

**Lynnhurst Neighborhood Association  
Community Participation Program  
2011 Annual Report**

**1. Accomplishments**

**What were your organization's major accomplishments in 2011? How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?**

The activities of Lynnhurst Neighborhood Association (LYNAS) are organized around a set of focus areas developed with input from our stakeholder groups – residents, businesses, schools, institutions and organizations active in Lynnhurst. These areas are also used as strategy groupings in our CPP and NRP plans. The activity in each area varies year-to-year in response to ongoing input from the neighborhood on priorities and concerns, the number and interests of the volunteers serving on our board and committees, funds available for implementation, and other factors. Please note that the LYNAS NRP Phase II Plan was approved in July 2011. Most of the 2011 activity was directed by our CPP Plan, but, moving forward, both plans will be implemented concurrently.

The focus areas of LYNAS and major accomplishments in some of these areas in 2011 are:

**Building a Sense of Community**

(Neighborhood-wide events, festivals and communications)

- LYNAS Annual Meeting: LYNAS held the 2011 Annual Meeting the evening of Tuesday, February 22 at the design showroom of Casa Verde, a local interior design and remodeling firm. This venue was selected as a way to appeal to a broader set of residents than might otherwise attend the typical annual meeting held in our community center. The featured event was determining neighborhood priorities for initially allocating NRP Phase II funds using a “dotmocracy” vote. Attendance at the meeting, approximately 50 residents, was larger than normal.
- Bryant Avenue Bridge Re-Opening Ceremony: On April 16, in conjunction with the City and Park Board, LYNAS sponsored a ceremony for the opening of the newly reconstructed Bryant Avenue pedestrian bridge over Minnehaha Creek. This bridge is an important asset to Lynnhurst neighborhood because it provides a pedestrian-friendly link between the two halves of the neighborhood divided by the creek. Approximately 70 local dignitaries and residents joined in the celebration.
- LYNAS Annual Summer Festival: This annual August event in Lynnhurst Park is LYNAS's most popular community gathering, featuring food, games, fire engine rides, live music, information tables and other attractions. It provides an opportunity for neighbors to socialize in a pleasant outdoor venue. A popular, local band with a strong following, Lynhurst, was the headline entertainer. The festival was entirely conducted by neighborhood volunteers and Lynnhurst Park staff. Food and equipment are purchased at a discount or donated by local businesses. Attendance was estimated to be at 1500 residents and friends of Lynnhurst neighborhood.

- LYNAS Annual Garage Sales: The neighborhood-wide garage sale is a popular event sponsored by LYNAS. We advertise this multi-household sale in local newspapers, prints maps of all participating addresses, and distributes boulevard signs to identify each location. Participation in 2011 was approximately 45 households.
- Communications: To better inform the neighborhood of events, activities and local issues in 2011, the Communications Committee started a Lynnhurst Facebook page and upgraded the neighborhood website: <http://www.lynnhurst.org/>. Promotional mailings were designed and distributed to approximately 2250 households for the Annual Meeting, Minnehaha Creek Cleanup, Summer Festival and other events.

### **Housing**

- In December 2011, LYNAS approved the use of Phase II NRP funds for a low-interest revolving loan program for many types of home improvements. The Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) will administrator the program, which will launch in early 2012 with a promotional mailing to every household in the neighborhood. Additional funds from Phase I program income are available if demand exceeds funding.

### **Natural Environment**

- The Lynnhurst Natural Environment Committee was re-established in mid-2011 with new leadership and members. The committee sponsored a buckthorn removal project in the Lake Harriet area, a LYNAS-subsidized sale of rain barrels and compost bins, and organized the waste and recycling receptacles and volunteers needed to make our Summer Festival a “zero waste” event. The Earth Day Minnehaha Creek area clean-up in April, an annual event, was organized by a committee member.

### **Business**

- Activity in 2011 focused on our major business node at W. 54<sup>th</sup> St. and Lyndale Ave. S. This node is shared with three other neighborhoods, Kenny, Tangletown and Windom, all of whom believe that maintaining the vitality and attractiveness of this business node is important to our quality of life. To help enhance the appeal of this node, LYNAS organized a committee with representatives of the four neighborhoods. The goal of this multi-neighborhood committee is to work with the businesses and their association (NEHBA) to implement a streetscaping project. The project would coincide with the Lyndale Avenue bridge and road reconstruction and would incorporate benches, bike racks, trash receptacles and other amenities. Each of the four neighborhoods committed an equal share of funds towards the capital cost of the project proposed by the businesses’ steering committee. These funds (\$48,000) would cover approximately half of the overall capital costs. This project would further qualify for additional county matching funds. Ongoing discussions are being held with key property owners as to their funding of the remaining capital costs and for the Special Services District necessary to provide maintenance for the streetscape elements. The four neighborhoods believe the end result will be an attractive commercial environment and the foundation for possible further enhancements to this area over the next several years.

