

**Community Participation Program
2014 Annual Report**

Neighborhood Organization: Corcoran Neighborhood Organization

Contact person: Eric Gustafson, Executive Director

Date of Board Approval: March 12, 2015

1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2014, Please provide information about:

- *What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2014?*
Direct methods include door-knocking, telephone calls, interaction at community events and at committee and board meetings, participation in neighborhood projects, and interactions in our office. Indirect methods included flyering at homes, our monthly neighborhood newspaper and weekly e-mail newsletter, and interactions via e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, and E-Democracy.
- *How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2014?*
We continued to conduct intensive outreach and organizing work in distressed apartment buildings, which are disproportionately occupied by new Americans, people of color and low-income families. We also employed strategies to get these participants involved as committee members, as board members, and as leaders generally. We also continued the Midtown Farmers Market and related outreach to increase visits to the market by EBT-SNAP users.
- *Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful? Why?*
Based on insights and results described in this report, as we work to improve the inclusivity of our engagement work we have begun to focus more on engaging residents along lines of housing tenure in lieu of race. 2/3 of our renters are cost-burdened and we find they are generally concerned about their housing situation. The subject matter is more salient with this approach, CNO remains rooted in its place-based mission, and 4/5 of our Black and Latino residents rent their housing, so improving our capacity to engage and organize with renters is making our work more inclusive and our organization more responsive to everyone's needs and concerns.
- *What did not work so well? Why?*
As we describe in this report, we decided to end our support of Mujeres en Accion y Poder in 2014 due to declining interest and participation, though many of the program's participants and leaders became or remained involved in CNO activities, especially in our work with renters on housing issues.
- *How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)?*
Approximately 1,200.
- *How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?*

Approximately 300.

- *How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?*
Over 60,000 including participation in the Midtown Farmers Market.
- *How many people receive your print publications?*
We now mail the monthly Corcoran News to all 1600 homes in the neighborhood, which is comprised of 3,942 people. We transitioned to mailed delivery in 2014 in order to better reach residents who rent.
- *How many people receive your electronic communications?*
2,838 people receive the Midtown Farmers Market weekly e-mail and 924 receive CNO's e-mail newsletter.

2. 2014 Highlights

Please describe one or two major highlights, and if possible, please include digital photos or illustrations:

- *What was the issue or opportunity the neighborhood was facing?*
- *Who was impacted?*
- *What steps did you take to address the issue or opportunity?*
- *What was the outcome?*

Note on our 2013 report: we described in our 2013 report work to address crime, walkability and blight at southwest 21st and Lake by pitching redevelopment concepts and partners to Minneapolis Public Schools. At a Feb. 5 meeting and as reported in the Star Tribune, Superintendent Michael Goar announced that on the neighborhood's recommendation, MPS had purchased the property at southwest 21st and Lake in order to develop a new Adult Basic Education facility.

CNO's work in multifamily housing is driving efforts by Minneapolis Regulatory Services and the City Council to improve policies related to livability and renters' rights for immigrants and other vulnerable renters. Our Southside United Neighborhoods began formally engaging City leaders around these concerns in January 2014 driven by leadership from CNO staff, and Council Members responded by putting us in direct collaboration with the new director of Regulatory Services. We also formalized our collaboration with the Council around these shared concerns through our Neighborhood Priority Plan, which was approved by the Council in July.

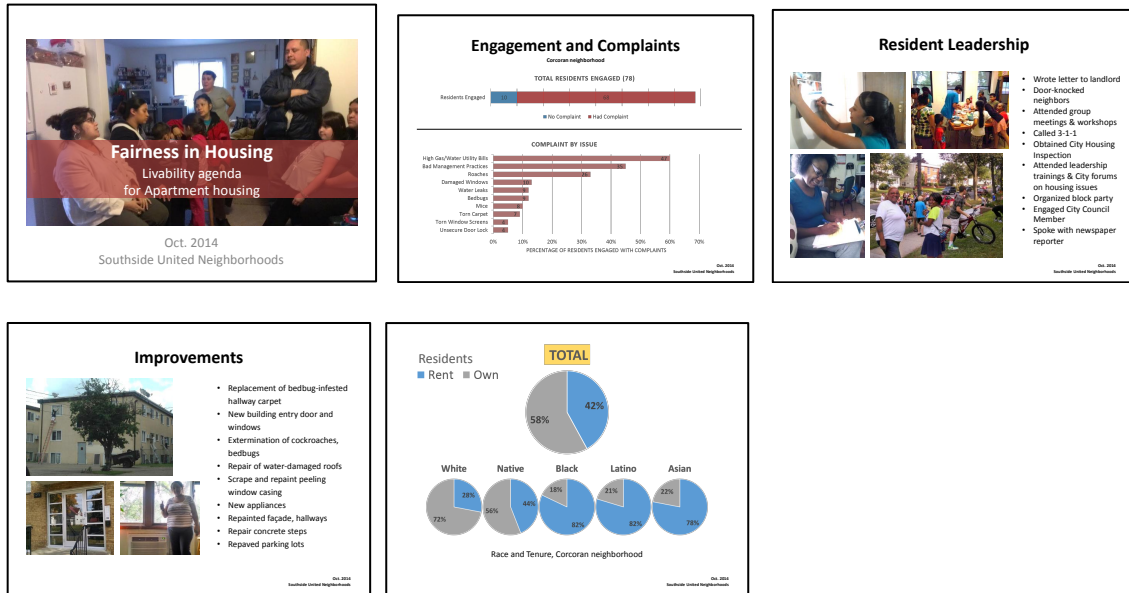
In October 2014, our Southside United Neighborhoods leadership and partner HOME Line met again with our 4 City Council members at City Hall. CNO staff led a presentation recapping SUN's work to date in 2014, including engagement of 188 households in 19 buildings, a summary of complaints by volume, a summary of resident leadership actions, a summary of the physical improvements achieved, and a summary of our substantial collaboration with the director and staff of Regulatory Services and City Council offices.

