

## SNO NCR Application

Organization Name:	Sheridan Neighborhood Organization
Address:	909 Main St. NE Minneapolis, MN 55413
Website url:	www.sheridanneighborhood.org
Organization email:	sno@sheridanneighborhood.org
Federal EIN:	411940413
Board Contact:	Name: Jenny Fortman, chair
Staff Contact:	Name: Phone: Email: Address:

- 1. After this first funding year, neighborhood organizations will submit proposals for three years of funding from the Community Participation Program. How will your organization engage residents and other stake holders in 2011 to develop your three year proposal?**

The Sheridan Neighborhood Organization has been working on the power of volunteers since it was established, just over ten years ago. SNO has been engaging stakeholders through a variety of projects and activities. Many of our current projects were defined in our NRP Phase II Plan, **Sheridan 2015**, which we completed in 2005. We will continue to build upon the successes of that **Sheridan 2015** plan, and also spend time restructuring our organization to comply with the new system established by the NCR.

We will also continue to do the great work we have done for many years of reaching out to our local businesses and residents, holding some of the most widely attended monthly neighborhood meetings in the city, and generally working together and listening to each other to build a strong and vibrant community.

Over the next three years we would like to engage residents and other stakeholders to look closely at our special mixed use commercial-residential corridors of 13<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Marshall St., and University Avenue, and their connection to the riverfront. We would like to hold a series of town meetings and outdoor events to research the strengths of our community, how those corridors play to the strengths, and look for feedback from residents and others on how to make those corridors stronger and even more essential parts of the neighborhood.

**2. What regular outreach and engagement activities will your organization carry out in 2011?**

We will continue to hold monthly meetings and work to keep these meetings interesting and engaging for community members. We will continue to advertise these meeting in the community press and through flyers and our on-line venues. We will share news through our **SNOmail** e-mail list (which all neighborhood residents and business operators are encouraged to join), advertise important events with display ads and/or flyer inserts and post key information on SNO's website at [www.SheridanNeighborhood.org](http://www.SheridanNeighborhood.org) . SNO will continue to send representatives to other active organizations including the 2nd Precinct 2PAC group, 3rd Ward CARE, Ritz Theater Foundation, and 13th Ave. Business meetings.

But we also realize that many residents and interested parties in our neighborhood are not going to attend meetings. Because of that, we will also do outreach and engagement through projects, activities and celebrations. Among these are the annual **Ice Cream SNOcial** that we hold in the fall, our **SNO Ball**, and the **Northeast Music Festival**.

**3. How will your organization reach out to under-represented groups in your community? Who are these groups?**

Over the years SNO has tried a variety of ways to reach out and include under-represented groups. From census data, we know that Sheridan has a higher percentage than the city average of Hispanic population, the Somali population in Sheridan is growing, and that many artists live in Sheridan. Sheridan has a median income lower than the city overall, and a higher percentage of renters. Northeast Minneapolis has historically, and continues to be, a working class and immigrant neighborhood, with a tendency to attract young adults who enjoy the variety of entertainment in the neighborhood, its walkability and neighborhood-scale businesses, and its proximity to downtown and the U of M.

One of the more successful SNO efforts to reach under-represented groups has been the **Shooting Stars** program, a youth photography initiative that received two CURA grants and engaged low income and immigrant youth and their parents. Contacts made through this program will be drawn upon as we do further planning. SNO outdoor events such as the annual **Ice Cream SNOcial**, the **SNO Big Deal picnic**, and **workshops on organic yard care** bring out a diversity of the neighborhood's residents. SNO has also partnered with and done outreach at events and opportunities such as **Art-A-Whirl**, the **Northeast Farmer's Market**, and many others. This year we are also planning a spring planting event, which we think will engage more members of the community.

SNO has also offered translation services for its program information. SNO members have hand-delivered fliers publicizing meetings and SNO's NRP housing programs. We will continue all these activities and will look forward to additional suggestions from the NCR and NCEC in reaching out to all corners and interests of our neighborhood.

