

Community Participation Program 2012 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Lynnhurst Neighborhood Association (LYNAS)

Contact person: Ruth Olson

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1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2012, Please provide information about:

- **What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2012?**
 - LYNAS Annual Meeting
 - Monthly LYNAS Board Meetings
 - Earth Day Clean-Up
 - Compost Bin/Rain Barrel Sale
 - LYNAS Summer Festival
 - LYNAS Garage Sales
 - Buckthorn Bust
 - Lynnhurst Environment Committee (LEC): Stormwater Management Forum
 - Environmental Enduring Environs Blog
 - LEC "Adopt a Storm Drain" Program
 - LYNAS Holiday Boutique
 - LYNAS Low-Interest, Revolving Loan Housing Program
 - LYNAS Business Exteriors Grant Program
 - Quarterly Print newsletter delivered to 2,000+ households
 - E-mail blasts (occasional)
 - LYNAS Facebook Page
 - LYNAS website
 - Nextdoor Lynnhurst

- **How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2012?**

Historically, senior citizens are not well represented in the activities of the neighborhood. LYNAS specifically chose to reach out to seniors via its new low-interest, revolving loan Housing Program. Support to senior citizens in the guidelines of the Housing Program called for eligible improvements that accommodate the elderly and/or disabled and allow them to stay in their homes. These accommodations include but are not limited to wheelchair ramps, chair lifts, and stair railings.

LYNAS advertised the program by a mailed postcard and notices in print newsletters. Further outreach was done by electronic media.

- **Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful? Why?**

The annual Summer Festival was again extremely popular and appealed to a wide variety of neighborhood residents.

Other smaller activities have been offered to appeal to smaller segments of the neighborhood population: environmental forums, 1st Annual Holiday Boutique, social media networking, etc.

The new social networking site, Nextdoor Lynnhurst, has been a useful tool to carry on neighborhood conversations. This is a new networking tool that is similar to Facebook, but meant for neighborhoods. We have seen an increased participation on this site and expect it to continue.

All of these activities allowed LYNAS the opportunity to share information about the Neighborhood Organization, available community resources and to recruit volunteers.

- **What did not work so well? Why?**

LYNAS has discovered that its website is not functioning well and is not user-friendly. We have contracted for a re-design on the site and this is currently underway. It is our hopes to offer neighborhood residents a more useful, informative, up to date and easy to navigate website.

- **How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)?**

We reached approximately 125 people through our monthly meetings, the Annual Meeting and through phone and/or e-mail contact.

- **How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?**

Approximately 150 individuals volunteered in organizational activities.

- **How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?**

Approximately 2,200 individuals participated in activities- primarily at the Summer Festival, the Holiday Boutique, the Annual Meeting and the garage sales. Although we know how many individuals hosted garage sales, it is difficult to gauge how many attended the sales.

- **How many people receive your print publications?**

2,000+ residents receive our print publications.

- **How many people receive your electronic communications?**

410 people receive our electronic communications and another 100-200 participate on Facebook and Nextdoor.

2. 2012 Highlights

Please describe one or two major highlights, and if possible, please include digital photos or illustrations:

- **What was the issue or opportunity the neighborhood was facing?**
Lynnhurst residents are environmentally focused and looking for opportunities to be good stewards of our natural resources -- undeveloped land, air, water, plants and animals.
- **Who was impacted?**
All Lynnhurst residents are affected by better stewardship of natural resources.
- **What steps did you take to address the issue or opportunity?**
The Lynnhurst Environmental Committee (LEC) hosted Earth Day Clean-Up, a rainbarrel/compost bin sale, Buckthorn Bust, a Stormwater Management Forum, the "Adopt a Drain" Program, four newsletters and also launched the Enduring Environs Blog.
- **What was the outcome?**
Many residents attended or participated in the LEC activities and they have successfully educated residents about environmental issues and opportunities in the neighborhood.



3. Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2012:

Other activity in 2012 focused on our major business district at W. 54th St. and Lyndale Ave. S. This district is shared with three other neighborhoods, Kenny, Tangletown and Windom, all of whom believe that maintaining the vitality and attractiveness of this district is important to our quality of life. This area endured a 9-month long road reconstruction project which negatively impacted the businesses. LYNAS worked with the local business association (NEHBA) to offer support to the businesses by promoting "shop local" through our communication tools and helping fund a Re-Opening Celebration for the Lyndale bridge to raise awareness that access to this area was back to normal.

To help enhance the appeal of this district, LYNAS continued to be part of a committee with representatives of the four neighborhoods. The goal of this multi-neighborhood committee is to work with the businesses and NEHBA to implement a streetscaping project. The four neighborhoods have committed to contributing a significant portion of the initial capital cost of installing attractive street features such as benches and bike racks if the businesses agree to establish a Special Services District to maintain these items. Ongoing discussions are being held with key property owners on this. The four neighborhoods believe the end result will be an attractive commercial environment and the foundation for possible further enhancements to this area over the next several years.

- **How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?**

The businesses were directly impacted by being able to stay open during construction. Residents now still have local, small businesses available within walking and/or biking distance of their homes.

4. *Housing*

What percentage of time did your organization spend on housing-related activities?

Approximately 4% of staff time was spent on housing-related activities. Our very successful home improvement loan program is administered by the Center for Energy and the Environment.

5. *Financial Reports*

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

See attached.

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

1. *Impact*

What interactions with City departments occupied a major part of your time? What worked well? What could be improved?

The majority of our time in interactions was spent with NCR, CPED and Minneapolis Park Board.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate your overall experience with your interactions with the City? ___3___

2. *City Communications - effectiveness*

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

Yes, it is understandable. However, fine-tuning communications to neighborhood specific needs would be appreciated.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City? ___3___

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.

There were very few notices of Lynnhurst specific activities (due to low activity). Those received appeared to be timely and appropriate. The Planning Activity Report is very useful and always received on a timely basis.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the timeliness of communications from the City? ___3___

4. *City Departments*

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

Better communication between and even within City Departments would help. Public Works is particularly difficult to navigate and get information from.

5. ***City Assistance***

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

Our NCR Specialist is somewhat difficult to reach and slow to return phone calls and e-mails. More timely responses would be appreciated.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the assistance provided to your neighborhood by NCR? 2

6. ***Other comments?***

LYNAS has been planning on using NRP Phase II funds to support streetscape elements at 54th St. and Lyndale Ave. S. This streetscape enhancement was to be a cooperative effort between Kenny, Lynnhurst, Tangletown and Windom neighborhoods.

As noted in Question 3 above, the road reconstruction was finally completed in 2012. We received budget estimates for the capital costs of the streetscape elements in a timely manner, but we have not been able to move forward with the plan due to the lack of response from Public Works. For over a year, the local Business Association (NEHBA) requested maintenance budget estimates for a Special Services District to support any streetscape elements. At this writing (early 2013), the maintenance budget has still not been received and the likelihood of the project is in jeopardy. This is hugely disappointing to us as this was a major focus of our NRP spending in the past and in the future. The neighborhood strongly values the business district and puts a high priority to funding in that area.