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## 2014-2016 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

### Submission Template

Please use this template as a guide to developing your submission for funding from the Community Participation Program. The level of detail should be appropriate to your organization's proposed activities, and to the level of funding allocated for your organization.

You may provide this submission electronically to [ncr@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:ncr@minneapolismn.gov). Please include a copy of your bylaws if they have been revised since your last funding submission.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

|                     |                                                                                                |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Organization Name:  | East Phillips Improvement Coalition, EPIC                                                      |
| Address:            | 2536 18th Ave S                                                                                |
| Website:            | Eastphillips-epic.com                                                                          |
| Organization email: | cpass@runbox.com                                                                               |
| Federal EIN:        | On File                                                                                        |
| Board Contact:      | Name: Carol Pass<br>Phone: 612-280-8418<br>Email: cpass@runbox.com<br>Address: 2536 18th Ave S |
| Staff Contact:      | Name: N/A<br>Phone:<br>Email:<br>Address:                                                      |

Who should be the primary contact for this submission? Carol Pass, Board Chair

Date of Board review and approval: Draft Review June 7, 2014, Approved July 5th, 2014

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## FUNDING ACTIVITIES.

Use the following questions as a guide for your submission. For questions 1-8, please limit each response to no more than 3 paragraphs.

- 1. Eligibility.** If your organization has not previously been funded through the Community Participation Program, please provide evidence of the organization's eligibility, as identified in Section II.A of the Guidelines.

*EPIC has been previously received funding through the Community Participation Program*

- 2. Community participation efforts.** Describe proposed outreach activity in the neighborhood, and methods to involve residents and other stakeholders in one or more of the three key program purposes. How will you engage residents and other stakeholders of their neighborhood in developing a Neighborhood Priority Plan?

### ***Engagement Strategy-***

*EPIC takes very seriously the first article of the City's statement of 'Core Principles of Community Engagement' namely the Right to be involved: that public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. If this is to be meaningful it must mean more than being involved in the conversation. It must mean having an impact on the result, shaping the character of the program, project or neighborhood. This requires informing the community residents with all the necessary information to be effective participants.*

*Throughout 2011 the EPIC Board of Directors and our cadre of volunteers carried out the most extensive survey and community engagement of East Phillips that, we believe, has ever occurred in any of the Phillips Neighborhoods for our NRP Phase II Action plan. Starting in 2011, first, we studied other similar low-income, multi-ethnic neighborhoods that had submitted before us to see what worked for them and what did not. We found some that had had the success they and we wanted after several trial runs. All of them found that computerized surveys missed the mark in low-income, very multiethnic neighborhoods. The results were too small and too "white". Some, like Cleveland, went on to try several times before they got what they wanted...and it was always produced by intensive face-to-face work with bilingual surveyors when necessary.*

*So that is what we chose to do at the outset. Though we used some computer surveys, we went almost entirely face-to-face and the results were gratifying though really hard work. EPIC used focus groups and house parties with many of the smaller ethnicities; garage parties to listen to the various sections of the neighborhood; board members sat in Cedar field to carry out discussions and listen to Native Americans and others using the Park; and house parties for new refugees. We purchased 30 folding chairs to carry meetings into apartment buildings where the Somali families and others reside. We door knocked every house and apartment building with bilingual volunteers.*

*Because the EPIC/NRP Phase II plan was so extensive, so connected to the people, and so recent, ours to implement in early 2012, the EPIC Board has understood this plan as our guiding document and this methodology as our guiding methodology. We will seek to continue to revise the Plan and bring it into focus with a variety of Priority Plans as EPIC moves ahead to continue its implementation and extend and add pieces.*

### ***Engagement***

*It is the intent of the organization to provide multiple points of engagement and various venues for residents and stakeholders to connect and share their input on what they think is important, given the major fact of the "Digital Divide" and the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual setting of East Phillips. This creates a radically different setting than found in most Minneapolis neighborhoods.*

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a. In implementation of our strategy, EPIC has continued door knocking, other direct face-to-face outreach and small meetings for many engagement efforts. Throughout the year we try to knock on every door at least once, usually more, around a specific issue, a pending concern, a campaign and the Annual Meeting. In the recent past, some of these have been Housing, the Swimming Pool, environmental issues and crime. Currently, these are Public Safety issues and youth programming, which we are trying to move ahead with.

