

## Community Participation Program

### 2014 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Jordan Area Community Council (JACC)

Contact person: Cathy Spann, Executive Director

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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 proved to be an exciting year for JACC to set a precedent for conducting engagement activities. The organization developed a comprehensive outreach plan that would carry over into 2015.

CPP activities that were carried out entailed a few new strategies of engaging residents and business owners and proved to be a catalyst for increasing community involvement.

- Greenway Open Streets – The City of Minneapolis is exploring converting low-traffic streets to a greenway in north Minneapolis. A "greenway" is a park-like biking and walking trail that people can use for transportation and recreation. The greenway is intended to create a new amenity for families in north Minneapolis. It could also create space for community gardens and public art. In 2014, JACC participated in open streets and facilitated family friendly activities in the Jordan Park. This outreach effort was a way to survey individuals/families directly impacted by the Greenway project.
- Greenway tours – JACC conducted tours of Greenway Projects in South Minneapolis i.e. Milwaukee Avenue
- Harvest Fest Open Streets – Over the past four years, streets in Minneapolis have transformed to allow residents to experience their city in a whole new way — by bike, by skateboard, etc. JACC hosted an info table to engage people during the event to increase neighborhood awareness and involvement, promote opportunities to be involved in the organization's planning and implementation efforts under the CPP program
- Ice Cream Socials – in areas where crime had increased and burglaries occurred to Habitat vacant homes, JACC and block club leaders held socials to engage residents
- Community Gardening activities – fun in the sun activities were held at the community garden located in the heart of Jordan at 26th & Knox in collaboration with Appetite for Change
- Holiday Lights contest – In collaboration with a new community business partner, Thrivent Financial, JACC hosted a community contest for residents to showcase their beautifully decorated homes during the holiday season.
- 50th anniversary annual meeting – JACC has historically hosted an annual community meeting; in 2014 JACC celebrated its 50th year of proudly serving the community and transformed the space at the North Regional library to host a gala that engaged over 150+ community residents, funders, business owners, elected officials, etc.
- Tornado Outreach – families that the city identified impacted by the aftermath of the tornado were contacted; tree damage and add'l housing assistance services were offered
- Block leaders gatherings - 45 people have been identified to have participated in the MPD block leader training; 18 active block leaders have been targeted to facilitate meetings
- Community Connections Conference – 2014 was the second year JACC participated as part of the planning committee and hosted a table to share information with as many as up to 500+ people.

- Responsible banking workshops – in Partnership with Jewish Community Action, JACC hosted listening sessions for residents; JACC staff participated in further meetings, focus groups with the University of MN, City of Minneapolis, and Jewish Community Action
- Hmong New Year Celebration - 2014 was the first year JACC participated by hosting an info table in partnership with Habitat for Humanity.
- National Night out – Jordan staff, volunteers attended six block club events to celebrate NNO; one block in particular raised funds to support two additional blocks with school supplies and food.
- Home dedications – Habitat for Humanity invited JACC to welcome new homeowners to the Jordan neighborhood
- North First Events – As a partner of the Northside Neighborhoods Council (NNC), JACC participated in events allowing community residents to do three minute presentations on subjects such as education, housing, health; forums were held at the Capri theatre; on avg 85+ people attended both in the spring and fall events.

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

According to the American Community Survey 5-year estimates that represent averages of data collected between 2008-2012, 19% of the Jordan neighborhood are of Asian descent. In an effort to reach out and involve the South East Asian community, in 2014, JACC recruited and hired a staff, whose primary focus was engaging and involving the South East Asian community and identifying barriers to engagement. In 2014, JACC participated in Hmong New Year by attending and hosting a table at the yearly celebration, held this year at the MN State Fair Grounds.

JACC has had a long history of collaborating with other agencies to meet the unmet needs of the community. In 2014, JACC and Habitat for Humanity welcomed new homeowners to the Jordan neighborhood. JACC staff were invited to participate in Habitats home dedications in the Jordan area. This effort assisted with reaching out to involve families that were of East African descent, primarily the region of Somalia and South East Asian residents.



36% of the population in Jordan are 17 years old or younger. To better engage this population, for the second year in a row, JACC was elected as an employer of the Minneapolis Step-up Program.

The agency employed three youth ages 14-15 as Youth Outreach Workers. Subsequently, two of the youth continued their employment through the Fall of 2014.



