



## **Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood (CIDNA) 2011 Annual Report to Neighborhood and Community Relations**

### **Accomplishments**

CIDNA's major accomplishments for 2011 focused on protection of the natural quality of the environment and enhancement of public spaces in the Cedar-Isles-Dean neighborhood. These projects support the ***City of Minneapolis "Eco-Focused" goal.***

Park Siding Park (PSP), a highly utilized, jewel of Cedar-Isles-Dean, was, and continues to be, a primary focus for the neighborhood. Through neighbor outreach, it was found that while the park offers a play area for families with young children, the park lacked attraction to other demographics. CIDNA's NRP Committee worked closely with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) to develop the following enhancements:

- Redesign and replace plantings in four large flower beds with sustainable species
- Install drip irrigation system in flowerbeds – approx. 2000 sq. ft.
- Install two permanent table tennis tables. These will be the first of their kind in the City of Mpls and Mpls Parks system
- Replace drinking fountain
- Plant new trees (magnolias) and replacement of diseased trees

Our neighborhood's volunteer gardeners have been an invaluable help in the development of plans and on-going maintenance.

Cedar Lake South Beach also saw some renovation in 2011.

- Additional, fresh shoreline sand
- Tree stump removal
- Painting of lifeguard chair
- Planting beds cleaned out

In previous years, the neighborhood had been told by the MPRB that any upgrade or renovations to Cedar Lake South Beach was on hold due to the impending SW-LRT (5-6 years from now). While there are other beach enhancements and pedestrian/bike safety upgrades we would like to see happen, we feel it was an accomplishment to have some attention paid to South Beach in 2011.

To support the ***City of Minneapolis goal – "A Safe Place to Call Home"*** - CIDNA also worked to maintain and improve resident and pedestrian safety.

Personal and email interaction revealed that residents were concerned about the rash of home, garage and vehicle break-ins in the neighborhood. With support and

coordination with the Minneapolis Police Department 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct, a Burglary Prevention workshop was held in May 2011. Chelsea Adams, Crime Prevention

Specialist, 5<sup>th</sup> Percent, provided information and answered questions. Ms. Adam's information was well received by homeowners, renters and commercial property/business owners in attendance.

CIDNA also created a task force to find a ways to provide safer pedestrian access on Sunset Blvd (east of Chowen to South Beach) and better separation of bike and pedestrian traffic at South Beach. While neither of these goals were accomplished, the outreach and engagement with the community regarding these projects was extensive. Five public meetings were held, a survey with over 100 respondents conducted, comment cards collected at meetings and Board resolutions approved and submitted to the City, MPRB and Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES).

Other events occurring in 2011 were:

(Events supporting **City of Mpls goal: "Livable Communities"**)

- Community Energy Services Workshop and Home Visits - 41 CIDNA households participated. Our staff member, Monica Smith, won an Outstanding Contribution Award on behalf of CIDNA for coordinating the promotion of the program in the neighborhood.
- Loan to Nonprofits Assistance Fund to support affordable housing in Mpls

(Events supporting **City of Mpls goal: "Many People, One Minneapolis"**)

- Fall Festival – despite inclement weather, approx. 125+ people, including homeowners and renters, were in attendance. Area businesses assisted in creating a successful event by donating funding, beverages, food and gift certificates.

### **2011 CPP Submission**

NCR (CPP) applications were due in early March 2011. Nearly simultaneously, CIDNA was working on getting approval of our NRP Phase II Action Plan (approved by City Council, Feb. 25, 2011). Input and data collected from NRP development surveys were deemed adequate in determining priorities for CPP.

Residents were kept informed via e-newsletters, website updates, articles/minutes publication in the local newspaper – *Hill & Lake Press* - and postcards mailing.

2011 community engagement activities in addition to the above were:

- Earth Day clean-up at Cedar Lake – April
- Annual Meeting - May
- Annual Wine Tasting fundraiser - October
- Establishment of "The Edge" (with West Calhoun neighborhood) - October

## **Stakeholder Involvement**

Our under-represented groups in Cedar-Isles-Dean are renters and business owners. We used electronic and print communication tools to reach out to all residents. Our goal is to insure our mailing list penetrates all apartment and multi-unit buildings in our neighborhood. We are continuing to work with our mail house.

CIDNA holds its Board elections at the May Annual Meeting. Officers are elected at the subsequent meeting in June. The board that served through most of 2011 consisted of 10 members (5 vacancies) and included one renter.

CIDNA's seven standing committees in 2011 included: NRP/PPP, Transportation, Land Use and Development, Fall Festival, Variance, The Edge, and Crime and Safety. Each committee had a varying number of volunteers and participants based on the project or task at hand. The NRP/PPP Committee, which consists of four core members, holds monthly meetings outside of Board meetings.

As stated above, a task force coordinating and developing neighborhood priorities with regard to impacts of the MCEs Force Main Sewer Realignment project was also active in 2011.

Other information about the organization in 2011:

- CIDNA fiscal year is June 1 – May 31.
- Attendance at the 2011 May Annual Meeting was approx. 50 people.
- Monthly e-newsletters and occasional email blasts concerning urgent issues are sent to an email list of 252 CIDNA members.
- Our postcard mailing list contains 1,707 addresses.