b. EPIC is continuing our 'bringing-the-meeting-to-the-people' with the most recent meeting only a few weeks ago in a large Somali apartment building, the last of three held there the past 8 months. We purchased thirty chairs for this purpose and also several tents. These meetings involve anywhere from 15 to 30 people, not including the many children that accompany the meetings. Interpreters are provided. The focus is to discuss concerns and future priorities and, again, the focus has recently tended to be Public Safety and youth issues. This has meant a strengthened involvement on the part of a number of ethnic groups, especially Latino, Somali and Nepali. We also have met in area residents' garages, homes and apartments. We get refreshments donated, which is essential for most groups, because the meetings need to be socially comfortable.

c. Membership Meetings: Our all-community monthly meetings at the new East Phillips Park building function as forums to inform the community about city information and seek their input to carry to government and other bodies; to address issues of concern and make plans to organize; to move projects and business forward; to listen to members' needs, problems and suggestions for future programs; to respond to crime and problem housing; and to build relationships. Minutes are taken and published on our website.

The monthly meetings have grown in size and interest in the past few years. They are a mainstay for EPIC outreach and the unvarying time helps make it the place to go when big concerns come up. We try never to vary the meeting time, the second Thursday of each month, so folks just know when it is and can come. It has been the same for over forty years...so older residents tell us. This works for a community that relies less on more modern forms of communication such as the Internet. Coffee, juice and cookies are donated.

Many organizations meet as a whole community with less frequency, but the intensity and volume of concerns in East Phillips are such that the Boards have continued to believe the monthly format is necessary. Its size can run as small as 10 to as large as 50 or more depending on current concerns. EPIC's Annual Meeting has tended to be very large and multi-ethnic. This past year was EPIC's largest and most diverse yet, at approximately 120 people. The provision and cooking of the food as an all-volunteer process has a "bonding experience" according to participants who really get to know each other. The growth in numbers and diversity at our Annual meeting demonstrates that our efforts to grow the organization are working.

d. While we primarily use these labor-intensive face-to-face strategies, we also utilize our Community Newspaper, "The Alley" to notify for our meetings and other engagement efforts and submit monthly articles. In addition, we use the our internet news letter, EPIC E-News, which goes out many times a month and has a reach of over 400 email addresses. This is also used to inform residents of our meetings. We translate when possible, primarily into Spanish, but are adding a translation button to this format. EPIC is working to increase the reach of this important tool by enlisting new members during door knocking and at various gatherings.

Announcements, minutes, events and new opportunities are also posted on our website, building our virtual community as we work to expand and improve it through EPIC's 'Bridging the Digital Divide' project. Reducing the Digital Divide is now engaging the youth in internships and other connecting associations in upgraded computer labs at East Phillips Community Center. The Board is also exploring hiring a Webmaster.

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e. *EPIC continues work to grow the East Phillips Park Programming Partnership, a committee of EPIC which meets monthly and connects EPIC members with both neighbors involved at the park and partnering agencies to work together in programming the park. Some of these organizations are Community University Health Care Center (CUHCC), Holy Rosary Church, MplsPRB, Liga Hispana de Beisbol, the Family Partnership and Urban 4-H (U of Minnesota). Lately this is moving toward Bridging the Digital Divide efforts with the City's IT Dept. These efforts are now engaging the youth in internships and other connecting associations.*

e. *The EPIC Board of Directors meets monthly to set the direction, and policy of the organization. Our Board is composed of 2 Latino home owners, 1 African American renter, 1 Native American renter, 1 Somali renter, 1 mixed Native American/Anglo renter and 3 Euro American home owners. We are confident that our board reflects both the ethnic and the economic mix of Phillips. This helps us better hear the voices of most economic and ethnic groups. Directors are selected at the Annual Meeting and serve for two years. The terms are staggered. Officers are elected by the Board members. We are growing the professionalism of the board by additional training with MAP for Nonprofits and intend to continue this effort with other providers as well.*

g. *The EPIC Community Garden is owned and insured by EPIC and has 34 plots. Each is held by a family or group, most with children. They are from many cultures: Latino, Oromo, Somali, Nepali, Asian, a Native American Preschool and Euro Americans. The garden probably engages over 80 adults and approximately 30 children. The scheduled workdays, monthly meetings and potlucks are major engagement pieces where information is given and taken. The same is true of the yearly Spring Planning Plot-assigning Party and Fall Harvest Party. As a testimonial, a Nepali woman from the gardening group ran for the Board at the Annual Meeting*