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

JACC has observed that many under-represented communities in the Jordan neighborhood are more likely to congregate among themselves. Collaborating with Habitat for Humanity has proven a very viable strategy to engage under-represented communities such as the East African population and South East Asian. JACC staff has been included in the programming of the home dedications and as guest speakers have an opportunity to welcome each new Habitat family that has purchased a home in the Jordan neighborhood. JACC started hosting meetings in different locations (i.e. housing meetings outdoors at 1200 West Broadway, a Crime and Safety meeting at a Habitat home, etc.). Changing the location venue and ensuring each site was ADA accessible, also increased participation among residents with limited or no access to a vehicle and addressed the needs of residents with limited physical mobility. Hosting community meetings directly in the neighborhood is a practice the agency will continue in 2015.



JACC used its office as an incubator to allow another small non-profit, Appetite for Change (AFC,) to expand its operations and further its mission of using food as a tool to health, wealth and social change. JACC and AFC collaborated to host “Fun in the Sun” events and created a partnership that allows AFC and community residents to maintain the upkeep while growing vegetables in the JACC owned lot; aka community garden.



- **What did not work so well? Why?**

The one area where JACC is continuously seeking ways to improve is the recruitment of board members. During all outreach and engagement activities, residents are encouraged to attend meetings and participate. Many residents through 2014, expressed interested either face to face and or via email however are still reluctant to commit to becoming a board member. The history of the organization still continues to be a stigma.

Another impact to engagement, during winter months there is low participation and attendance at community meetings. JACC is exploring indoor winter family activities for 2015.

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

Direct contact with individuals is the method by which JACC markets/advertises its monthly meetings, address crime and safety issues and provide information about the Jordan neighborhood. During the Summer, Fall of 2014, the staff canvassed and outreach 2-3 times weekly, the agency reached approximately 450 individuals thru door knocking, meetings and one-on-ones. The outreach staff worked closely with block club leaders to facilitate meetings; collaborate with other organizations to do pop-up events, reached out to the faith based community for volunteer recruitment and attended other neighborhood association events and meetings.



- **How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?**

JACC has had approximately 60 individuals volunteer either as board members, housing & crime and safety members, block club leaders, NNO organizers, etc.

- **How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?**

JACC has seen an increase in participation through 2014. JACC hosted, collaborated and participated in many events and activities in 2014, from Greenway Open Streets, bus tours, Ice Cream Socials, Community Gardening activities, North First events, with an estimated over 800+ participating.



- **How many people receive your print publications?**

JACC has made an earnest effort to reach beyond its borders and have partnered with other organizations to broaden participation. As a partner of Northside Neighborhoods Council (NNC), Lowry Business Association and the Lowry Corridor Implementation Committee (LCIC), materials are distributed throughout North Minneapolis within the boundaries of seven neighborhoods: Cleveland, Willard Hay, Near North, Heritage Park, Hawthorne and Harrison as well Jordan. Over 4000 people receive printed publications either in the form of newsletter or flyers; 2200+ newsletters were circulated door to door in the Jordan neighborhood in the spring and fall.

- **How many people receive your electronic communications?**

In 2013, JACC hired an Administrative Coordinator to manage internal and external communications. The staff skillset is project experience with social media management, email marketing and website management.

These skills prove to be an asset to the agency. As a result, JACC improved its online presence and saw an increase in people receiving agency information; 1000 people received electronic communications from JACC on a monthly basis thru out 2014 via the website, Facebook, Jordan Next door, etc. there are 700 people on JACC's listserv; it is estimated an additional 300 people receive information via disseminating thru other non-profits, businesses, schools, MPD, MPS, City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, State of MN, etc.

## 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?

The Jordan Area Community Council (JACC) has had a history of involving the community by doing outreach, especially thru door knocking, social gatherings and building block clubs for residents to get to know their neighbors. The issue the agency faced for many years is finding outreach methods to engage underrepresented cultural and ethnic communities.

In 2014, an opportunity presented itself for JACC to partner with Thrivent Financial Services and Habitat for Humanity.

Thrivent has a long history supporting the housing developer. The staff reached out to JACC during a Habitat home dedication ceremony wanting to explore a collaboration. The results of such a dialogue laid the ground work for spearheading the kick-off of a holiday lighting contest.

In December 2014, Jordan residents were engaged thru social media to participate in a contest to determine the best decorated home during the holiday season. Staff and volunteers toured the neighborhood and selected the winners of the contest. Thrivent volunteers provided gift baskets for each household that participated in the contest.

