

MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

LOWRY HILL

NRP PHASE II

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

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Lowry Hill

NRP Phase II Plan

Proposed - April 2007

Neighborhood Description

The Lowry Hill neighborhood is bounded to the north by I-394, to the east by Hennepin Avenue, to the south by 22nd Street, and to the west by Kenwood Park.

Named for Thomas Lowry, one of the original residents and developers of the area, the neighborhood is home to the Walker Art Center, the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, and Thomas Lowry Park, a peaceful retreat in the middle of the city.

The neighborhood is also home to many historic and architecturally significant residential structures. Lowry Hill Residents, Inc. (originally Lowry Hill Homeowners, Inc.) was formed in 1946 with the primary purpose of preserving these structures and maintaining the residential character of the neighborhood.

Planning Process

The NRP Phase II Subcommittee designed and circulated a survey to the neighborhood's approximately 2200 households (See Attachments B and C). It posed a series of questions to residents about the Lowry Hill neighborhood, NRP generally, Lowry Hill Residents, Inc., NRP Phase I projects in Lowry Hill, priorities for NRP Phase II money, and demographic information.

Approximately 2200 postcards were mailed to the residents of Lowry Hill requesting their participation in the web-based survey. The survey was made available to all Lowry Hill residents via unique access codes included with the initial postcard. A follow-up mailing was done for all those residents who had not yet completed the survey, and a paper survey format was made available to anyone who request one.

The NRP Subcommittee made specific efforts to ensure that renters in Lowry Hill were included in mailings about the survey. And they collected demographic information from respondents to help ensure that they were reaching a reasonable cross-section of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood received 290 responses to the survey. At the time that residents completed the survey, they were informed that they could return to the web site upon the conclusion of the survey period to view the results compiled for the whole neighborhood.

Using the information from this survey and the neighborhood's Phase I Review (see Attachment A) as a key guide, the NRP Phase II Subcommittee developed draft Phase II strategies and the proposed allocation of funds to each of those strategies. During their work, the committee 1) determined what if any needs remained from Phase 1 projects, and 2) examined first broad then more specific questions on the survey about respondents' usage of the neighborhood, concerns & desires about the neighborhood, and finally there reasons for moving into and staying in the neighborhood.

They packaged these strategies into a draft plan and distributed the draft to all residents prior to the Lowry Hill Residents Inc. annual meeting for approval by the neighborhood. After a period of discussion and questions, the proposal was voted on and approved by those present at the meeting.

Section 1: Parks and Recreation

Strategy 1: **Park Improvements**

Strategy Description:

Work with nearby neighborhoods to make improvements to parks that serve Lowry Hill.

Examples of parks which would be targeted include: Kenwood Park which contains both green space which residents use for events both formal and informal and also includes recreational facilities such as tennis courts, ball fields, and a playground; Thomas Lowry Park which contains green spaces used for gathering for formal and informal events; Spring Lake Park which contains natural spaces which may be enjoyed on walking and biking trails; and Triangle Park which has playground facilities. Capital improvements are needed both at the parks that contain recreational facilities and the parks that contain just green spaces. For example, Spring Lake Park needs restoration work including removal of non-native plant species.

\$10,000	Improvements to Thomas Lowry Park
\$50,000	Improvements to tennis courts at Kenwood Park
\$40,000	Improvements to other parks resources: Kenwood Park/Recreation center, Spring Lake, Triangle Park, etc.

Strategy Implementor: Park Board

Public Partner(s): Minneapolis Public Works Department

Contract Manager: Minneapolis Finance Department DFD

NRP Phase II funds: \$100,000

Section 2: Community Improvements and Safety

Strategy 1: **Neighborhood Safety**

Strategy Description:

Provide support to efforts designed to enhance the safety of the neighborhood.
Among the more common safety issues that occur in the neighborhood are theft from autos, auto theft, and burglary. The types of crimes can be reduced through education of and communication with neighborhood residents. Support will be provided to activities such as Neighborhood Watch, lighting projects and other projects enhancing neighborhood safety when the situation warrants it.

Strategy Implementor: to be determined

Public Partner(s): Minneapolis Police and Public Works Departments

Contract Manager: DFD

NRP Phase II funds: \$20,000

Strategy 2: **Neighborhood Livability**

Strategy Description:

Support efforts designed to enhance the character and livability of the neighborhood.

Lowry Hill is one of the older more established neighborhoods in Minneapolis. The combination of attractive historic homes, and well-kept yards along relatively quiet streets that are lined with a mature tree canopy makes the neighborhood very livable and attractive to residents. There are a variety of issues that potentially threaten the character and livability of Lowry Hill. Dutch elm disease is an example of a threat that could wipe out a significant amount of the mature tree canopy along streets. Increased traffic problems as the result of commuters cutting through neighborhood streets, and parking on neighborhood streets to ride the bus into downtown are also examples of livability concerns.

Activities to be supported may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Elm tree program
- Streetscape improvements
- Traffic and parking mitigation

Strategy Implementor: to be determined

Public Partner(s): Park Board and Minneapolis Public Works Department

Contract Manager: DFD

NRP Phase II funds: to be determined

Section 3: Housing

Strategy 1: **Housing Projects**

Strategy Description:

Provide financial assistance to support housing projects in or near Lowry Hill.

Lowry Hill has some of the oldest housing stock in the city. Housing in the neighborhood is a blend of single-family residences, duplexes, triplexes, and, to a lesser extent, higher density housing.

Activities to be supported may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Structural or exterior improvements to homes and apartment buildings
- Incentives to encourage energy improvements to homes and apartment buildings
- Assistance to non-profit housing projects (e.g. The Bridge for Youth)

Strategy Implementor: to be determined

Contract Manager: DFD or CPED Housing Policy and Development Division

NRP Phase II funds: \$315,000

Section 4: History & Preservation

Strategy 1: **History and Preservation Efforts**

Strategy Description:

Support efforts to study, document, and promote the historic character of the neighborhood.

An historic context study of Lowry Hill is being conducted by professional consultants with Phase 1 NRP funds. Phase 2 projects would build on this work and might include an inventory of historic properties in the neighborhood and/or a publication that communicates the information gathered from these professional studies. One of the overarching goals of this strategy is to educate residents about the historic nature of the neighborhood, so that it is valued and protected by residents.

Strategy Implementor: to be determined

Contract Manager: DFD, NRP or CPED Planning Division

NRP Phase II funds: to be determined

Section 5: Administrative Support

Strategy 1: **Implementation Support**

Strategy Description:

Provide support for administration and costs associated with communicating with neighborhood residents.

Strategy Implementor: Lowry Hill Residents, Inc.

Contract Manager: NRP

NRP Phase II funds: \$13,754