

Neighborhood Program Options for Consideration

To Address Critical Issues

Neighborhoods 2020 is a unique opportunity to analyze our existing neighborhood and community engagement programming, structure, funding and oversight. NCR has taken care to make options available for City policy makers to consider, taking into account the historical success of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and Community Participation Program (CPP).

The City has long recognized the importance of neighborhood organizations and that they are an important link to the civic and community life of the City of Minneapolis. Neighborhood organizations are also in a unique position to identify local issues and opportunities in their communities and mobilize local resources.

The [Neighborhood and Community Relations department](#) (NCR) worked in collaboration with the [Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission \(NCEC\)](#), community partners, neighborhood organizations, City leaders, and other stakeholders to determine policy recommendations for the future programming and funding of neighborhood organizations.

We must look for constant ways of improving the services we provide to our residents through our granted agencies. Businesses and agencies that do not change and adapt to the changes in society and the world have a difficult time surviving and remaining relevant and competitive.

The options that include reform in Neighborhoods 2020 include ways we can plan for a more equitable, impactful and sustainable neighborhood funding system. The idea is not just to help neighborhood organizations survive past 2020, it is to help them thrive. It is also looking at a new model for an engagement policy at the City of Minneapolis and making sure that we have a two-way relationship with our contracted agencies and that the City, and each of its departments, is committed to creating consistency and transparency in our engagement efforts.

This is also an opportunity to evaluate how NCR can provide better services to residents, contracted agencies and City departments. The current staffing levels and structure make it difficult to meet the expectations of neighborhood organizations, City departments and other important partners. The most recent evaluation of [neighborhood programming](#) indicated that several more neighborhood support specialist staff at NCR should be hired and that the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) is in need of reform. None of this has occurred.

At this time, these options are presented for discussion purposes only. The NCR Department and the NCEC are not making recommendations to the City Council. Recommendations to the City Council will be developed after further community dialogue and work groups have taken place - anticipated date for this work to be completed is February 2019.



Option #1 – Partnership Model / Impact Assessment Model

The impact assessment model allows for neighborhood organizations to be classified and funded based on the capacity of the organization. Neighborhood classifications could be determined by a third party source with extensive knowledge of the Minneapolis neighborhood system or through self-assessment. The final determination would be vetted by NCR staff and the NCEC before going to the Minneapolis City Council for approval. An example of an impact assessment model is:

Level I organization –Has developed web site and newsletter, is creating partnerships and collaborations.

Level II organization – Is in the process of fiduciary certification, and has emerging community partnerships and renter leadership.

Level III organization – Has sufficient staffing for intended impact, and has outside funders, fiduciary certification, solid community partnerships, sustainable programming and leadership for renters and underrepresented groups.

Pros –

- Ability to increase partnerships across neighborhood organizations and increase mentorship between higher capacity groups and smaller capacity groups
- Not based solely on a complex funding formula, but based on what the neighborhood organization feels they can effectively accomplish with their grant funds through the City's application process
- Level II and III Organizations could provide administrative oversight for smaller Neighborhood organizations so they can focus more on community organizing
- Manages expectations from other stakeholders on what the capacity to provide outreach and engagement is for each funded organization

- Increases opportunities for more partnerships with cultural organizations and larger non-profit community-based organizations
- Increases fiduciary consistency throughout the neighborhood system
- Allows for complete autonomy of neighborhood organizations as separate from the City
- Increases capacity of NCR staff to focus on equity and inclusion efforts and the training and support that neighborhood, City departments and cultural organizations expect
- Increases consistency across the City for robust engagement opportunities in all areas of the City

Cons –

- Could result in lower funding for neighborhood organizations that do not wish to partner with a higher capacity organization
- Could result in additional staff and volunteer time in doing assessment and handling disputes
- May result in organizations growing too fast
- May result in additional staffing costs

Option #2 – Pooled Services Model

The pooled services model allows for neighborhood organizations to be funded at a capacity base level and for what they feel is possible to accomplish with their grant funds through an application process.

It differs from the impact assessment model in that some funds will go to pooled administrative and support services to a geographic area loosely based on the Minneapolis community boundaries. The pooled services model would provide administrative and inclusiveness support for neighborhood organizations and engagement support for the City departments.

Pros –

- Ability to provide more administrative support for neighborhood organizations such as financial management, payroll, HR, legal, risk management and policy and procedure development
- Allows for neighborhood organizations to focus more on community organizing and less on administration
- Allows for NCR to be more embedded in the community
- A more de-centralized approach to engagement support for City departments and leaders with more support and feedback on local projects, programs and policies
- NCR could create a pool of supportive services, including bi-lingual outreach support, translation, childcare, etc. – to support increased equitable engagement at the neighborhood level
- Increases fiduciary consistency throughout the neighborhood system

Cons –

- May result in an increased need for additional funding
- Potentially creates another layer of bureaucracy
- Could be seen as blurring the lines of independence of neighborhood organizations and the City

Option #3 – Community Participation Program (CPP) Model

The [Community Participation Program](#) model is the current model of engagement funding for neighborhood organizations on a three-year cycle based on a complex funding formula. The formula takes into consideration many factors of each neighborhood such as size, underrepresented groups, income and livability. The minimum allocation is \$25,000 per year. Neighborhood organizations receive an additional \$900 for Directors and Officers insurance.

Pros –

- Ability to maintain the existing robust system of 70 neighborhood organizations
- Minimizes disruption to the current neighborhood system
- Allows for complete autonomy of neighborhood organizations as separate from the City

Cons –

- Lack of fiduciary consistency across the system
- Capacity of neighborhood organizations varies widely
- Expectations of neighborhood organizations do not always match capacity
- Expectations of NCR do not always match capacity
- Outreach support for City programs, projects and policies varies by organization
- Limited capacity for systemic equity

Option # 4– To be determined – We want your ideas!