h.. *Major Events: EPIC will continue our June SummerFest next year and further build up its outreach. We had a tent and table there where we handed out our brochures and signed more people up to membership. We will encourage growth in our National Night Out celebrations, also a good time to reach out, collect opinions and disseminate information. We usually have 10 to 12 block parties, which we encourage through funding. Board members visit these with our brochures, other current information and collect opinions. EPIC will continue involvement in "Clean Sweep", our fall Clean-the-Whole-Neighborhood event partnering with Midtown Phillips, Phillips West, and Ventura Village, which involves over 600 volunteers.*

i *EPIC members will continue to ferry folks to the Partnership of Diabetics meetings to begin to pay greater attention to and involve our elders in the community. We have already met with several groups of Somali elders in nearby apartment complexes to assist with their greater use of our new park building.*

j. *EPIC members will continue to support and attend the Hispanic Baseball League games, and both the Latino and Somali soccer games and other sporting events. We intend to assist in the starting of a Latino little league that is next on the agenda for the Hispanic Baseball League. These are great times to outreach to parents, build community, disseminate information, build relationships, share information and build our membership. Many Latinos from the Hispanic Baseball League and Somali soccer attended the Annual Meeting.*

**3. Building organizational capacity.** How will you work to: (1) provide opportunities for the direct involvement of members, (2) build your membership and volunteer base, (3) encourage and develop new leadership, and (4) expand the organization's capacity through self-assessment and other activities.

a. *The East Phillips Park Programming Partnership is an ongoing committee involving East Phillips nonprofit program partners from the Metro and residents of the community who work to*

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forge expanding and serving activities in East Phillips, making use of volunteers and paid staff of these service organizations. Some of the most involved organizations along with EPIC are the Community University Health Care Center (CUHCC), Holy Rosary Church Summer Camps, the Family Partnership, Liga Hispana de Beisbol, Urban 4-H, Osiris, Midtown Phillips and the MPRB. These work with residents to bring unique programming to the park.

- b. Through EPIC's work with the East Phillips Programming Partnership East Phillips was chosen by the MPRB to be one of the first park sites to be funded for an expanded computer lab, doubling our capacity, and are using our 'Bridging the Digital Divide' work with Osiris and the City IT Dept. to support digital inclusion of all the families of East Phillips. We received funding to employ East Phillips youth as tutors and mentors for the new larger lab. EPIC will continue expanding this project, which provides jobs for youth interns trained to assist seniors and others new to the use of the Internet and the computer in learning basic computer skills. These efforts will expand EPIC's contact list and facilitate EPIC's broader communication, a win-win project of EPIC. We will host a mini-conference to recruit other Phillips Neighborhoods to work with the City IT Department's equity project.
- c. EPIC enrolled the whole board in professional training with Management Assistant Project's Nonprofit Board Boot Camp training and later the Tech Workshop and will attend their Advanced Board Boot Camp. The Boot Camp was very helpful. Board members expressed that they felt more professional and committed afterward.
- c. We are and will continue to work with the Police Department to move ahead with Block Club expansion. We have about 10 block clubs, but these could be stronger. We have gotten additional Block Club Leaders trained recently and will try to get more trained and use the upcoming National Night Out to help the blocks get more organized for this. This is part of our Public Safety Priority Plan. We will continue to host more gatherings independent of our community meeting time to address issues in a block-by-block way. Some of these will continue to be in Spanish, Somali or Nepali.
- d. EPIC Ambassadors- A group called EPIC Ambassadors is forming to go through the neighborhood and greet people, bringing our brochures and other information, expanding our already large email lists, inviting people to meetings and connecting people more intentionally with the neighborhood organization. We do much of this already, but the program will formalize training, identity, accountability and effectiveness.

- 4. Building neighborhood relationships.** Describe your outreach, networking, and inclusivity efforts to: (1) build a sense of a whole neighborhood among residents, (2) build bridges among neighbors and diverse communities within the neighborhood, (3) work with other neighborhoods and organizations on issues of common interest, (4) build partnerships with private and public entities, and (5) benefit the neighborhood as a whole.

*While working with only volunteers is a lot of work, the depth of commitment and focus for someone at work on their own living space and with their own neighbors is remarkable.*

**Note:** Since our community is 87% persons of color and almost all are underserved, all the previously mentioned activities plus those mentioned here serve them and build relationships, though some do so more intentionally. Since that is the case, all the previously mentioned activities will not be mentioned again here. Some with a more focused intent are the following.

1) Bridging the Digital Divide project in our park building is a major inclusivity project, both providing jobs for youth and connecting the neighborhood via the Internet. Youth are being trained to serve as tutors and mentors to cross-cultural peers and adult new users in concert with the City IT Department's Internet equity project.

