of businesses on Nicollet to draw people to the neighborhood and increase neighborhood self-sufficiency.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Support the affordability of commercial space on Nicollet. (on-going)</li> <li>b. Maintain a commitment to unique and independent businesses. (on-going)</li> <li>c. Create a website to promote available Whittier commercial properties that communicates the Whittier Alliance's retail and commercial preferences. (2012)</li> <li>d. Build relationships with realtors and brokers who share a commitment and understanding of Whittier's commercial corridor character. (2013)</li> </ul>	<p>50% decrease in vacant storefronts, down from approximately 10 in 2011.</p> <p>Website created in 2012.</p> <p>Double the number of new relationships with realtors and brokers by 2013</p>
<p><b>2. Increase "destination" businesses on Nicollet to draw local, metro and worldwide customers.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Define and create a plan to attract destination businesses. (2012)</li> <li>b. Ensure Nicollet is appealing in all seasons. (2014)</li> <li>c. Explore creation of outdoor markets. (2014)</li> <li>d. Strive to have a destination on every block. (2016)</li> <li>e. Create a convenient parking location that provides new and existing businesses adequate parking, and reduce flat lots and curb cuts along Nicollet Ave. (2016)</li> </ul>	<p>Three new destination businesses</p> <p>One new "destination" that is not necessarily a business.</p>
<p><b>3. Create a heightened sense of the proximity and accessibility between Nicollet and other neighborhood destinations by 2015.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Improve connections for walkers, bikers, and cars between neighborhood destinations (such as the MIA, the Greenway, the Lyn/Lake area, Fair Oaks Park and Nicollet Avenue) by installing visual links, points of interest, walking-talking points, art installations, signage, pavers, and other curiosities and amenities to draw people's attention. (2015)</li> </ul>	<p>Visual links, points of interest, and other improvements will be installed.</p>

<i>This goal will be accomplished in the following ways.</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
<p><b>1. Residences and businesses in the neighborhood will conserve more energy and generate more energy locally by 2016.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Educate and engage stakeholders in conservation and alternative energy efforts. (on-going)</li> <li>b. Engage the services of an expert to establish baseline energy use and renewable energy production in the neighborhood to enable moving toward measurable reduction in energy consumption. (2012)</li> <li>c. Explore and implement steps toward a Whittier Energy District. (2015)</li> </ul>	<p>Total neighborhood energy use will decrease by 10% by 2016.</p> <p>Total neighborhood production of renewable energy will increase by 25% by 2016.</p>
<p><b>2. Residences and businesses in the neighborhood will reduce waste and the consumption of natural resources by 2016.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Educate and engage stakeholders on waste reduction practices, including how to reuse, recycle, compost, and reduce reliance on disposable materials. (on-going)</li> <li>b. Engage the services of an expert to establish baseline waste production of households and businesses. (2012)</li> <li>c. Promote the reuse and re-purposing of building structures and materials. (on-going)</li> </ul>	<p>Total neighborhood waste by ton will be reduced by 10% by 2016.</p>
<p><b>3. Neighborhood transportation infrastructure will change to support increased reliance on walking, biking, car-sharing and transit as alternatives to single-occupancy cars.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote bus ridership, taxis, and ride-shares. (on-going)</li> <li>b. Reduce and discourage surface parking and surface parking lots. (on-going)</li> <li>c. Improve car-sharing opportunities. (2013)</li> <li>d. Implement increased safety measures for bikers and pedestrians, including creating areas in the neighborhood free of car traffic. (2016)</li> <li>e. Integrate Whittier with a regional transit plan. (2016)</li> </ul>	<p>Total number of parking spaces and/or flat lots will be reduced by 10% by 2016.</p>
<p><b>4. Green space will be increased and improved by 2015.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Create a green-path network, including additional gardens and outdoor gathering spaces, green alleys and walls, planters and planted boulevards. (2013)</li> <li>b. Protect and improve existing parks and other green spaces. (on-going)</li> <li>c. Implement center lane green boulevards. (2016)</li> </ul>	<p>A new green path network at least one mile long will be created by 2013.</p>
<p><b>5. Water quality and water conservation will increase.</b></p>	