## **2011 Financial Report**

### **CPP Budget vs Expenses to date 12-31-11**

	<b>2011 Budget</b>	<b>Expenses thru 12/31/12</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Staff	\$8,359.48	\$9,714.40	\$(1,354.92)
Professional Services	\$500.00	\$-	\$500.00
Communication/Outreach	\$2,979.00	\$2,589.91	\$389.09
Supplies/Material	\$200.00	\$144.13	\$55.87
Festivals/events	\$2,450.00	\$1,601.20	\$848.80
Food and refreshments	\$815.00	\$388.84	\$426.16
Other Services	\$1,085.00	\$1,234.30	\$(149.30)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,388.48</b>	<b>\$15,672.78</b>	<b>\$715.70</b>

### **Other 2011 revenue sources:**

Jones-Harrison contribution - \$500  
 Wine Tasting Fund Raiser - \$875  
 CEE Coordination Award - \$333

**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?**

- CPP: The CPP application and guideline process was time consuming. Understanding the program, educating the CIDNA Board, and completing the required paperwork was a challenge considering the relatively small amount of money we received in funding.

**2. *City Communications – effectiveness***

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

- Many of the public hearing notices are very cryptic and require follow-up on the part of neighborhoods to learn more so we can determine whether it is an issue we wish to address.
- Newsletters from our City Council members (Goodman and Tuthill) are excellent.

**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.

- The City Council vote on restricting NRP Phase II funds (December 2010) took neighborhoods by surprise. Adequate notification of the action was not provided. Our objection to the process was completely disregarded.
- The documents for the next phase of CPP were released on April 12 with a deadline of June 15. The short time frame is difficult for a volunteer organization to complete the required paperwork and get it approved by our board within two months.

**4. *City Departments***

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

- CIDNA would like to see a better dialogue established when working on neighborhood priorities. Our feeling is that input/concerns/comments fall on deaf ears. See “other comments”

**5. *City Assistance***

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

- Offer a streamlined application process for neighborhoods receiving under a certain amount (\$25K?) of CPP funding. CIDNA’s allocation for 2011 was \$14,000. The application requirements were the same for our neighborhood as for neighborhoods receiving \$60K+. The process was time-consuming for staff and volunteers, taking time away from other important issues.

- Offer a monthly brown-bag seminar on a variety of topics. This would be educational and allow neighborhoods a forum for interaction and idea sharing. Record the minutes and post them online for others to access.
- Get creative with the funding so that a small percentage of the CPP can go toward food or find a way to ease that NRP restriction. Food brings people together.
- Serve as liaison, or at least facilitator when attempting to create dialogue with City departments.

## **6. Other comments?**

Both the CIDNA Board and the NRP committee have had the sewer realignment on the radar since January 2010. Board members began attending MCES public meetings and hearings in early 2010. And, based on data collected from NRP neighborhood surveys in Sept. '09 and Feb. '10, clearly establishing safe pedestrian access on Sunset Blvd as a neighborhood priority; the NRP Phase II action plan included a strategy for partnering with municipal authorities during construction.

Five public planning/design meetings were held between June and November 2011. A survey regarding Sunset Blvd functionality, with over 100 respondents, was conducted over the summer. MCES presented working concepts at several Board meetings, the 2011 CIDNA Annual meeting and at the 2011 Fall Festival. A second survey/comment card was conducted in the fall, prior to writing Resolutions.

Four clear goals and priorities were set:

- 1) Traffic Calming
- 2) Pedestrian Access
- 3) Landscaping / Green space
- 4) Adequate Parking

An Executive Summary containing the evaluation of concept alternatives was submitted to City Council, Public Works and MPRB in October. With this document was yet another plea for City Public Works to work with the neighborhood in developing a solution which met the decades-long goal of establishing safe pedestrian access on the section of Sunset Blvd between Chowen and Depot. Then, finally in December, three Resolutions were written and submitted to the City, MPRB and MCES imploring the City departments to please work with us to meet the neighborhood goals.

At the same time this extensive outreach and neighborhood participation was occurring, Public Works gave direction to MCES reconstruct Sunset Blvd "as is." No communication as to why this direction was given was ever shared with the neighborhood. After Resolutions were submitted, the City threw the neighborhood a bone saying that a sidewalk could be installed and parking removed on one side of Sunset with a 75% approval by property owners. But this was it. There was no discussion on meeting the other neighborhood goals.

Unfortunately for CIDNA, the neighborhood was a victim of bad timing coordinating our priorities in regard to the affects of the Force Main Sewer Realignment. NRP was winding down and NCR was just getting staffed. NPP (Neighborhood Priority Plans) were not yet even a part of CPP funding.

Obviously our neighborhood did its due diligence (and then some) in garnering neighborhood input and participation. With the exception of MCES, no dialogue was ever established. With two years of comprehensive work, we could not overcome (or even get a justification for) the directive of “replace Sunset as is.”

The following are a few quotes taken from the Community Participation Program guidelines:

**“Program Purposes”**

- “As partners in building a better city and creating vibrant, safe, welcoming and livable spaces, neighborhood organizations and the City each have unique roles in identifying and acting on neighborhood priorities.”
- “City decision-making is improved when we involve those most affected by these decisions. The City’s core principles of community engagement state that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.”
- “Through partnering with neighborhood organizations, the City of Minneapolis can better reach—and be informed by—the people who are most affected by City decisions.”

**“Support and Monitoring of Contracting Neighborhood Organizations”**

- “Provide technical assistance to contracting neighborhood organizations as necessary to help guide and support their efforts in carrying out their community participation activities.”
- “Provide technical assistance to residents, neighborhood organizations, City Departments and participating jurisdictions in the development and implementation of Neighborhood Priority Plans.”