

## **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:

### *1. 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.")

### **1. NRP Phase II Plan**

SAENA residents, board members and the NRP Policy Board approved a plan for over \$239,000 that the neighborhood will use to invest in housing, parks, lighting, neighborhood planning and community outreach.

### **2. Park Improvements**

- Tree Trust Park Improvements
  - We invested over \$8,000 in Community Commons Park to make improvements in landscaping and maintenance.
- Trash Service
  - We are getting weekly trash service to improve waste removal.
- Master Plan Survey (Park Questions)
  - We are continuing plans to make best use of that space. We are surveying the neighborhood about their priorities for park development through our master plan project.

### **3. New Home Improvement Loan Programs**

- SAENA formed a committee to look at how we can change our lending programs to best serve property owners in the neighborhood. We held a public meeting where residents gave their thoughts on how to make our programs more effective.

- We changed the programs to increase maximum loan amount, lower interest rates, eliminate the loan-to-value ratio, and create incentives for green improvements.

#### **4. Street Lighting Initiative**

- Our NRP Phase II plan included a \$30,000 allocation to increase street lighting in the neighborhood. Based on support from residents, SAENA initiated a petition to install streetlights on Madison St and two blocks of Spring St (between Monroe and Jefferson St). SAENA staff went door-to-door to gauge initial support from homeowners on those streets.
- Public Works sent out an official petition to each property owner in the affected area. At least 70% of property owners needed to send back the petition in support of the project for it to move forward. Only 27% of owners sent back the petition in support of the project. Another 27% of owners sent back the petition in opposition to the project. The remaining 46% of owners did not send back the petition, which counts as a “No” to the proposed project.
- There is still \$30,000 allocated for street lighting in the neighborhood. SAENA will continue to explore potential street lighting projects.

#### **5. Webster School**

- It is currently used as administrative offices and a few early childhood education classes. The administrative offices will be relocated to a new building in North Minneapolis in 2013, leaving the building with limited or no use.
- SAENA has been asking for input from residents about a proposal to make the Webster School building the location for a new MPS early childhood education center. After hearing strong responses from residents in favor of this option, we advocated to the MPS Board that Webster should be the location for this new early childhood center. We are continuing to monitor the MPS decision and activity.
- We urge community members to continue providing input to the school board regarding the potential early childhood education center at Webster.

#### **6. Neighborhood Events and Outreach**

- We engaged the community through Neighborhood Walks, the Plant Give Away, Ice Cream Social, the Celebrate St Anthony East BBQ, and the tour of National Night Out events. We had great attendance and fun at our events. It was also a great way to reach out to residents who don't regularly attend SAENA meetings.
- Quarterly Newsletters
- Regular email updates and postcards

#### **7. Involvement with Community Partners**

- Participated in 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward Neighborhood Fest, 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Advisory Council, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward CARE Meetings, and Minneapolis Public School Board meetings

## 8. Community Garden

- Continued to provide low-cost garden plots at the community garden.

## 9. Neighborhood Master Plan

- SAENA allocated \$30,000 to develop a small area neighborhood master plan. The master plan committee convened in February and is in the early stages of the project.
- We conducted a neighborhood survey this summer to get input from residents about how they want to see the neighborhood develop in coming years. We received 294 returned surveys and gained valuable information that will guide further outreach in our master plan project and will inform future SAENA projects.

## 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?

We carried out the following outreach and engagement activities:

- Regular postcards and quarterly newsletters to each household
- Door knocking for street light petition and Webster School Building community input
- Weekly Neighborhood Walks (during Summer and Fall months)
- Organized tour of each National Night Out event in St Anthony East
- Monthly Community or Board Meetings
- Ice Cream Social
- Plan Give Away
- Landlord Workshop
- Mass communications (e-newsletters, website, Facebook)
- Direct targeted mailings for special meetings
- Partnered with Spring Manor and Clare Housing to improve communications and make new contacts
- Partnered with Habitat for Humanity to promote homeownership and volunteer opportunities for Third Avenue Townhomes in neighborhood
- Held focus group meeting to identify ways to make SAENA's home improvement loans more accessible and attractive
- Held focus group meeting to discuss potential dog park development in a SAENA-owned neighborhood park

- Held a Neighborhood BBQ at Clare Housing apartments to bring neighbors together and get more residents to complete the neighborhood master plan survey
- Started an outreach committee that will work to increase participation from residents and stakeholders, and develop strategies to reach out to underrepresented groups
- Began work on the Neighborhood Master Plan. We formed a steering committee, hired a graduate student researcher through a CURA grant to help develop a neighborhood survey, and implemented outreach for the survey. We received 294 returned surveys. About half of the respondents were renters, the other half were homeowners. We also administered a special survey for neighborhood businesses.

