

Community Participation Program Guide to 2011 Annual Reports

Intended audience: Your Community Participation Program annual report is primarily intended to inform the NCR Department, the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) and the public about your Community Participation Program activities. You may also want to use your annual report to NCR as a way to inform others about your work, including funders, other neighborhood organizations, City departments and the City Council. If your organization produces a separate report for your annual meeting, you may also want to include it as supplemental material.

Contents: At a minimum, your annual report should address the following:

Accomplishments

What were your organization's major accomplishments in 2011? How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work? (Note: focus on your accomplishments, not your activities, such as "Field Regina Northrup organized the Lee Family 80th Anniversary Commemoration on July 16, 2011, recognizing an important story in the history of Civil Rights in Minneapolis. In addition to engaging more than 1,000 residents, the event coincided with the City's Community One Read event, providing the opportunity to connect the commemoration with broader city events.")

The most noticeable achievement of the Cleveland Neighborhood Association in 2011 was the move to hire a full-time staff person. This accomplishment signifies a shift of the organization toward prioritizing outreach and engagement in the community. With the leadership of the board of Directors, the organization redefined their model from utilizing a part-time support staff charged with administrative duties who maintained a connection with the city entities and was receptive to the community, to a full-time staff focused on broadening the organizations reach and relationship with the residents of the Cleveland neighborhood.

The Cleveland Neighborhood Association continues its strong tradition of Live on the Drive, a summer concert series that brings hundreds of residents together to meet their neighbors and enjoy top-notch music by local artists. CNA has also launched or supported a number of other community events and efforts including February Follies, Harvest Fest, Holiday on 44th, Cleveland Garden Tour, Cleveland Flea Market, Spring Clean-up and more. We maintain a working relationship with the Minneapolis Parks and the staff at Lucy Laney school.

Additionally, CNA organized several events and community initiatives. February Follies provided an outdoor community gathering in the cold winter months. A walking club was started to promote healthy living and community safety. CNA participated in the Community Energy Services home audit program and was recognized by CES for its high resident participation rate.

2011 CPP Submission Follow-up

Reviewing your submission for CPP funds for 2011, what outreach and engagement activities did you carry out? What worked well, and what did not work so well? Why?

- *Regular, well-advertised community meetings.*
CNA continued it's consistent community meeting schedule with advertisements in the local monthly newspaper and in our quarterly newsletter. Turn out has been low however and our 2012 approach is to critically analyze our events and our advertising to reach a broader constituency.
- *Quarterly Newsletter*
CNA has continued our newsletter schedule and find it is something residents look forward to and take the time to read each month. Our reach with the newsletter is all 1300+ homes in the Cleveland neighborhood, a total of over 3000 residents.
- *Monthly publication in the Camden News*
CNA has continued to advertise in the Camden News monthly which is mailed to the doors of all Cleveland residents and surrounding neighborhoods.
- *"Guerilla" Block parties*
A few block parties were convened last summer. The pilot project was successful and we hope to create a model for the future that will be easy for new block leaders to facilitate.
- *Walking clubs*
A walking club was started and continues this year, an average of 4-6 residents participate.
- *Open committee meetings*
All CNA committees are open to the public. They are advertised on the website, through an email newsletter and in our print publications. However, attendance continues to be low and efforts will be made to improve outreach and attendance in the coming year.
- *Surveys on specific issues*
A survey was done at Live on the Drive regarding the concert series. A more in-depth survey is being planned for the fall of 2012.
- *Door knocking*
The lack of staff capacity kept this from being carried out on a large scale. Residents did do a targeted effort to approve removing Ash trees on several blocks. Doorknocking the neighborhood is a high priority task for the current staff in the summer of 2012.
- *Tables and/or booths at community events*
Limited staff and volunteer capacity kept the organization from doing this on a large scale, but efforts are being made to increase community presence in the coming year.
- *Meet with business owners and church congregations to share concerns and strategies about issues.*
As part of the Lowry Business Association CNA has maintained strategic relationships with those businesses involved. However, due to limited staff capacity, we have not followed through on this to the degree that we had hoped in 2011. We intended to increase this outreach in the coming years.

Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your submission for CPP funds for 2011, how did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities? Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful?

The board elections in October of 2011 brought in a number of new board members who hadn't previously served a term on the CNA board before. Though there are new voices on the board, CNA still recognizes the need to increase involvement of under-represented communities in its decision making process so that it more accurately reflects the demographics of the neighborhood.

Please also provide the following:

A. How many people currently serve on your board? Are there vacancies?

There are currently 9 board members serving varying length terms. There are two current vacancies on the board as of June 2012.

B. Approximately how many individuals have participated in committee meetings in the last year?

CNA conducts three monthly community meetings in the areas of Events, Crime and Safety, and Community Development. There is an average of between 7-8 individuals that attend each meeting. Of those more than half are regular attenders (including board members), the others are occasional attendees of which about fifty individuals attended one or more meetings in 2011.

C. How many people attended your annual meeting?

We had ___ in attendance at our annual meeting in October 2011

D. How many households regularly receive your publications (such as newsletters or newspapers)?

All 1350 households in our neighborhood receive our quarterly newsletter mailed to their door. Additionally, all households in the Cleveland neighborhood and all of Camden (55412 zip code) receive the monthly Camden News where we post a 350 article with updates and events.

E. Approximately how many people participate in other activities of the organization?

The Live on the Drive summer concert series boast a regular attendance of 1500+ concert-goers each summer.

Financial Reports

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

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?

The Cleveland Neighborhood Association worked with the city to use NRP funds for the city to acquire 2716 Lowry Avenue, a blighted property. Tiffany Glasper at the city proved very helpful in this process.

2. City Communications – effectiveness

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

The InTouch email that David Rubedor sends out is quite helpful to know what is happening throughout the city.

The notices regarding City Council meetings and other hearings could be formatted to include a bit more useful information within the body of the email. This would be much more useful for those who receive it.

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 varies depending on the situation. Many notices regarding meetings, etc come through regularly scheduled and formulated channels. This is useful, but also makes it easier to miss when there is a unique or important notice relative to your area of the city or neighborhood. Additionally, notices that don't fall within these regular categories are sometimes irregular and don't utilize the already established channels. These notices sometimes require board actions and are given too short of a notice for a volunteer board to make a purposeful decision.

4. City Departments

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

Establishing personal relationships and communication channels can go a long way toward improving neighborhood connections. Even to a neighborhood organization staff, it can be difficult to navigate the City departments system. If I had a strong sense of who my first point of contact could be for any question I might have, I'd be more likely to maintain communication. An example, we used to receive more advanced notice regarding inspections and clean sweeps. It's hard to be proactive without that respected communication.

Though not direct departments of the city, it's worth noting that we've had positive experiences with the communication from Minneapolis Parks. We've had less positive experiences with communications from the Minneapolis Public Schools.

5. City Assistance

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

NCR can and should actively work to convene gatherings of Citizen Participation groups to share best practices and ideas for leveraging the resources available to better our communities.