



Community Participation Program Lyndale Neighborhood Association 2012 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Lyndale Neighborhood Association

Contact person: Mark Hinds

Date of Board Approval: May 13, 2013

Stakeholder Involvement

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

- **What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2012?**

LNA conducted a wide range of activities during 2012. At LNA our outreach and engagement activities start with a comprehensive communications program designed to make sure our community members have the information they need to be informed and engaged community members.

This includes publishing the award winning Lyndale Neighborhood News 12 times a year; having three electronic newsletters that include a general newsletter, one for volunteers, and one for neighborhood businesses that reach 1,459 people on a monthly basis. LNA also has a website (Lyndale.org) that is designed to be a community news site that saw substantial growth from 2011 to 2012. In 2012 Lyndale.org had 11,587 visits and 54,548 page views, which was 43 percent and 82 percent increase respectively from 2011.

LNA uses a variety of outreach techniques including door knocking, phone calls, flyers, block clubs, mailings, community events, etc. to build connections with community members. These activities are conducted on an ongoing basis around all of LNA's program activities.

LNA also provides a wide range of opportunities for community members to be engaged in their neighborhood's work. This includes serving on one of LNA's six active committees (Board, Environment, Housing, Business, Crime & Drug, and Volunteer), being a block-club leader, volunteering with one of LNA's programs, helping with a community event, directly working on a community project, serving on the board, or participating in General Membership meetings.

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

A major part of LNA's work the past few years has been trying to build a working multi-cultural community where all Lyndale Community Members feel welcome and encouraged to be a part of LNA's work.

This work has included the Lyndale Women's Leadership Program, where LNA works with cohorts of Latina and Somali women over an eight month period to help them become community leaders. In 2012, the program graduated our second Latina cohort and our first Somali cohort. A major part of the program is helping participants learn how to design and complete a community project of their choice.

LNA also started an ESL program at the end of 2011 and spent a considerable amount of 2012 building the program up and expanding it from two nights a week to three nights a week. During 2012 the program met in the evenings at Zion Church. The program recently expanded by starting to also offer class during the day three times a week. LNA's ESL program is designed to connect students and volunteers to LNA's other work.

In addition to this work, LNA organized several culturally oriented events, including our annual La Posada and Dia Del Nino events. In addition to our community events LNA also publishes a part of the Lyndale Neighborhood News in Spanish each month, added Spanish and Somali pages to our website, and conducted outreach efforts targeted specifically towards each community.

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

Yes! Our strategy of using longer term programs and activities, particularly the Women's Leadership Program and ESL Program to engage under-represented community members is really starting to pay off. What it enables us to do is to build meaningful relationships in ways that we could not do with just community events or door knocking alone.

It takes a long time to build trust and engage people, especially within new immigrant communities where community members have reasons to be wary of governmental institutions and may not have had any experience with community-based organizations.

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

The strategies LNA is using work well. The hardest thing with our model is making sure we have the financial resources necessary to support staff who are culturally and linguistically competent to work with all of our communities. LNA would not be able to support these programs and this work with the City's current level of support through the CPP and NRP programs.

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

LNA does not currently track direct contact like this with community members. We are currently working on a new system that will be designed to help us better understand our work in this area and with volunteers and hope to introduce it during 2012.

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

193

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

8,200 plus

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

4,537

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

We have three electronic newsletters that reach 1,459 people. The newsletters are the Lyndale E-News, which is our general information newsletter; Lyndale Gives Back, which is targeted towards volunteer opportunities in the neighborhood; and Lyndale Business Matters which is targeted towards neighborhood businesses.

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?
- Who was impacted?
- What steps did you take to address the issue or opportunity?
- What was the outcome?

A major issue facing Lyndale during 2012 was the reconstruction of Nicollet Avenue. Nicollet Avenue is a main thoroughfare in the neighborhood. LNA was heavily involved in advocating for the funding for reconstruction and in the planning of the redesigned street.

The last major work on Nicollet Avenue was in 1954 when the old street and streetcar tracks were paved over. The last mill and overlay for the street was in 1977. Since then the lack of investment in the corridor has severely inhibited investment and resulted in the area feeling like a forgotten part of the city.

The lack of investment and deterioration of the area has combined in recent years to have a major impact on the neighborhood, with the corridor acting as a drag on the rest of the neighborhood. This contributed to making the area feel unsafe and discouraged people from patronizing businesses.

Leading up to 2012, LNA worked with residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to help lead the way to develop a vision for a new Nicollet Avenue at the center of the neighborhood.

For this year's construction LNA worked with CPED, Public Works, and the City Council to make sure the construction process was well defined and that a really hard year would have as little impact on neighborhood businesses and community members as a possible.

To help mitigate the impact of construction LNA:

- Developed a partnership with CPED to conduct an innovative marketing campaign called Live Nicollet. The campaign included paid advertising, an online component, signage, regular features on local businesses, and a customer loyalty effort.
- Regularly doorknocked businesses in the neighborhood
- Provided regular communication with businesses and residents about the construction process.

The work LNA put into this effort should payoff for years to come. The new Nicollet Avenue is a beautiful street that you can tell was designed to encourage people to get out of their cars and walk-around. The work with the businesses helped them to ride out

the storm and to introduce them to community members who will hopefully become regular customers.

