

Northside Residents Redevelopment Council (NRRC)

Community Participation Program 2010-2011 Annual Reports

1. Accomplishments

What were your organization's major accomplishments in 2011? How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?

NRRC went into 2011 as a board managed organization after transitioning from the leadership of the previous administration. While it was an uphill battle gaining understanding of the administrative side of the organization, the board was invigorated by the implementation of its strategic implementation plan drafted in 2010. The second half of 2011 was primarily dedicated to aiding and assisting in the recovery efforts from [the May 22, 2011 tornado](#) that rocked half of the north Minneapolis neighborhoods.

The board of directors resolved to delve into the historic roots of the organization to re-establish a genuine and robust relationship with the residents of Near North and Willard Hay. To that end, 2 neighborhood gatherings were planned and several collaborations were organized to bolster cross-organizational relationships and to broaden resident engagement.

The district wide resident gatherings were themed beginning with the first geared towards re-familiarizing residents with NRRC and announcing its refreshed implementation of a robust resident engagement process. Over 100 residents participated in the interactive gathering and there was overall excitement and anticipation of set on a course to accomplish the goals of the strategic plan¹. A back to school ice cream social themed district wide gathering was held in the fall 2011. No less than 100 residents attended the event where free school supplies were distributed and residents were able to get information from no less than eight education related agencies and organizations that were present at their own information tables

Hosted by NRRC and held at The Capri Theater, [Solutions Twin Cities Volume 4](#)² was a collaboration with Works Progress which brought over 100 participants together to hear about 11 innovative movements, all with a unique artistic approach to their body of work³.

Late in 2010 NRRC was approached by founder/community activist Michael Chaney to inform and engage the community on the concepts of urban farming as a means of community driven economic development. Hundreds of resident volunteers and dozens of agencies participated in the inaugural year of Project Sweetie Pie including [North High School \(a school with historic precedence that NRRC and the community continue to fight to keep open\)](#). The NRRC Green Team which consists of resident volunteers, Step-Up Students and NRRC board members, collaborated and provided staffing and management in conjunction with the North High horticulture program. The program continued to expand through the growing season to include in kind donations from local merchants; the use of privately owned residential vacant lots to grow produce that was either donated through existing channels or sold to local vendors, generate revenue and business

¹ See attached NRRC Board Strategic Retreat Summary 2010

² <http://solutionstwincities.org/event.htm>

³ See attached Citizen Participation (CPP) 2010-2011 Annual Report Supplement

training for North High students⁴. The resident engagement incubator/fiscal agent service model NRRC applied to the Project Sweetie Pie grassroots movement was successful in that it added to the movements stability and credibility which led to it ultimately being funded to employ a group of 7 neighborhood youth.

Additionally, in August, less than 90 days following the tragic May 22, 2011 tornado, approximately 60 urban farm enthusiasts participated in this year's [Urban Ag Tour](#)⁵. One of the stops on the tour was "The Olive Garden" located in Willard Hay at 1422 Oliver Avenue North⁶.

Taking place in June, 2011, A [Give & Take](#)⁷ event was held at the 5 points building which is also host to KMOJ. The Give & Take event was the first community event that followed the May 22nd tornado. No less than 100 Residents and curious visitors poured into the building to share: "What do you know?" And learn "what do you want to know?" Give & Take helps curious attendees answer those questions through a sort of show and tell program that features cocktails and speakers. Mary deLaittre, the founder and principal of Groundwork discussed RiverFIRST, the winning proposal in the [Minneapolis Riverfront Redesign Competition](#)⁸; baker and entrepreneur Lynette Coleman of The Pie NetteWork talked about pies and cooking-up a small business; and Bill and Beverly Cottman, and their daughter [Kenna](#)⁹, shared their knowledge of re-collections and re-tellings of ancestral facts and fictions. In all, the Give & Take was more about the telling soul of north Minneapolis, pictures of the tragic tornado were shared and the resilience of the resident community was displayed by the dance recital and sentiments shared by residents.

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?

In collaboration with Northside Developers Group (convened by Nexus Partners), NRRC along with 10 other north Minneapolis agencies organized an Erase Racism workshop. Along with a great opportunity for cross organization collaboration, the event provided board members, staff and several residents additional tools and strategies to broaden resident engagement among historically underrepresented ethnic and cultural groups.

Efforts to increase identify and engage additional block club leaders were somewhat stifled by the lack of staff through the first half of the year and somewhat hindered thereafter due to the May 22, 2011 tornado. The board composition shifted as the board chair stepped down to assume the duties previously carried out by the executive director. The board's primary engagement member was unexpectedly thrust into an acting chair position further hindering the organization's ability to reach out to block club leaders as the primary focus was on tornado recovery and stabilizing the organization's financial holdings.