**Parks**  
**Transportation and Traffic**  
**Education**  
**Crime and Safety**

### **Other General Activity**

- Over the past 10+ years, LYNAS has relied primarily on volunteers to implement its activities, with a paid part-time staff person during some years to assist with the interface to the NRP process. In late 2011, LYNAS started a search for a quarter-time Lynnhurst Neighborhood Coordinator to assist with many general activities beyond the NRP/NCR interface. We believe this position will significantly enhance our capacity to serve the neighborhood and implement focus area strategies. It will also provide some year-to-year continuity for ongoing activities and record keeping, which has been a challenge with a purely volunteer-driven organization. In early 2012, the position was filled.

## **2. 2011 CPP Submission**

**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?**

See #1 for activities.

These activities were well received and attended and we believe we have been successful at engaging a wide spectrum of the neighborhood's residents. Some of these activities have become standard and expected annual events and attendance was particularly high this year. Others activities/events were newer and it is our hopes that these activities will be supported in the future and become traditions of Lynnhurst neighborhood. Our commitment to these activities remains high.

Engagement with the 54<sup>th</sup> St. and Lyndale Ave. businesses has been very successful and gratifying. Going forward, LYNAS hopes to better engage the rest of our business community, particularly the business node at 50<sup>th</sup> St. and Bryant Ave. This node has not historically been active with neighborhood association, but energetic new owners and assistance from the business association, NEHBA, make collaboration with LYNAS a real and exciting possibility.

## **3. 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 previously identified underrepresented population in Lynnhurst neighborhood continues to be renters (approximately 10.5% of the housing units in Lynnhurst neighborhood are renter occupied). Further underrepresented populations could be people of color and senior citizens. We have reached out to these populations through

our website and mailings. With the implementation of a Housing revolving loan program, we feel that we have reached out even further into those communities.

**Please also provide the following:**

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

At the 2011 Annual Meeting, a full board of 12 members was elected. During the course of the year, there were three resignations and those spots remained open.

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

Approximately 25-30 people participated in various LYNAS committees.

**C. How many people attended your annual meeting?**

50 people attended the annual meeting.

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

Approximately 2200 households receive informational mailings.

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

Approximately 2000 people participated in and/or volunteered for other activities of the organization (this includes the Summer Festival, Bryant Avenue Bridge Celebration, Garage Sales and other smaller activities).

**4. Financial Reports**

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

Please see attached report.

**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?

Given that LYNAS was still generating its NRP Phase II Plan in 2011, interaction with the old NRP Department was high. With the decreasing staff it was sometimes difficult to get consistent information.

Furthermore, it is difficult to find out who you need to speak to in any given department, especially when regular staff is not available. A great deal of time is spent just working your way through the levels of any given department until you finally reach the correct person. An organizational chart of different departments would be helpful. However, this would need to be continually updated to reflect staffing changes.

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

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

Yes, but many times it is more information than we need in certain areas and less than we need in others. For example, if a Planning Application has been filed for a property address within our boundaries, it would be helpful to automatically be provided the supporting documentation. Instead, if we need it, we have to look for it and make follow-up calls and contacts.

*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.

We receive consistent and timely communications from NCR, the Planning Department and the Police Department. Given that there are typically not a lot of City activities in Lynnhurst neighborhood, it is difficult to know if there are other communications.

3. *City Departments*

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

Increased communication on neighborhood specific issues would be appreciated and a quicker response time when we do call on a question/issue.

We find it very difficult to reach Public Works and to get timely responses. It is frustrating that sometimes we cannot move forward due to their lack of response. If our purpose as a neighborhood organization is to engage the community and to provide support for identified neighborhood needs, then we need a better partner in Public Works .

*City Assistance*

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

Although we understand that the department is new and still developing programming, it would be helpful to streamline some of the requests for information. Also, a longer preparation period for required documents/plans would be appreciated. Most neighborhood organizations meet on a monthly basis and it is difficult to time the preparation, review and approval of documents with a short preparation time frame.

4. *Other comments?*