

## **Community Participation Program Guide to 2011 Annual Reports**

**Intended audience:** Your Community Participation Program annual report is primarily intended to inform the NCR Department, the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) and the public about your Community Participation Program activities. You may also want to use your annual report to NCR as a way to inform others about your work, including funders, other neighborhood organizations, City departments and the City Council. If your organization produces a separate report for your annual meeting, you may also want to include it as supplemental material.

**Contents:** At a minimum, your annual report should address the following:

1. *Accomplishments*

What were your organization's major accomplishments in 2011? How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work? (Note: focus on your accomplishments, not your activities, such as "Field Regina Northrup organized the Lee Family 80th Anniversary Commemoration on July 16, 2011, recognizing an important story in the history of Civil Rights in Minneapolis. In addition to engaging more than 1,000 residents, the event coincided with the City's Community One Read event, providing the opportunity to connect the commemoration with broader city events.")

**6<sup>th</sup> District Off-Leash Dog Park**

***EHFNA took the initiative to engage East Harriet residents when 3 sites were selected within and around Lyndale Farmstead Park as options for the next 6<sup>th</sup> District off leash park site. Two neighborhood representatives were selected to serve on the 6<sup>th</sup> District Off-Leash CAC after a process including; posting an application on our website and in our eNews, Parks, Environment & Schools (PES) Committee interviewing all candidates and a full board vote after final recommendation by the PES Committee.***

***The representatives provided up –to- date CAC and park reports through emails and attendance at the EHFNA Board Meetings. Announcement of CAC meetings dates and frequent updates were provided to the neighborhood through our eNews, website and facebook page. Proposed maps of the three sites were displayed at RoseFest in July.***

***A survey to encourage neighborhood input was done through our eNews contact list and distributed at the Lyndale Farmstead Park by volunteers to area residents over a several day period. The survey results were compiled and presented to the entire CAC group, park staff and park commissioners.***

***Volunteers distributed door hangers to all homes & apartment buildings in the neighborhood to inform residents of the final CAC recommendation, the next steps by the MPRB and how residents could provide comments or concerns to the CAC & MPRB .***

***Our two signature events, KiteFest and RoseFest brought the neighborhood and area residents together to celebrate community.***

**2011 KiteFest (10<sup>th</sup> Annual)** - East Harriet collaborated with Linden Hills Neighborhood Council, the DNR, the MPRB , MN Kite Society and local businesses drawing both area and regional spectators. This twin cities favorite free event held on Lake Harriet brings hundreds of people from all over to fly kites, participate in a medallion hunt, try their hand at ice fishing & snowshoeing, catch a horse-driven wagon ride and enjoy hot chocolate and cider while roasting marshmallows over an open fire.

**RoseFest (6<sup>th</sup> Annual)** – East Harriet’s annual neighborhood summer festival draws East Harriet neighbors and residents from several surrounding neighborhoods together to celebrate community. The event focused on highlighting local talent and area businesses. The event includes live music from several local bands, grilled food, a variety of fun events for all ages, The Classic Auto Event and business & organization informational booths. The funds raised from this event helps support KiteFest and Movies in the Park.

2. **2011 CPP Submission**

Reviewing your submission for CPP funds for 2011, what outreach and engagement activities did you carry out? What worked well, and what did not work so well? Why?

**Both KiteFest and RoseFest appeal to the residents of East Harriet and surrounding neighborhoods and attracts close to a 800 area residents to the events each year.**

**KiteFest at Lake Harriet:** East Harriet organizes 45 volunteers to serve cider, sell & assemble kites, assist with horse drawn wagon rides and help with the kid's medallion hunt for KiteFest every year.

**RoseFest at Lyndale Farmstead Park:** 100 volunteers (mostly East Harriet residents) set up, sell tickets, assist with carnival games, inflatables, dunk tank, scoop up snow cones, grill and serve food. East Harriet businesses are sponsors for the event. Weather proved to be a challenge in 2011. Rain and lightening the night before delayed set up to the next morning however, volunteers rose to the task and we were ready to open at noon. Attendance on the day of the event was down due to a high heat index but again volunteers showed up and stayed to the end! This is a huge event, involving many members of the community, but it also is a tremendous commitment on the part of the organizers.

**Earth Day cleanup at Lake Harriet:** East Harriet Parks, Environment and Schools Committee partners with Linden Hills and the park to host Earth Day at Lake Harriet. EHFNA encourages residents to put on gloves and pick up garbage bags and rakes for this yearly event. Although this event is dependent on weather, it continues to have a good turnout of residents and local groups.