Cross organization collaboration efforts were successful as illustrated by: Solutions Volume 4 event; Erase Racism Workshop; Give & Take Event.

Providing fiscal agent services was successful in assisting grassroots groups carryout out their respective engagement missions. These collaborations put NRRC in a position to assist in carrying

⁴ See Attached Project Sweetie Pie photo flyer

⁵ <http://www.tcurbanag.com/new-urban-ag-tour-info.html>

⁶ See attached Citizen Participation (CPP) 2010-2011 Annual Report Supplement

⁷ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/worksprogress/5910542792/in/set-72157627009683261>

⁸ <http://minneapolisriverfrontdesigncompetition.com/>

⁹ <http://compas.org/artists/kenna-camara-cottman>

out the program goals aimed at engaging youth and senior populations, as well as bridging the two (Project Sweetie Pie; Grandparents Shaping Communities).

The attempts to leverage resources available through the cities Neighborhood and Community Relations department were not so successful as much of the resources were dedicated to tornado recovery and supporting the neighborhoods collectively (Northside Neighborhoods Council. NNC).

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?

The senior citizen population is an underrepresented population in north Minneapolis.

Throughout 2011 NRRC Partnered with two separate resident groups whose members are primarily senior citizens. NRRC worked with the Near Northside Senior Collaborative (NNSC) throughout the year to host events to broaden both the visibility and membership of the NNSC. Events culminated in coordinated voter registration and GOTV efforts to mobilize the residents of a high-rise senior citizen building.

Secondly, NRRC provided administrative support to Grandparents Shaping Community, a senior group with resident membership primarily from the Willard Hay neighborhood.

Offering underrepresented groups administrative support proved helpful in keeping NRRC involved in more resident driven activities. NRRC was also able to distribute the activities and information of these respective groups more efficiently and timely when NRRC was more intricately involved in the production and/or duplication of the materials.

Please also provide the following:

- A. How many people currently serve on your board? 23 resident leaders were seated on the 2011 board of directors.
 - a. Are there vacancies? There are a total of 35 seats available including several at-large seats that are reserved for individuals with specific skill sets that would forward the organization's mission.
- B. Approximately how many individuals have participated in committee meetings in the last year? Approximately 250-300 individuals participated in committee meetings in 2011. The most significant participation was the Residential Commercial Task Force which considers proposals from developers seeking building permits, variances or using public funding for neighborhood development projects. Residents who participate in these meetings tend to reside in the immediate impact area around the proposed developments.
- C. How many people attended your annual meeting? Approximately 40 including the state Senator and House representative of the district.
- D. How many households regularly receive your publications (such as newsletters or newspapers)? NRRC did not generate its own newsletter however, it partnered with other agencies and list serves to distribute its events (Insight News, 5th Ward Council Member's 5th Ward Newsletter and weekly community updates)
- E. Approximately how many people participate in other activities of the organization? **200**

4. *Financial Reports*

Please provide an income and expense report for your organization for the year. (Please include all funding sources)¹⁰.

¹⁰ See attachment NRRC Financial Report 2011 (CPP submission)

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?

NCEC-the representative that covered Willard Hay and Near North did not engage with residents as the council had expected and as outlined in the NCEC charter

NCR-Staff made numerous efforts to engage neighborhood councils and offered resources to better afford councils the likelihood of carrying out industry best practices related to resident engagement

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

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

Information received from the city of Minneapolis tends to be understandable and useful to English speaking readers. Documents in alternative languages are believed to be available through the NCR department but NRRC did not have cause to engage this resource in 2011 but hopes to in coming years.

3. *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.

Timely information remains an effort that all agencies including city staff work to improve. NRRC staff spent a considerable amount of time learning the city's processes that include resident engagement components.

Regular communication with NCR staff was maintained to share the concerns with the lack of timeliness that neighborhoods get information as it significantly impacts the neighborhood councils' ability to effectively inform their respective constituent resident bases.

4. *City Departments*

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

Communicate staff changes as they occur; hold annual information sessions in the community so that both residents and neighborhood councils better understand the processes and inter-department processes as they relate to resident engagement processes

5. *City Assistance*

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

Communicate to city departments the importance of authentic resident engagement and support the processes the respective neighborhood councils use to garner broad resident engagement;

Continue to communicate the importance of neighborhood councils to City Council members; encourage city council representatives to respect the process rather than allowing residents to circumvent the engagement process by engaging directly with city council when they find themselves in a minority position relative to the broader community.

6. *Other comments? Efforts of the NCR department are appreciated and supported by NRRC. There is a concern that while African Americans constitute a significant percentage of the population of Minneapolis, there is no African American neighborhood specialist. NRRC hopes this to be remedied in the coming year.*