Looking back at the 2011 CPP submission, it was notable that we met goals to gain a bilingual board member, promote the Third Avenue Townhome homeownership opportunities to St Anthony East residents, increase communications through starting a quarterly newsletter, increased partnerships with Clare Housing and other neighborhood stakeholders, completed the NRP Phase II Action Plan submission and began implementation of the plan.

Though we increased our outreach and engagement this past funding cycle, not all activities were very successful. Only a handful of rental property owners attended the landlord workshop, we did get as much representation from renters as we wanted to, and regular meeting attendance did not significantly change. SAENA's outreach and master plan committees will help make these efforts more effective this next CPP cycle.

SAENA's most successful efforts were the Ice Cream Social, Plant Give Away, Neighborhood BBQ, Master Plan survey, changes to the home improvement loan programs, and National Night Out events. All of these events and activities were successful because of the great volunteer effort from residents, support from local businesses, and increased communications from SAENA through various methods.

### *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?

SAENA used opportunities at neighborhood events and neighborhood walks to meet residents of diverse backgrounds and encourage them to participate in the organization. Through the neighborhood walks, we met a resident who is bilingual – English and Spanish – and who is now on the board of directors.

The NCR Access and Outreach Specialists and Neighborhood Support Specialist also helped us identify residents who could help us reach out to underrepresented groups. For example, a resident in one of our MPHA apartment buildings who speaks several East African languages helped us encourage tenants to fill out the neighborhood survey. The NCR Access and Outreach Specialists connected us to this resident who helped us.

Third, we made many new contacts with renters and management at Clare Housing and the Spring Manor Apartments, and we now have regular participation from them. We moved our community and board meetings to Clare Housing and held a well-attended neighborhood event there.

Finally, we started an outreach committee that will focus on increasing SAENA's capacity to improve communications and increase engagement of renters and underrepresented groups.

Please also provide the following:

- A. How many people currently serve on your board? Are there vacancies?  
There are currently 9 active board members with no vacancies.
  
- B. Approximately how many individuals have participated in committee meetings in the last year?  
12-15 people
  
- C. How many people attended your annual meeting?  
25 people
  
- D. How many households regularly receive your publications (such as newsletters or newspapers)?  
All 1150 housing units receive regular postcards and quarterly newsletters
  
- E. Approximately how many people participate in other activities of the organization?  
30-50 people not including special events

#### 4. *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?

SAENA worked with the NCR, CPED, DFD, Public Works, the office of Council Member Hofstede, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Police Department, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation, and the Minneapolis Public School Board this past funding cycle. The majority of interaction was with the NCR and Council Member Hofstede.

SAENA spent the most time working with the NCR. We worked with the NCR in a number of ways to manage existing NRP and CPP contracts, increase outreach capacity, and manage administrative functions (e.g. sign on to new general liability insurance policy). The NCR Neighborhood Support Specialists and Access and Outreach Specialists were very helpful and responsive. They were particularly helpful as we implemented a survey for the small area master plan.

One way that the City could improve service is by holding a business reply permit that would allow neighborhoods to conduct mail surveys at a cheaper rate. The NRP used to provide this service and it is something that the NCR might want to consider.

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

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

Yes, the information is clear, understandable, and useful.

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.

Yes, we receive regular and timely notices from the City, such as weekly planning application reports, notifications of public meetings, and grant opportunities.

4. *City Departments*

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

SAENA feels that City departments generally function effectively in the neighborhood. We have found that departments are responsive to our questions and requests for service or information. One area that could be improved is through additional communications with the neighborhood, particularly to explain how the NCR, NCEC, and other City entities work together.

5. *City Assistance*

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

As mentioned in Question #4, SAENA would benefit from obtaining a greater understanding of what the NCR and NCEC do, how they work together, and how SAENA can increase partnership with these departments. The board suggests that it would be helpful to have representatives from these departments attend a board meeting and give a brief presentation on the NCR and NCEC. Additional informational materials, such as the Quick Guide to City Acronyms sheet, would be helpful.

6. *Other comments?*