A community gathering, with over 55 people from various ethnic, cultural and socio economic backgrounds, was held to announce the winner. The outcome of bringing multi-racial and ethnic communities together to celebrate was a major accomplishment



## 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?

The Jordan Area Community Council began in 1964 when local PTA members came together to prevent the closure of the Jordan Jr. High School Public Library Branch, the struggle resulted in a new Regional Library opening in 1971. In 2014, JACC celebrated 50 years of proudly serving the community. It was a major milestone for the agency and community to revisit the foundation on which it was built;



With the assistance from two of JACC's original founders, JS Futchter and Ed Enstrom, the agency was able to create a gala to honor the many years of serving the Jordan neighborhood.

The gala was held at the North Regional Library and welcomed 150+ guest, residents, business owners, funders, elected officials and other non-profits.

Mayor Betsy Hodges presented JACC Board Chair, Jeff Skrenes, with a framed proclamation acknowledging that the Jordan neighborhood is one of the most diverse communities in the Twin Cities metro area, considers the Jordan Area Community Council a fundamental partner in achieving the city's goal of living well, thanks the residents of the Jordan neighborhood for fifty years of outstanding community services and strategic partnerships and proclaimed October 16, 2014 as Jordan Neighborhood Community Day in the City of Minneapolis.



#### 4. Housing

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

According to the American Community survey 5-year estimates, that represent averages of data collected between 2008-1012, 20% (509) of Jordan properties were vacant housing units, 79% (2,082) were occupied, 42% (874) were owner-occupied and 58% (1208) were renter-occupied. The area was greatly impacted by the foreclosure crisis and the 2011 tornado.

By the winter of 2014, the City of Minneapolis was reporting an average of 90+ properties were vacant and boarded in the Jordan neighborhood. Jordan Area Community Council spent 40% of time on housing related activities related to historic preservation and problem properties remediation. This time

includes the housing subcommittee reviewing, revising the Jordan Community Neighborhood Preservation Resource and Design Guide, housing meetings to review developer's plans, meetings with City of Minneapolis regulatory service department and CPED to address blighted abandoned Jordan properties. JACC observed a correlation between housing related activities and crime and safety issues. This assisted the agency with revising the "Dirty Thirty" program originally implemented in the 90's to address problem properties.

Over the past 20+ years JACC has offered housing assistance to homeowners thru revolving/rehab loans, closing cost and down payment assistance, etc. In 2014, the agency spent 15% of organizational time to review and evaluate current programs and met with its housing vendor, Northside Housing Services to gain oversight on YTD funding.

## **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?**

JACC works the closest and has the most interaction with the Neighborhood Community Relations (NCR) department. This department has proven to be an asset in providing guidance and direction regarding insurance, grievances, CPP compliance and funding.

In 2014, JACC selected a new housing vendor to administer its housing loan programs. The NCR staff were instrumental in facilitating the transition; terminating contracts, attended board meetings, etc. this was a long lengthy and complex process. The outcome worked very well. The city identified funding available to administer programs and explained process for implementation.

The NCR & CPED departments have advised and worked closely with the agency regarding the sale of agency assets.

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? \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_

### **2. City Communications – effectiveness**

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

The city community communications department does a very good job with translating information in different language formats. Information is very understandable, useful and readable.

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

### **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.



JACC is exploring the tools to reach out to and involve under-represented communities. One key factor to address, if people do not have internet access or a computer, what is the best way to reach those households.

Most communication from the city is via email. JACC receives adequate notices of city activities and is able to easily post information via its website and other social media networks.

On a scale of 1 to5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the timeliness of communications from the City? 4

#### **4. City Departments**

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

Regulatory services and the MPD are two departments, JACC is working to define expectations. MPD meets monthly with the agency to discuss crime and safety, moving forward in 2015 the agency will seek to increase outreach and engagement activities with this department, and invite regulatory services dept. to meet every other month to address the revised "Dirty Thirty" list of the most problematic properties in Jordan.

JACC is also seeking to work closer with the CPED housing division to improve communication as it pertains to vacant homes in Jordan.

#### **5. City Assistance**

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

JACC relies very heavily on the NCR staff expertise, experience working within the CPP guidelines, this partnership supports less flaws in monthly expense submissions. Having experienced NCR staff well versed in contract negotiations has proven to be an asset to the organization. NCR staff has supported the organization by attending events, meetings, trainings, etc. The support has been invaluable to the organization.

On a scale of 1 to5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the assistance provided to your neighborhood by NCR? 5

#### **6. Other comments?**