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- 2) *The community garden serves 34 large families and groups of Latino, Ethiopian, Nepali, Oromo, Somali, and Euro American ethnicity as well as a Native American Preschool. We are working on a little library there to share books and a cookbook to exchange recipes and share ethnic foods, turning our cultural differences into a great place to appreciate and celebrate them.*
  - 3) *Attendance at Cultural Events: weddings, birthdays, funerals, hospital stays, school performances and sports events has created deep, lasting relationships and allowed the board to meet the needs and concerns of underserved people, especially new immigrants and refugees.*
  - 4) *Partnering with another neighborhood, Ventura Village with “A Partnership of Diabetics” has been an effective way to work with another neighborhood on a great project for under-served elders. We have helped with financing interpreters and recruitment, bringing East Phillips elders.*
  - 5) *The East Phillips Programming Partnership has connected EPIC with effective partnerships with the previously listed organizations bringing additional services to East Phillips.*
  - 6) *It is our hope that the EPIC Ambassadors project will bring increased connections and inclusion throughout the neighborhood, broadening and deepening our participation.*
  - 7) *We are working with PCs for People to get those without Internet service connected.*
  - 8) *We are seeking ways to fund our ethnically based sports teams and activities. We have successfully written partnership grants in the past and hope to continue.*

**5. Involvement of under-engaged stakeholders.** Organizations should discuss which stakeholder groups are typically un-engaged or under-engaged in their work, and how they will work to involve those groups. Organizations should also discuss how the NCR Department can help with this work. *Again, East Phillips 87% persons of color, almost all of who are underserved, have been previously mentioned as being served in all of EPIC’s activities. The following groups of typically under-served and under-engaged people have been dealt with in the previous page: Nepalese, Somalis, Latinos, Elders, and Youth. See answers to 2, 3 and 4.*

*Some additional activities of greater intentionality are mentioned below.*

- 1) *Recruited new Board nominees from the Somali, Nepali, Anglo and Latino communities.*
- 2) *Hosted a meeting with United Nations Representatives for Refugee resettlement, a national cabinet member from Nepal and Commissioner McLaughlin at East Phillips for Nepali neighbors.*
- 3) *Supporting Latino Neighbors by accompanying them in court on immigration issues.*
- 4) *Raised \$3,500 in donations for summer camp scholarships for 20 plus children and youth.*

*The two groups that have been less well served by EPIC are the African Americans and the Native Americans. The African Americans are a small group in East Phillips and leadership is somewhat unengaged. Rapport with African American youth in park programs, however, is growing and may lead to their involvement and future leadership. We are working on this with park staff. If one scans the Native American Opportunities for Engagement Brochure, it is puzzling to determine what EPIC can offer this group, that they do not already have, with their much more extensive budget and focus. What it seems we are lacking is inclusion of one another and intentional efforts to understand all the diverse groups in the neighborhood. We are trying to move in this direction and recognize it needs dialogue and possibly multi-cultural forums.*

**6. Housing Activities.** Neighborhood organizations should discuss their work on housing and housing related activities. Organizations should estimate the percentage of time to be spent on these issues. *EPIC will continue to promote our housing programs (Home Buyer Deferred loans and Revolving Home Improvement Loans, both are No-Interest to accommodate Muslim homeowners) we will use our brochures at our various venues, National Night Out, Harvest Party,*

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*Clean Sweep and regular membership meetings. This raises awareness of the organization, offers resources to residents, and preserves East Phillips housing stock for a sustainable future.*

*Also, in view of EPIC's long-standing commitment to retaining our unique heritage of affordable home ownership, while still responding to change, we need to look at new construction. Our plan has been to seek greater density on the boundaries of East Phillips along major corridors and single-family homes and duplexes for the interior part of the neighborhood.*

*East Phillips has a large number of City-owned vacant lots in the middle of residential areas. These could go the highest bidder, which would probably not mean single-family homes or duplexes, but rather higher density apartment buildings. If we are to hold onto the success we have had in the past with neighborhood stabilization, we need to find ways to fill these vacant lots. However, we have an unfunded NRP category for new construction from the loss of funding from the 2010 changes to NRP.*

*The EPIC Board has been working with PRG since last winter. They have begun leveraging dollars for their program and have invited EPIC to be a part. The board has also contacted greater Metro Housing and they encouraged us to fund family homes.*

*The EPIC board has considered a plan modification using housing funds internal to NRP Phase II to assemble the dollars to accomplish this and will seek greater involvement through a Priority Plan engagement process using this as a community building project, engaging the neighborhood in site selection and design.*

*EPIC will market the new Greenway Heights apartments, the only affordable family housing on the Greenway, which opens in December with 46 units. We are proud of this accomplishment.*

*Five to 10% of our time may be devoted to housing in general.*

**7. Unused funds.** Organizations should discuss how they plan to use unused funds from the previous cycle for community engagement or implementation of neighborhood priorities.

