

Neighborhood Organization Information

1. NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

Corcoran Neighborhood Organization

2. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

Neighborhood Organization Contact:	Heidi Johnson McAllister
Organization Address:	3451 Cedar Ave S
Organization ZIP:	55407
Organization Email Address:	heidi@corcoranneighborhood.org
Organization Phone Number:	612724-7457

3. DATE OF BOARD APPROVAL

Once your board has reviewed this draft annual report, please provide the date of the meeting at which the board approved submission of this report to NCR. Note: Meeting minutes may be requested by NCR.

3/9/2017

2016 CPP Annual Report

Stakeholder Involvement - Basic Outreach & Engagement

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OUTREACH ACTIVITIES DID YOUR ORGANIZATION USE IN 2016?

4. MEETINGS (please check all that apply)

- Held regular committee meetings or discussion groups that are open to all stakeholders.
- Held at least one general membership or community meeting (in addition to the annual meeting) to gather input from residents and other stakeholders for a neighborhood specific initiative.
- Hosted at least one general membership or committee meeting in response to a City request for input - such as a development proposal, transit planning or public works project.
- Conducted one or more focus groups.

5. DOOR-TO-DOOR (please check all that apply) Door-Knocking or Dropping Flyers Door-to-Door

- At least once with goal of reaching a portion of neighborhood.
- At least once with goal of reaching most or all of neighborhood.
- For more than one issue/outreach effort.
- On a routine basis.

6. Door-Knocking/Flyering

- Was carried out primarily by staff
- Was carried out primarily by volunteers

7. Door-Knocking/Flyering

- Was carried out primarily to increase membership and participation
- Was carried out primarily to get input on specific city or neighborhood issue
- Was carried out primarily to inform stakeholders of a city or neighborhood issue

8. Approximately how many households did your organization reach through door-knocking in 2016?

0

9. EVENTS (please check all that apply)

- Staffed a booth or table at neighborhood event or other community event that included sign-up sheets, surveys or information about your organization.
- Organized one or more issue specific event (such as a safety forum, housing fair, Open Streets, Creative Citymaking, etc).
- Organized smaller events for specific outreach to target audiences (e.g., sidewalk tabling to reach renters, lemonade stands, tabling at Farmer's Market, etc.)

10. OTHER (please check all that apply)

- Conducted at least one community-wide survey (such as a random sample or all-household survey).
- Conducted another form of survey (e.g., intercept survey).
- Developed partnerships with cultural, religious, professional or business associations to expand outreach into under-represented populations.
- Distributed a quarterly or semi-annual newsletter to all households.
- Other activities (please describe here):

Under #6 above, contracted Corcoran residents and volunteers also made major contributions to our overall door-knocking and flyering efforts.

11. Please provide an estimate of volunteer hours provided to your organization in 2016

3,500

12. How did your organization reach out to under-represented groups in your neighborhood? (Please check all that apply)

- Worked on an issue of particular interest to an under-represented group within the neighborhood.
- Provided notices of annual and special meetings in multiple languages.
- Provided newsletter articles or web pages in multiple languages.
- Targeted outreach in apartment buildings or blocks to reach renters.
- Targeted tabling at other events or locations (such as farmers markets, cultural events, etc.).
- Held focus groups or open meeting formats for under-represented communities.
- Met with other agencies in the community that work closely with under-represented constituencies in the neighborhood.
- Included an Americans with Disabilities Act statement on meeting and event notices.
- Reviewed participation activities, and identified new leaders and volunteers for volunteer, committee and board participation.
- Held one-time/pop up events in areas of the neighborhood that don't often have neighborhood meetings
- Other activities (please describe here):

13. What more would you like to tell NCR or the community about your Stakeholder Involvement? What are you doing that is new or particularly successful to involve residents and others?

- We have a committee and chair position on our board reserved exclusively for renters. We organize across geographies through the Minneapolis Renters Coalition, and utilize legal and technical partners such as HOME Line to realize greater impact.
- We find that effective work is crucial to recruiting new participation within under-represented groups.
- We door-knocked or flyer-ed around 1,200 households over the course of the year.

2016 CPP Annual Report

Neighborhood Priorities

PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY NEW PRIORITIES YOU HAVE APPROVED.