**Sale-o-Rama:** EHFNA coordinates the sale by gathering the individual sale information, creating maps, placing ads and distributing the packets to each sale location. East Harriet has coordinated the sale on the same day as CARAG to attract more buyers to the neighborhood. A couple of dozen residents officially sign up for the garage sale, and we

***have found many additional households participate by setting up sales on the same day. It has become a neighborhood tradition.***

***Garden Tour: East Harriet partnered with CARAG to revive the Garden Tour in our neighborhood. Although we attracted a few gardens, we found that there is not a big interest in this event and will not go forward with the garden tour in 2012.***

***Open Streets Event: EHFNA participated in this first annual event initiated by the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition. The event takes place on Lyndale from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 42<sup>nd</sup> Street bordering our neighborhood's eastern border. East Harriet partnered with Bethlehem Lutheran Church and sponsored bike decorating for kids followed by a parade. We found it was difficult to organize the parade but the bike decorating was a hit and we plan on participating again in 2012.***

***Other Events: The Walking History Tour co-hosted with Linden Hills and National Night were both successful. East Harriet is planning another walking history tour for 2012. The Crime Committee continues to look for ways to increase the number of block leaders and future NNO participation for East Harriet.***

***Annual Meeting –Held in October, the annual meeting offered music, food, interaction with neighbors and a chance to hear about EHFNA, speak to board and committee members about involvement in the neighborhood and hear from the local elected officials. Elections are held for open board positions. East Harriet residents can seek a position and or participate in the voting.***

### ***3. Stakeholder Involvement***

Reviewing your submission for CPP funds for 2011, how did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities? Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful?

***East Harriet volunteers worked with the Walker Methodist staff to purchase, prep and store food for RoseFest. This partnership has helped with the cost of food, preparation time and a provided a convenient location to store and access food during the festival.***

***Most of our board and committee meetings are held at Walker Methodist, an extensive senior residence and care facility, making it easy for the seniors to attend our meetings and bringing neighborhood residents into the facility, promoting relationships between the neighborhood and Walker residents.***

***East Harriet communicates and promotes VOA Southwest Senior Center activities and announcements in our eNews and website. We also rent office space in this building which keeps us in close contact with their staff.***

***Volunteers delivered doorhangers /flyers to all homes/apartment buildings on two separate occasions: To promote RoseFest and inform residents of the final recommendation by the 6<sup>th</sup> District Off-Leash Recreation Area CAC. In addition, a survey was conducted to get feedback from residents about the impending Dog Park. The flyer***

***and survey were our best vehicle to get information out fast about issues that will potentially have a big impact on our residents.***

***A 5 X 7 postcard was mailed to all residents promoting the Annual Meeting in October. Both the doorhangers and postcard encourage a broad neighborhood attendance and involvement.***

***We find that the doorhangers can be effective in promoting events. We will continue to promote the use of our facebook page, eNews (548 subscribers) and website as the main source of information about city services, local events, news, neighborhood events, and volunteer opportunities. ENews blasts are the best way to inform residents of more pressing issues.***

***Surveys can be effective depending on the issue at hand and how it affects then resident. In the case of the Off Leash Dog Park in our neighborhood, residents had strong feelings both ways and were more inclined to respond to a survey. A combination of online and a face to face survey at events will have more impact.***

Please also provide the following:

- A. How many people currently serve on your board? Are there vacancies?  
***Two vacancies***
- B. Approximately how many individuals have participated in committee meetings in the last year?  
***22***
- C. How many people attended your annual meeting?  
***45***
- D. How many households regularly receive your publications (such as newsletters or newspapers)?  
***560***
- E. Approximately how many people participate in other activities of the organization?  
***150***

***4. Financial Reports***

Please provide an income and expense report for your organization for the year. (Please include all funding sources).

**In addition to your annual report, please take time to describe your interactions with City departments and other jurisdictions.**

**1. Impact**

What interactions occupied a major part of your time? What worked well, what could be improved?