2012 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2012:

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

2012 was a good year for LNA, we were able to continue making progress on achieving our vision of creating a safe, vibrant, and sustainable community. This included our ongoing efforts to engage as many people as possible in their neighborhood's work, our inclusive organizing work to connect with our new immigrant community members, and large community events. We were also able to support neighborhood businesses through the Live Nicollet campaign and work with community members' to identify items that were important for them Curiosities of Lyndale public art project.

The two accomplishments that stood out the most from 2012 were related to our inclusive organizing work. The first accomplishment was the second year of the Women's Leadership Program that graduated its second Latina cohort and first Somali cohort of community leaders. In addition to helping develop 24 new leaders, the program also engaged 80 percent of the women from the program's first year.

The culmination of the program is the community project where participants conduct outreach to assess needs in the community and then develop a project that addresses that need. The Latina cohort developed Club de Niños which addressed a gap in services for young children and their families. The Club de Niños happened over the course of eight weeks in the summer of 2012, with the women taking on leadership roles at each meeting that highlighted their skills and talents. Lyndale is now up for Neighborhood of the Year from Neighborhoods USA because of this project. The Somali cohorts community project focused on expanding ESL class to included day classes.

The second accomplishment was building up the Lyndale English as a Second Language (ESL) Program, which started in November of 2011 and expanded its classes from two nights a week to three while providing over 3,000 hours of instruction during 2012. Being able to get this program up and running was a major accomplishment for LNA and one that should benefit the community for years to come.

These programs and our other inclusive organizing work are helping LNA see significant growth in engagement from traditionally underrepresented communities. Both programs are unique in that they are intentionally designed to build community and give participants the tools they need to have a voice in helping to shape the community. From English language skills to leadership skills, these programs give participants the confidence, connections, and help to build relationships that enable them and their families to thrive – something we are very proud of as an organization.

1. Housing

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

LNA's core staff spent approximately 8 percent of their time as a group on housing related activities in 2012. This was equivalent to around a 1,000 hours of staff time. It's important to note that LNA operates a number of programs and other activities that take a significant amount of staff time that are not related to housing related activities.

2. Financial Reports

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

The following is a summary of LNA's 2012 revenue and expenses. These numbers are unaudited numbers.

	Total Actual 2012
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
40000 - INCOME	
4-00100 - Contracts	
Total 4-00100 - Contracts	211,294.81
Total 4-10000 - Government Grants	40,046.91
Total 4-40000 - Corporate/Foundation Support	122,500.00
Total 4-41000 - Neighborhood Support	31,139.96
Total 4-50000 - Earned Revenues	11,353.81
Total 40000 - INCOME	429,199.17
Expense	
Total 5-11001 - Salaries	239,944.25
Total 5-12300 - Benefits	21,550.22
Total 5-12400 - Payroll taxes	19,737.74
Salaries & Benefits Total	281,668.71
Contractors	3,666.25
Office Expenses	11,379.95
Program Expenses	96,113.88
Property Expenses	19,537.47
Total Expense	412,366.26
Net Income	16,832.91
Balance Sheet Items	
Reserves	
Capital Reserve	900
Operating Reserve	3600
Total Reserves	4500
Mortgage Principal Payments	
3537 Mortgage - Primary	2686.55
3537 Mortgage - Upstairs Renovation	5985.96
NRP Loan - Back Yard Renovation	4396.88
Total Mortgage Principal Payments	13069.39
Other Capital Expenditures	0
	0
Total Balance Sheet Items	17569.39
	0
Net Operating Balance	(736.48)

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?

During 2012, most of our interactions with the City were through Public Works and CPED related to the Nicollet Avenue construction project. We also regularly worked on a wide variety of issues with the Council Members offices from Ward 10 and Ward 8 and some with staff from the NCR Department on our Women's Leadership Program. We will greatly miss Roman Gonzalez who was with the NCR Department during 2012, he regularly provided us with an incredible high level of support that went above and beyond what we could expect.

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? _____4_____

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

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

Sometimes, it often depends on which department is sending out the information. We often find that most of the legal notices we get are almost indecipherable for staff who work on these issues all the time, let alone community members. We would also like the City to more regularly publish information in multiple languages, which means going beyond just saying if you would like this translated.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City? _____2_____

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.

This is one of our many areas of frustration with the City. So many of the notices and communication pieces we receive from the City are timed so late in the process that it is very difficult to engage community members around the issue at hand – and even when we do the information is often dismissed out of hand. An additional issue is that we often receive so many communications that is difficult to sort through them to identify the high priorities are from the neighborhood's perspective. We have tried to relay this information through City staff and Council Members numerous times, but it doesn't seem to have any affect on the process.

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? _____2_____

4. *City Departments*

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

One of the main ways City departments can improve how they function with neighborhoods is to start by developing some respect for the work that we do. It's very difficult to approach working with departments, when you so often hear City staff bad-mouthing neighborhoods in public meetings. This happens on a regular basis and includes staff from the NCR Department and seems to be a part of a culture that is dismissive of real community engagement and the work of neighborhood associations.

City Assistance

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

The most important thing the NCR Department can do is to become an advocate for neighborhoods and neighborhood funding. The work neighborhood organizations are trying to do can not be done well with the current level of support from the City.

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? ____1____

5. *Other comments?*

We would be happy to sit down to discuss the issues we have raised in the comments on working with the City and the NCR Department.