**4. What planning activities would your organization like to carry out in 2011? (This could include strategic planning, land use planning, NRP planning, etc).**

In 2010, SNO began a mid-term review of its **Sheridan 2015** plan. These review activities will continue, and SNO will do planning activities as part of several of its monthly meetings and at its annual **Ice Cream SNOcial** event.

SNO plans to begin work on developing a small area plan that will look at opportunities, trends and future ideas for its three special mixed use commercial/residential corridors, 13<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Marshall St., and University Ave. These streets have naturally developed into mixed use corridors, with housing and business intermixed. Many of us think that this mix represents the best of city living, but we also feel that city zoning and other policies make this mix challenging to establish and sustain. We would also start to look, over the next couple years, at zoning along these streets, inviting city representatives to talk with neighborhood residents about how city policies can make these streets better places to live, work and play instead of putting up roadblocks to good ideas.

#### **5. How does your organization provide information to the community? How do you gather information from the community?**

We would also like to continue our tradition of creating a variety of events that go beyond meetings to reach people in the neighborhood. Events such as our **Ice Cream SNOcial**, the **Northeast Music Festival**, and others are opportunities to get feedback about our work and involve residents.

This summer we would also like to work on a project with the **Grace Center for Community Life** to create gardens out of a corner of the neighborhood that has long been covered in asphalt. This project will involve reaching out to a wide variety of neighborhood residents to create community-built garden spaces.

In the past, SNO has solicited neighborhood input via surveys, but that is only the start of methods that we have used. For last year's **Ice Cream SNOcial**, we made a map showing our neighborhood accomplishments in both a paper version and a parking-lot size chalk version. Neighbors were encouraged to put up post-it notes with their suggestions on the paper version and to write in chalk on the chalk map. We plan to do similar creative planning this year, presenting these maps at both our annual meeting and at the SNOcial.

SNO provides information to the community with its **SNOmail** e-news, its web site, a message board in the heart of the neighborhood, and with regular ads and flyers in the neighborhood newspaper. We would like to continue all of these activities, and use the next few years to strengthen these communication methods. We would like to redesign our web site and increase the frequency and quantity of our mailings and advertising.

#### **6. What festivals and events will your organization host or support in 2011?**

SNO would like to host a second **Northeast Music Festival**. SNO has applied for a Minnesota State Arts Board Arts Festivals grant to support this event for 2011. SNO would like to present this festival annually, growing it into a sustainable event. Where **Art-A-Whirl** opens the Northeast Arts District outdoor season in May, this weekend music festival caps off the outdoor

season in celebration of Minnesota's diversity of musical talent, in addition to celebrating its art galleries and other performance opportunities.

SNO's business district assessment of the first **Northeast Music Festival**, which brought in an estimated 4500 people, found that overall median retail sales within the district increased in the months after the event as compared to months before it was held, most strikingly showing median improvement of six points at music venues and four at district eateries.

Because Sheridan is part of the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District and is home to a number of live performance and arts-related businesses, its hosting of this music festival is a great fit that also boosts both the Sheridan micro-economy and the city as a whole.

Another event that SNO would like to continue is the annual **SNO Ball**. The SNO Ball is a gala fundraiser. It was started in 1999 with the idea that if we could keep ticket prices affordable to neighbors, we could raise money and build community. The SNO Ball has been an extremely popular event that has transformed itself many times over the years, and has also spawned many imitations. In the 10 years of SNO Balls, we spent an average of \$5000 as seed money for the event and raised anywhere from \$3000 - \$7000 in profits.

But because SNO is an all-volunteer organization, sometimes we can't raise the volunteer energy to deliver some events. Because of over-commitment of some of our members we were not able to produce a SNO Ball this past winter. But we would like to spend 2011 building new leadership in our neighborhood so that we can produce a SNO Ball this coming winter.