***Creating the CPP Plan, policies and Annual Report consumed significant board time from May through September. Also during that time major events including RoseFest and planning for EHFNA Annual Meeting took a lot of time. East Harriet is a small neighborhood, with part-time staff, and a new inexperienced board meeting once a month. Reliance upon city staff is critical.***

***Interactions based on the experiences of various committees and board:***

***Crime, safety, transportation, and noise committee (CSTN)***

- Police: The CSTN committee interacts very well with the Minneapolis Police department and the corresponding Crime Prevention Specialists. The interactions average 5 hours per month. This may include meetings with the department, classes taken for continued education, connecting the police with the residents. What has worked very well is the open communication between the community and the department. What could be improved is for both the community and department to continue to communicate with each other.***
- Bicycle Department: Working with the bicycle department really started recently. Interactions average 4 hours a month, with an increase during the summer months. What works well is the information available and the quick and valuable information that is sent back concerning questions the neighborhood may have. The CSTN committee does not have any suggestions for improvement at this time.***

***Parks, environment, and schools committee (PES)***

***The PES committee's interaction with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has been mixed. See the following two examples.***

- 1. The search for a location for an Off-Leash Recreation Area (dog park) in the 6th park district was centered on the East Harriet Neighborhood. The MPRB solicited EHFNA for 2 members of the CAC, which we appreciated. Unfortunately, because of the divisiveness of the issue, the CAC expanded significantly in both membership and time (12 meetings). Some of the most strident and angry folks from the previous failed Dog Park efforts were put on the CAC, increasing the divisiveness. As a Neighborhood Board, we saw that this issue had the potential to have a big impact on our neighborhood park and residents and we performed extensive outreach to our***

**residents through flyers and a survey, which was presented to the CAC. This issue consumed a large amount of the EHFNA Board's energy during 2011.**

- 2. A local artist, with a well-established reputation for installation art, wanted to indefinitely loan a sculpture to the MPRB. The MPRB referred the artist to the EHFNA Board (and PES Committee) to get neighborhood support for placing the sculpture in a park in our neighborhood. The artist was told by the MPRB that if the Neighborhood Board championed his sculpture, no interest groups were opposed to its placement, he had a funding proposal, and he had a good presentation that the Park Board would think about letting his sculpture be placed in the Park. Neither our Committee nor our Board has personnel to assess the value and placement of any public piece of art. Our Board did not have the training or resources to evaluate such a proposal, while the MPRB and City do in fact have paid staff to do just this. However, we appreciated that the MPRB sought input from the neighborhood. In the future, we would appreciate having the MPRB provide a recommendation before it was referred to the neighborhood.**

**Regarding schools, everyone that the PES committee has met, including the administrators, teachers and concerned parents at Barton, Stonebridge, and Lyndale Schools have been responsive, straight-forward, student-focused.**

*City Communications – effectiveness*

Is the information that you receive from the City understandable and useful?

**Department specific emails are good.**

**Figuring out the new CPP system has been challenging. The Board submitted to NCR staff questions regarding the new 2012-2013 CPP application and funding requirements and waited a long time to get answers - 6 weeks in one case. This delayed our CPP application. However, NCR staff have been very helpful in meeting with us to educate us about the system.**

*City Communications – timeliness*

Do you receive adequate notice of City activities in your neighborhood? If not, did your organization inform somebody at the City of this? Did the City respond in a positive manner? Please explain.

**In most cases, yes. Some delay in EHFNA getting information from MPBR on the Off Leash Dog Park during the CAC process and currently during their construction planning. Committee members contacted the park staff and park commissioner to request updates and MPRB staff have responded in a positive manner with relevant information.**

2. *City Departments*

How can City departments improve the way in which they function in your neighborhood?

***We are fortunate to have some of the gems in the Park System in our neighborhood, so we are heavily impacted by the MPRB. More transparency from the MRPB would be welcomed. It is difficult to figure out to whom within the MPRB to address particular concerns. One idea is to make more accessible the contact information for key staff (Chief of Park Police, Superintendent, etc) with clear, understandable explanations of what areas they are responsible for.***

3. *City Assistance*

How can the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department improve the assistance it provides to your organization as a citizen participation group?

***More accessibility to NCR staff. The long delay in getting answers to questions is discouraging. We were expecting a team-approach wherein various NCR staff would have specialties and we would be referred to the 'expert' in a particular matter.***

***The many reports and applications take a disproportionately large amount of time, especially during the transition from NRP to CPP. Our Board is made up of volunteers who have limitations on their time. It would be helpful to streamline the reporting system and rules.***

***Could a representative from NCR attend our Board meetings periodically to foster our relationship and facilitate better communication about: what NCR can and can't do, the regulations that the neighborhood Board is subject to, etc. It would put a face with a name and help the Board understand the system in which they are operating. The entire Board, rather than the neighborhood coordinator and 1 or 2 Board members, would become more familiar with NCR and its staff.***

4. *Other comments?*