

East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA) 2014 Annual Report Community Participation Program

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1. Stakeholder Involvement

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

What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2014?

2014 outreach efforts included our annual mailing to all residents; monthly e-newsletters; meeting minutes, notifications and ads in community newspapers (*Hill and Lake Press* and *Southwest Journal*); and updates on our website (www.eastisles.org) and Facebook.

Residents were invited to participate in monthly board and committee meetings. Our committee meetings and events offered the opportunity for residents to become EIRA members. We recruited volunteers via standing committees, e-newsletter, events, community newspaper, personal contact and our annual mailing.

EIRA organized two large annual social events: Ice Skating Social in January and the Ice Cream Social in August. EIRA also holds semi-annual membership meetings (April and October). The April meeting was held at a restaurant and provided a free chili dinner. The October meeting included a panel discussion featuring state and local elected officials.

The Outreach & Nominations Committee employed a variety of methods to recruit new board members to serve on the EIRA Board of Directors.

The East Isles Green Team held a number of very successful events in 2014 (see 2014 Highlights for more details).

Board members and committee leaders staffed an EIRA table at the Uptown Association Annual Meeting Expo and 25 volunteers ran a pop booth during the Uptown Art Fair.

How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2014?

We reached out to our under-represented community by sending a mailing to every resident in East Isles and including EIRA Board meeting minutes, special event notifications, and ads in the local newspaper (*Hill and Lake Press*), which is delivered to every residential property (including multi-family buildings) in the neighborhood. Special events are also promoted in the *Southwest Journal*. Notices were also placed on our Facebook page and NextDoor.

Fliers to promote events were hung in the lobbies of apartment buildings, posted in local coffee shops/businesses and on the community bulletin board in Triangle Park.

Board members were asked to distribute fliers to promote the Annual Meeting to friends and neighbors.

Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful? Why?

Personal phone call and email communication were the most effective strategies to encourage participation and recruit volunteers.

Our monthly e-newsletter is a great tool to communicate events, programs and issues.

The Green Team achieved good participation for the 3rd Annual Super Sale (neighborhood-wide rummage sale) by using lawn signs and door-hangers. The Green Team has recruited participants via outreach to nearby neighborhoods.

We seek to have a mix of residents on the EIRA Board: renters, homeowners; residents living in multifamily dwellings and single-family homes, along with adults of varying ages. In 2014 the EIRA Board composition was as follows:

- Three renters living in apartment buildings
- Four members residing in multi-family buildings as owner-occupiers (including duplexes and condos)
- Seven living in single-family dwelling

What did not work so well? Why?

Posting flyers in apartment building lobbies is very time consuming for volunteers.

It can be difficult to get residents involved because people have busy lives and other priorities that can be limiting factors in their participation in neighborhood activities.

How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)?

EIRA had direct contact with approximately 250 people in 2014.

Green Team leaders make a special effort to engage participants in its events. We have used this approach to recruit members to our leadership team and in other green activities.

How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?

EIRA had 50 individuals volunteer for various activities in 2014.

How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?

Approximately 600 people participated in our activities during 2014.

How many people receive your print publications?

2,200 households

How many people receive your electronic communications?

EIRA's email distribution lists contained 460 addresses in 2014.

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?

Green Team

The East Isles Green Team's mission is to bring together East Isles residents—from homeowners to apartment dwellers, singles and families—to learn, connect, have fun, and act in ways that benefit our community.



The Green Team organized a number of successful programs/events in 2014 including: Transition Towns series; Earth Day clean up; Green Festival and Plant Swap; Green Mixer targeted at young residents; a program for young mothers on keeping kids safe from household toxic chemicals; a garden-side celebration and tutorial to celebrate the one year anniversary of our Demonstration Raingarden, and the third annual East Isles Super Sale. It also organized the summer-long "Tot Plots for Kids" program that engaged 15 families in edible gardening.

It also formed a Community Solar Project Team to engage East Isles residents in the new state-wide community solar program. Much of the year was spent forming an active core leadership team and building partnerships with organizations such as (1) "Partners in Energy" (Midtown Corridor neighborhoods, the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE), the City of Minneapolis, and Xcel Energy) and (2) Community Energy Resource Teams (CERTS). The Green Team solar team was also asked by the City to join a new community solar Advisory Committee to support emerging neighborhood community solar programs.

In addition, the Green Team also volunteered to help with organics composting at community events (Nature Valley Bicycle Festival and Uptown Art Fair).



3. 2014 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2014:

- **What were your organization's major accomplishments?**
 - Formalized our 501c4 status with the IRS.
 - Formed an active EIRA Green Team Community Solar team, forged strong relationships with key community solar organizations in the City , becoming a key player in the emerging community solar garden program.
 - Initiated a dialogue with the Park Board on the rehabilitation of Smith Triangle and Thomas Lowry monument.
 - Continued to work on specific zoning and land use issues
 - 1800 Lake pumping groundwater into Lake of Isles/Lake Calhoun Lagoon
 - Conditional use permit for Bridge for Youth to consolidate their programs
 - Vacant property slated for demolition at 2208 Irving Ave S
 - Worked with developers on new projects in the neighborhood:
 - 16Twenty
 - Lake and Irving
 - Seventeen10
- **How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?**
 - A major feature of East Isles is its physical beauty and land and building features. This year maintained a focus on these assets which make East Isles a highly livable community and very desirable to individuals who reside here.

4. Housing

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

Twenty percent.

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

We interact most directly with our City Council Member Lisa Goodman and her staff. CM Goodman attended our monthly board meetings to share information about City news and issues.

We work most directly with NCR for our CPP and NRP programs.

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? 4

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

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

- Many of the public hearing notices are very cryptic and require follow-up on the part of neighborhoods to learn more so we can determine whether it is an issue we wish to address.
- Newsletter from Council Member Goodman was very helpful.
- The City offers a number of ways to keep informed about Snow Emergencies.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City? 4

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.

Public hearing notices are mailed within 10 days of hearings. The notice is often the first time we are learning about an issue. This presents a challenge to adequately respond since our board meets once a month. The City wants feedback from the neighborhood organization but the timing rarely works out to be able to respond with only a 10-day notice.

The City occasionally uses online survey (at times with a limited timeframe and distribution methods) which begs the question: how representative are such solicitations when the timing and methodology reaches so few given the City's overall populations, ages ranges, access to computers, etc.

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? 3

4. ***City Departments***

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

The city could develop new policies to revitalize abandoned houses that were paying all fines and taxes but are unoccupied (e.g. 2208 Irving Ave S).

The city could develop new policies to prohibit developers that had major violation of city regulations from developing again in the same neighborhood (e. g. 1800 Lake).

5. ***City Assistance***

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

NCR can share best practices of other neighborhood organizations to help us better reach our renter community.

Jack Whitehurst and Bob Cooper are both very responsive and extremely helpful.

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? 4

6. ***Other comments?***