Inner-city communities are disproportionately affected by concentrations of designated affordable housing, which concentrates and isolates persons living in poverty. 25.7% percent of households in Whittier live below poverty and an estimated 7% live at the poverty level. (Minnesota Compass, 2011). Researchers believe high concentrations of poverty (over 20%) in a community have a negative effect on both the people themselves and the areas in which they live and should ideally be below 10% in any neighborhood (Galster, 2009). The Whittier neighborhood has a disproportionally higher number of designated affordable housing units and facilities compared to most other Minneapolis neighborhoods (e.g. 30 Supportive Housing and Health Care facilities, three men’s and women’s emergency housing shelters, and 40 designated affordable housing (15-30 year covenant) townhomes and apartment buildings.)

The City of Minneapolis has acknowledged the need to build affordable housing in neighborhoods not impacted by poverty in the city's 2009 Plan for Sustainable Growth: "Work to improve the stability and sustainability of the city's disadvantaged communities by taking measures to diversify the household mix and allay historic patterns of concentration of poverty." There are few incentives or regulations in place, however, to encourage the diversification of affordable housing. The City of Minneapolis continues to approve new affordable developments in communities with high rates of poverty, such as Whittier.

To support economic health and diversity and housing equity, the Whittier Alliance supports the following goals.

<i>This goal will be accomplished in the following ways.</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
<p><b>1. Improve the condition, aesthetic and curb appeal of housing stock in Whittier.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Effectively communicate this goal to all residents and property owners. (2012)</li> <li>b. Engage and work with rental property owners to set high standards for rental housing maintenance and management. (2013)</li> <li>c. Promote resources such as loans, grants, and education opportunities to encourage owners and residents to invest in the historic preservation, general maintenance, curb appeal and livability of the buildings they own and/or occupy. (on-going)</li> <li>d. Explore the expansion of fiber optic communications infrastructure in Whittier neighborhood. (2013)</li> </ul>	<p>At least 10 Rental Rehab &amp; Renewal (3R) loans will be made for rehabilitation/restoration.</p>
<p><b>2. Preserve and increase single-family and owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify and inventory homes that were originally built as single-family homes. (2012)</li> <li>b. Work through zoning issues to “down zone” properties to restore them their original single-family home status. (2013)</li> <li>c. Promote loans, grants, and education opportunities to encourage owners to return divided homes to single-family homes where possible. (2013)</li> <li>d. Require that new development include owner-occupancy and single-</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to 10 loans listed in (1.) above, 10 loans will be made for single-family home rehab, remodel and/or improvements.</p> <p>Successful down zoning of at least 10% of eligible properties.</p> <p>20 new or converted single</p>

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*Special section:*

## **Ensuring Organizational Sustainability**

Comprehensive Vision: The Whittier Alliance is an effective, efficient, well-respected organization that thrives and succeeds in its goals.

Organizational Sustainability Goal: **In 2012, the Whittier Alliance will create a plan that leads to long-term organizational sustainability and financial stability.**

*A committee will be formed to work on this “internal” strategic plan for the WA.*

### **Key Questions**

*These questions should be taken up by the committee and answered in the order presented below.*

- 1. What kind of organization do we want and need to be over the next 10-20 years, in terms of the Whittier Alliance’s mission/purpose, value to the neighborhood, values, and core competencies?**
- 2. What kind of organization is needed to accomplish the five other strategic plan goals and other existing commitments?**
  - a. What is the WA “business model” in terms of how revenue is generated and how services are provided?
  - b. What percentage of the board and staff’s time should be focused in what ways?
  - c. What is the role of governance (board members)?
  - d. What are the core functions/expectations of the Executive Director and other staff, no matter who is in the roles?
  - e. What would accelerate the WA’s ability to achieve its 5-year goals?
- 3. To finalize the mission, start with ideas suggested by the whole board and possibly the whole neighborhood and then use the committee to finalize the mission/purpose and the question above.**
- 4. What kinds of resources are needed to achieve the strategic goals?**
  - a. What are the WA’s realistic funding prospects and long-term financial plan?
  - b. If funding dried up 40 months from now, what would we do?
  - c. How can we work toward independence from City of Minneapolis funding and services?