

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Organization Name:	Ventura Village
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Federal EIN:	41-1930600
Board Contact:	Name: Robert Albee
Staff Contact:	Name: Mary Watson

## VENTURA VILLAGE PROPOSAL

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON AUGUST 15, 2012

### FUNDING ACTIVITIES.

Ventura Village continues to operate as a volunteer organization. We contract for specific services as needed. Our funds are used primarily for community engagement activities. Since January, 2011, Ventura Village has initiated a number of strategies that have increased community engagement. We will continue to use these strategies and will continue to develop new strategies.

- a. We have worked with Minneapolis Park Board and a number of community organizations to save, rehab and reopen the Phillips Community Center (PCC). It is now a vibrant community assets that houses Ventura Village Neighborhood offices as well as: Waite House, APOD (A Partnership of Diabetics), Running Wolf Fitness Center, Minneapolis Swims and Somali American Community's Guri Nabad. These organizations provide immigrant, settlement house, recreational, educational, nutritional, and wellness services to our community.
- b. We developed, in cooperation with the University of MN College & Design and West Phillips, a Redesign for Peavey Park. We are continuing to work with these partners to implement the Redesign Plan. This project may take up to five years to complete.
- c. We are working with the Minneapolis Police Dept and neighborhood partners to encourage programming in Peavey Park. This programming has reduced crime and increased community participation in activities in the Park. Calendars of events are published every two weeks.
- d. Our Community Engagement Committee has developed an outreach initiative at the corner of Franklin and Chicago Avenues in Peavey Park called *Amen Corner*. Celebrating its first anniversary this August, *Amen Corner* is in operation Thursday & Friday evenings from early spring through late fall. People are encouraged to participate by speaking, reciting poetry or singing with an open microphone. Food and beverages are provided.
- e. The purpose of the Ventura Village Wellness, Gardening & Greening Committee is to enhance the wellness of Ventura Village residents through optimized physical activities, social networking, support for home and community gardens, urban farming and healthy eating initiatives. We design these activities and infrastructures with sustainability, community involvement, and environmental justice as core values. Our Community Wellness and Greening Committee is working with a number of organizations to create community and home gardens. Our first neighborhood community garden called the 24<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Farm is located at 13<sup>th</sup> Ave and E 24<sup>th</sup> St. We have created a *Tool Lending Library* to assist individuals who wish to create private gardens. In the springs of 2011 and 2012 we participated in a plant and seed/plant giveaways at the PCC. The Local Food Resource Hubs are a project funded by the City of Minneapolis and coordinated by Gardening Matters. The Wellness, Gardening & Greening Committee hosted the program for Phillips in 2011 and remains involved in 2012. The purpose of the program is to increase residents' access to healthy homegrown food. In 2011 the focus was on distribution of reduced seeds and garden plants. In 2012 those will continue but with an increased focus on education, building community connections around food and with the foods systems that impact our health and lives. Beneficiaries of the program are local residents. The 24<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Farm is a coalition project whose intent is grow healthy food locally for residents, and to create the culture and practices of healthy food production close to home. Coalition member organizations include Ventura Village, Indigenous Peoples' Task Force, Women's Environmental Institute, Waite House, Indian Health Board, Native American Community Clinic, and Dream of Wild Health. Beneficiaries will include local residents who have the opportunity to participate in the food production or consumption process. This Committee is also hoping to develop a Winter Safety Initiative to increase snow removal from our sidewalks throughout the neighborhood.

- f. Our Crime and Safety Committee is working closely with the Minneapolis Police Department, the City and County Attorneys, and the County Community Probation Personnel to create opportunities for residents and business owners to work with these government agencies to reduce crime and increase personal safety. For instance, two Ventura Village members co-chair the Phillips Community Court Watch initiative. This Committee is also responsible for the Lighting Project that will increase the light in public places such as sidewalks and alleys. This Committee continues to work to educate residents in crime prevention strategies. Encouraging residents to call 911 is one of those strategies
- g. We are developing new strategies to reach out to our East African immigrant neighbors by hosting meetings in many of our Public Housing facilities. We encourage the Police Department and our City Council's Office to participate in these meetings to address their unique issues. Recently, Ventura Village purchased reusable air horns for distribution to elders walking alone in the community. These will be used whenever the pedestrians feel threatened by possible thieves, robbers and muggers. We are working closely to ensure that they become connected to Third Precinct Police officials who can also help them work out additional strategies for pedestrian safety and in their public housing buildings and units.
- h. We are hosting and encouraging more community events by providing resources such as PA systems, tables, chairs, etc. These events provide venues where all members of our diverse community can come together for educational purposes such as health fairs and seed giveaways, for social events such as AMEN CORNER, for celebrations such as the Peavey Park Festival, and for cultural events such as the American Indian Month Celebration.
- i. We have established a Business Committee. This Committee is responsible for the business of Ventura Village such as maintaining records, financial information, tax returns, manuals, etc. This Committee works with our Business Partners in the Community, and works with the Franklin Area Business Association.

## DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

At the beginning of 2011 we believed we needed to update our Land Use plan. After meeting with representatives from the City of Minneapolis it was decided that most of our real estate is already developed and a new plan is not necessary. Instead our Land Use and Development Committee is addressing development opportunities on a case-by-case basis. There are properties owned by the City and some privately owned that we are working to rehab or rebuild. Neighborhood dollars will not be used in these developments, but our support is a positive resource that aids developers in achieving success.

## INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

We continue to hold a general membership meeting every month and we mail meeting notices to more than 260 members. At our August General Membership Meeting we had 30 new participants in attendance. This is a 30% increase in 18 months. We also e-mail meeting notices, police alerts, City information, etc. to an ever-growing e-mail list which is now over 300 subscribers. We have an updated web site with general neighborhood information where people can sign-up to be on the e-mail list to receive meeting information.

### ESTIMATED BUDGET

Staff Expenses	
Employee Benefits	
Professional Services	68,000
Occupancy	33,000
Communications/Outreach	11,000
Supplies and Materials	10,000
Festivals and events	3,000
Food and refreshments	0
Development	0
Fundraising	0
Other Services	1,930
TOTAL:	126,930

## VENTURA VILLAGE GRIEVANCE POLICY

Any grievance with Ventura Village's programs, staff or Directors, including the conduct of committee(s), task force(s), Board or special meetings, shall be made in writing on a designated grievance form, one grievance per form, and communicated to the Executive Director or Executive Committee, at least ten (10) working days prior to a regularly scheduled or special meeting (as defined in Article II Section 6 Subsection B). The Board shall adopt a uniform policy for the disposition of such grievances, and the Executive Director, Executive Committee or Board respond in writing to the grieving party within ten (10) working days of any meeting at which the grievance is heard to declare the actions taken to resolve the grievance.

## VENTURA VILLAGE ADA POLICY

All official Ventura Village meetings and events will be held in ADA accessible buildings and/or locations.