*EPIC has purposely captured considerable unused funds by remaining a volunteer organization and hopes to spend them carefully and productively. The money to go into Priority Plans has been discussed and prepared for in the past year. The following opportunities will require community engagement to form Priority Plans. Most are already in our NRP Phase II Plan, which can be used as a guide. The neighborhood has expressed a desire to save funds for these each of projects.*

- 1) Housing- Using reallocated NRP dollars and funds set aside for Priority Plans, we hope to fill our vacant lots with housing: only \$15,00 a piece for subsidy from PRG and more from Greater Metro Housing corporation. We have a considerable number of empty lots owned by the city.(See Request)*
- 2) The Swimming Pool - Capital expenditures for the pool, especially now with a contribution match.*
- 3) Lighting of the East Phillips Park fields for security and better use of the fields and for which the Park board has promised a match.*
- 4) Lake Street Business fix-up grants - offering fix-up grants for businesses, and more.*
- 5) Funds for Bridging the Digital Divide Campaign-We may apply for the Community Fund, unless we can finance this ourselves.*
- 6) Public Safety-People wish to hire off-duty police for 'hot spots', fund a police bike and cameras.*
- 7) An Office for EPIC was on our survey but not included in our Phase II Plan because we felt we could not afford it after the Mayor's Budget cuts.*
- 8) Contracting professional help and/or staff.*
- 9) Hiring an accountant and a web master.*

**8. Budgets.** Submissions should include a budget showing how Community Participation Program funds will support the organization’s community participation work and an amount set-aside for implementation of Neighborhood Priority Plans. An annual budget for the organization should also be provided.

Expenses related to projects may only be eligible if they are related to implementation of an approved Neighborhood Priority Plan, and are identified in a CPP contract or an NRP contract or MoU. Contact your Neighborhood Support Specialist at NCR for further details.

*EPIC Board requests that NCR roll over 2012-13 CPP funds (\$123,934) and unused funds from 2011 per email of Wed, 15 Jan 2014 from Robert Thompson.(email available upon request)*

ESTIMATED BUDGET

| EPIC 2014-16 CPP Budget   | 2014     | 2015     | 2016     |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Staff Expenses            |          |          |          |
| Employee Benefits         |          |          |          |
| Professional Services     | \$2,000  | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| Occupancy                 | \$3,000  | \$8,000  | \$8,000  |
| Communications/Outreach   | \$3,000  | \$5,000  | \$5,000  |
| Outreach Partnerships     | \$5,000  | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| Supplies and Materials    | \$2,000  | \$4,000  | \$4,000  |
| Meetings/Community events | \$5,000  | \$7,000  | \$7,000  |
| Development               | \$2,000  | \$2,000  | \$2,000  |
| Fundraising               | \$1,000  | \$2,000  | \$2,000  |
| Other services            | \$7,000  | \$8,000  | \$8,000  |
| Total for Contract        | \$30,000 | \$56,000 | \$56,000 |
|                           |          |          |          |
| Neighborhood Priorities   | \$34,961 | \$8,960  | \$8,960  |
|                           |          |          |          |
| Total:                    | \$64,961 | \$64,960 | \$64,960 |

**Notes:**

- Staff expenses should include payroll, FICA, and withholding, and contract staff.
- Employee benefits should include any health insurance, retirement, or other benefits.
- Professional services should include the cost of temporary contractors, bookkeepers, accountants, etc.
- Occupancy should reflect costs related to rent, utilities, phone, websites and email expenses, and other similar expenses.
- Communications/Outreach should include costs of publications, printing, postage, delivery, and flyers.
- Supplies and materials should include office supplies as well as expenses for supplies related to ongoing programs such as block patrols, etc.
- Meetings and community building events can include those costs related to community meetings and events (excluding food and entertainment).
- Development expenses could include costs related to training, education, recognition, or orientation for board, staff and volunteers.
- Fundraising could include any costs related to fundraising for your organization (hiring of consultants, costs of materials, postage, events, etc.).