Our Midtown Farmers Market committee and our Board adopted the following updated priorities on March 10, 2016:

1. Communications – Develop and implement a communications plan and strategies to continue communicating with customers, vendors and community members regarding the interim market site. Develop a two pronged plan to communicate with different audiences, primarily values shoppers who view the market as a destination and new audiences we are aiming to attract to the market. Goal: Update website, recruit PR specialist, increase newsletter following.
2. Outreach and Partnerships – Create new “Dine Out for the Market” program with local restaurants with aligned values. Engage target audiences through themed market days, cooking demos. Increase Tuesday attendance. Continue to recruit new AC members. Goal: Pair appropriate chefs to themed market days, re-establish AC membership to 2015 numbers, and partner with 6 restaurants for “Dine Out for the Market” program.
3. Fundraising – Evaluate and revisit fundraising strategies and tactics in order to create a more diverse fundraising platform. Adjust pace of efforts to create a more realistic timeline for asks and add all efforts to fundraising calendar. Goal: \$13,500 total: events (\$3,500), spring mailing (\$2,500), Carrot Box (\$1,000) and #FeedtheCarrot (\$1,200), Give to the Max Day (\$1,000) and Individual Donations (\$1,800), additional activity (\$1,500).
4. Operations – Recruit vendors according to needs of the market as stated by the market manager, develop vendor engagement strategy and vendor market evaluations. Goal: Create vendor I.D. signs for each for vendor to use at market.

Our Newspaper committee and our Board adopted the following updated priorities on July 14, 2016:

1. Promote the Corcoran neighborhood as a great place to live, work, and play.
2. Highlight news, events, and concerns regarding the work of CNO, the neighborhood, and the surrounding area.
3. Increase the number of residents who are aware of and participating in CNO related work.

2016 CPP Annual Report

2016 Highlights

PLEASE DESCRIBE ONE OR TWO MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- 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?

15. MAJOR HIGHLIGHT #1

Through much of 2016, Minneapolis Renters Coalition (MRC) member Inquilinx Unidxs por Justicia (IX) was engaged in a fair housing lawsuit against landlord Stephen Frenz. The lawsuit exposed not only significant livability and renters rights concerns raised by tenants, but also exposed the landlord's efforts to defraud the court and the City of Minneapolis. These developments generated substantial press coverage and a broadened public awareness of the housing issues of greatest concern to the most vulnerable Minneapolis tenants. The work also exposed a highly profitable "slumlord" business model being practiced by Frenz -- one of the city's largest operators, a former president of the Multi Housing Association who bragged of his credentials leading landlord trainings for the City of Minneapolis. Frenz was also the landlord who had been celebrated and recruited by City officials three years earlier to assume ownership and management of nearly 1,400 highly undercapitalized, unsubsidized apartment units, primarily occupied by immigrants and people of color who had suffered under the ownership of notorious landlord Spiros Zorbalas until revocation of his licenses by the City.

Tenant leaders supported by the Minneapolis Renters Coalition have worked together with neighbors to hold Frenz accountable, and their work helped cause and support actions by City leaders to begin revocation of Frenz's rental licenses across Minneapolis. Facing the effective termination of his business, Frenz put eight of his buildings up for sale in August 2016 during a very strong market for apartment sellers, a notable trend in post-purchase "upscaling" and rent increases, and a near-zero vacancy rate for units priced at \$1,000 or less throughout the metro. This included 69 units in five buildings on a single block in the Corcoran neighborhood, just one block from the Lake Street light rail station. In response, the staff and Renters Committee of MRC member Corcoran Neighborhood Organization (CNO) door-knocked all of the affected homes, in order to build and rejuvenate relationships with families, and to share information about what the revocation process could mean for them. Based on these conversations, CNO and its MRC partners worked with building leaders to organize a protest of ongoing livability and affordability concerns in the buildings, right outside their doors. Despite the

landlord's notable staff surveillance of the event, widespread evictions and retaliation, and Minneapolis' lack of renter protections, over 65 people attended. The protest and the community conversations that followed it – on the street, at our farmers market, and online – were an opportunity for both affected renters and allies from the neighborhood and the broader community to come together to talk about how a license revocation, the sale of these buildings, the current real estate market, and unresolved livability conditions mean for tenants of Frenz and the larger community.