We presented five developed policy improvement recommendations based on resident direction, policy research conducted with technical and legal partner HOME Line, and insights gained through the work. These included: 1.) Raise standards for livability and inspections, 2.)

Foster energy efficiency and fair utility billing, 3.) Equip renters and landlords to eliminate bedbugs, 4.) Make housing standards and renters' rights transparent and legible, and 5.) Support tenant hotline and renter organizing capacity.

As expected, the Council Members had also prepared for this meeting and engaged with us in a discussion of strategy to develop and advance these changes at a Council, department, and community level, and next steps and timeframe for all parties to continue the work.

Following are sample slides from our presentation.



3. 2014 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2014:

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

Land Use, Housing and Economic Development drives strategic improvements to the built environment. 2014 achievements include shaping public/private redevelopment plans for the 6.5 acre 2225 East Lake property adjoining the 3rd busiest Blue Line station -- slated for Spring 2015 groundbreaking -- to achieve a 1-acre plaza for the Midtown Farmers Market and other uses, and community goals around walkability, retail, sustainability, and a diverse array of new housing. The committee also visioned and recruited private partners and Minneapolis Public Schools support to redevelop blighted property at 21st and Lake Street. The committee also fostered construction by the County, City, and MnDOT of new bicycle safety facilities at the 32nd and Hiawatha crossing benefiting residents and South High students.

Renters Committee. Immigrants in the East Lake Street corridor -- where Latinos now comprise 1/3 of the population -- are being housed by a class of predatory landlords, exposing families to unsecured buildings, environmental health hazards, unstable tenure, and lost wealth and opportunity. In response, CNO has developed a program to engage and empower individual and collective action by concerned residents who rent. In 2014, we helped 43 households take action to build durable skills and achieve significant public and private area improvements at all

9 buildings where we've worked. Meanwhile, we've engaged 4 City Council members and the Regulatory Services director around improvements to regulatory process and housing standards.

Midtown Farmers Market connects the diverse residents of south Minneapolis to food producers in a mutually beneficial economic and cultural exchange, serving over 60,000 people and 80 vendors each season with twice-weekly markets held May through October. Our programming and outreach has continued to target low-income residents and Latino and East African immigrants in the neighborhoods near the market, with the aim of building the most inclusive farmers market in Minnesota and a permanent regional asset and destination at the Lake Street station on the Blue Line.

Corcoran Community Garden, in its second season, provides food production, education, and community building opportunities for 40 gardeners including 15 new gardeners and 25 who do not have access to gardening space at home.

Corcoran News is an English/Spanish monthly resident-driven newspaper delivered to every household since 1985. The News unveiled a bold, modern, and more readable design in 2014.

Mujeres en Accion y Poder women's empowerment program serves as a bridge for new Americans to the community and resources that are available but often unknown. The program drew almost 100 participants to programming in Corcoran, Powderhorn, and Sibley Parks during 2014. On the recommendation of the CNO Board, Corcoran Park and MPRB leaders recently agreed to take on ownership and financial support of the program and its lead staff person, program founder Silvia Perez. This move helped to free up capacity to develop our work on Economic Development and Tenant Organizing.

Economic Development is a new committee established to build a retail environment that is fully-occupied, stable, and responsive to residents' needs through strategic support and collaboration between resident leaders and property and business owners. CNO secured a new 2-year grant from McKnight along with funding from LISC and CPED to support the work.

4. Housing

What percentage of time did your organization spend on housing-related activities?

Approximately 50%

5. Financial Reports

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

An income and expense report is attached.

In addition to your annual report, please take time to describe your interactions with City departments and other jurisdictions.

1. Impact

What interactions with City departments occupied a major part of your time? What worked well? What could be improved?

- Regulatory Services was a major partnership described above. Top staff are responsive and interested in real collaboration.
- CPED remained very engaged in development projects of mutual interest at 2225 East Lake and elsewhere, and helped support our economic development work. David Frank, Paul Mogush, and Kristin Guild remain our main contacts and each are responsive, informative, and helpful.
- Public Works director Steven Kotke attended our walking tour of the Lake and Hiawatha pedestrian zone and engaged in related discussions with elected officials and staff from MnDOT and Hennepin County. Despite this highlight the department feels distant and difficult to access – the bicycle staff are a notable exception and seem to operate within their own culture.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate your overall experience with your interactions with the City?

“3” overall for CNO staff, “2 or 3” for homeowners, and “1” for residents who rent based on our observations of their experiences working with Regulatory Services and 3-1-1 staff.

2. City Communications – effectiveness

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

The information is generally understandable but is often characterized by unnecessarily technical and obscure jargon, and thus often requires seeking additional input from city staff to gain clarity.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City?

Please see our answer for question #1.

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.

Not sure.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the timeliness of communications from the City?

Not sure.

4. City Departments

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

City departments can't and won't make meaningful improvements without political will and the joint effort of residents and their elected leaders.

5. **City Assistance**

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

As we wrote in last year's report, it is not clear to us what sorts of services the NCR department offers or how to access them. With those services we have accessed (e.g. translation), we have had a very mixed experience.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the assistance provided to your neighborhood by NCR?

We rarely need or use assistance from NCR, but Michelle Chavez has been great.

6. **Other comments**