The **SNO Annual Meeting** is a neighborhood gathering that is more than an annual board election. The election of SNO Board members to one-year terms is indeed part of the event. But we also premier a new annual neighborhood video, hold the annual lottery for our NRP "Fix and Paint" exterior home improvement program, engage in various neighborhood planning and review activities, and enjoy great socializing.

SNO hosts the **Ice Cream SNOcial** on the first Thursday evening of September. For about a decade this free event has attracted many neighbors who don't come to SNO meetings. SNO provides a free Sundae bar and places to sit and chat with neighbors. Since it is attended by many who don't participate in other events, we have often used this event as an opportunity to gather input for neighborhood planning.

Sheridan Neighborhood is the only Minneapolis neighborhood without a developed park. Since 2005, SNO, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and others have been working on a project to build a Veteran's Memorial plaza and neighborhood park on the site at 1300 Water St NE. Our goal is to have the first phase of the project completed by Sept. 11, 2011. We plan to hold our **Grand Opening of Sheridan Memorial Park** on the 10 year anniversary of 9/11.

**7. What else would you like the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission know about your organization?**

Sheridan Neighborhood Organization has been an all-volunteer organization from the beginning. We have all elected to donate our time to run our neighborhood group so we could devote all of our Neighborhood Revitalization Program funds to physical enhancements to our neighborhood and to community-building activities. We volunteer hard to pull people together for the projects we have accomplished, and the planning we have undertaken, and we take great pride in our many accomplishments, from improvements to our unique 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue strip that include a renewed Ritz Theater, the growth of active businesses along the street, and enhancements we have been able to make such as the Arts District signs, bike racks, and pedestrian level streetlights. These projects have fostered a sense of excitement and enthusiasm among residents, and have made our neighborhood a destination. Just five years ago, city planning maps identified 13<sup>th</sup> Ave, NE as a residential street. Now it is recognized by the city as one of its Great Streets corridors. This came about because of our dedicated volunteer work.

We like to see the material results of our efforts to improve our neighborhood. That is why funding for projects is so essential to us. Our philosophy has been to use projects to engage the neighborhood, and without funding for material, physical projects, our whole philosophy of neighborhood engagement is at risk. We believe that outreach will be considerably harder if there isn't a material, physical rallying point.

**8. Besides funding, what are some other ways that the NCR and NCEC can help your neighborhood organization?**

We are extremely thankful for the work that our NRP neighborhood representative, Stacy Sorenson, puts into our neighborhood. Without her experience and expertise in navigating the deep waters of city policy, we would never be able to operate as effectively as we have a volunteer organization. She regularly attends our Community Development Committee Meetings as well as other neighborhood meetings and spends considerable time on our needs outside of these meetings. We would hope that NCR/NCEC would be able to continue such essential service to us.

We are also amateur planners, and as we develop our small area plans for our commercial corridors, continue our re-evaluations our Sheridan 2015 plan, and start the process to develop a new full neighborhood plan, we would need the professional help and guidance of NCR/NCEC as we reach out to all corners of the neighborhood.

We also would like NCR/NCEC to broaden the use of its funds. As we said, we believe that planning and outreach happen best when a physical or material improvement is made to the neighborhood, and we would like to continue our tradition of investing in our neighborhood's human capital by investing in physical improvements. as neighbors come together to develop plans, funds are essential to jump start creative projects and make positive change happen.

**Sheridan Neighborhood Organization - NCR 2011 Budget**

<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Professional Services – NE Music Fest and business outreach, memberships	10,000

Occupancy – office expenses, phone	2,826
Communications/Outreach – Advertising in community press, flyers	7,000
Supplies and Materials – purchase of a new laptop computer and software	2,000
Festivals, Events and Fundraising	7,500
Development – developing a small area plan - start up costs	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,326</b>

The Sheridan Neighborhood Organization Bylaws are posted here:

<http://sheridanneighborhood.org/info/bylaws.htm>

The Sheridan Neighborhood Organization Board approved this application with a unanimous vote at its monthly public meeting on Monday, March 28.