This StarTribune article by Eric Roper elaborates on the circumstances of the protest. <http://www.startribune.com/embattled-landlord-plans-to-sell-buildings/390052731/> CNO and other MRC partners also invested staff time into recruiting reputable housing operators to tour and consider purchase of the buildings for sale. We used the operators' insights to educate CNO leaders and other residents about the economics of the real estate market and the current situation facing Frenz's renters and these important housing assets in Corcoran. Five private and nonprofit buyer/operator teams toured the buildings, and agreed that the buildings needed \$40,000-50,000 per unit in repairs, were priced at 150% of their value or more (i.e., at the top of a market cycle), and were likely to achieve that price.

All prospective buyer/operators we spoke to agreed that in this climate and given the strong buyer and renter demand for these units, regardless their condition, the neighborhood faced the likely prospect of widespread displacement, the permanent loss of affordable housing due to rent increases, and a reluctance or inability by any new ownership to sufficiently invest in repairs, address widespread failure of building systems, and establish a reserve fund to drive recapitalization of the buildings. (This is an "investment" pattern our neighborhood has become sorely accustomed to over the years.) The nonprofit buyer/operators we recruited were unable to compete given the seller's preference for quick cash offers, the lack of immediate access to capital or operating funds, and other factors. We came to realize, as a community, that in this environment it seemed possible that no one in the neighborhood would benefit from the building sales.

The protest drew television coverage that included an interview with a tenant leader and powerful imagery of black mold, rodent infestation, and other physical deficiencies that were present when she moved into her unit just four months earlier, serving to disrupt the usual narrative that tenants "cause" such problems. The event also resulted in affected renters articulating demands of the landlord, the larger Corcoran community, and City government. The CNO board, with key leadership provided by Renters Committee Chair Edain Altamirano -- herself a Frenz tenant whose family had suffered from mold exposure, threat of eviction, and more -- responded by passing a resolution in support of tenants' demands. The CNO board also called for new City resources to respond to the need for greater code compliance and capital investments in highly distressed buildings such as these, and the ongoing and substantial loss of housing affordability highlighted in the Mayor's budget address over the summer.

In November, Council Member Alondra Cano convened a working group with City Housing Director Andrea Brennan, key players in housing finance and community

development, and MRC leadership. The working group explored ideas for City investments that could address the experiences, concerns, and demands of Frenz renters and affected neighborhoods. CNO has since signed a contract and workplan with an experienced housing policy consultant, on behalf of the MRC's real estate committee. The project will result in policy and program recommendations that could be realized via the City budget and departments, NRP dollars, and neighborhood programming and activities. The work is being funded with a \$5,000 grant from LISC and a pending contribution from the City, while garnering interest from other philanthropic actors. The MRC's work also helped inspire the City's new \$1.5Million Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) preservation fund.

In organizing the protest, tenants' primary goal had been to disrupt the building sales or inspire the buyers to keep rents affordable. Two of the original eight buildings -- in the Standish and Lyndale neighborhoods -- sold; the remaining offerings were cancelled. Renters in sold buildings are cautiously optimistic about the new owners, and they are also connected to available supports from their neighborhood organizations and the MRC as a result of the leadership capacity and renter involvement that the MRC and its members have built. In late summer, IX supported established renter leaders as they filed a class action lawsuit against Frenz brought pro bono by the same skilled corporate litigator whose work with MRC members inspired the City's license revocation action. Renters and neighborhoods continue to seek receivership status for the Frenz portfolio as the revocation moves to the City Council for action.

This story is just one example of how the MRC's work and its neighborhood-based model empowers and utilizes the leadership of affected renters while also educating, agitating, and activating allies, the larger community, established institutions, and policy makers. The Minneapolis Renters Coalition has since hired Edain Altamirano as a paid organizer, based largely on the skills she learned and what she accomplished with her Corcoran neighbors -- both as a leader in her neighborhood and as part of her neighborhood organization. Edain's new job allowed her and her family to find a great new home near light rail, in Standish.

16. MAJOR HIGHLIGHT #2