

## **Community Participation Program Guide to 2011 Annual Reports**

**Intended audience:** Your Community Participation Program annual report is primarily intended to inform the NCR Department, the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) and the public about your Community Participation Program activities. You may also want to use your annual report to NCR as a way to inform others about your work, including funders, other neighborhood organizations, City departments and the City Council. If your organization produces a separate report for your annual meeting, you may also want to include it as supplemental material.

### *1. Accomplishments*

What were your organization's major accomplishments in 2011? How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work? (Note: focus on your accomplishments, not your activities.)

CARAG partnered with the VOA- Southwest Senior Center to envision, construct, and install a beautiful mosaic mural at Bryant Market (3200 Bryant Avenue S.). The mosaic involved more than 100 neighbors, beautifies a rundown commercial building, and prevents graffiti adjacent to the neighborhood park.

CARAG beat Waite Park neighborhood in a race to 400 Twitter followers as a fun way to build awareness of the neighborhood and organization and strengthened the social networking site as a communication tool for CARAG- especially with younger residents who make up a significant portion of the neighborhood.

CARAG organized the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Chilly Chili Fest on February 25, 2011 drawing over 200 CARAG neighbors to this fun, community-building event improving neighborhood awareness and identity. . The Chili Fest also raised almost \$1,000 for Joyce Uptown Food Shelf, as well as allowed local businesses to promote themselves with event supply and door prize donations.

### *2. 2011 CPP Submission*

Reviewing your submission for CPP funds for 2011, what outreach and engagement activities did you carry out? What worked well, and what did not work so well? Why?

CARAG engaged neighbors through regular outreach activities such as community meetings and events, as well as communication tools like the CARAG E-Update, website and Uptown Neighborhood News. Agenda time during monthly CARAG Neighborhood Meetings focused on discussion about engaging the neighborhood and how to utilize CPP funds.. The engagement activities include:

- Monthly CARAG Neighborhood Meetings: Fewer CARAG neighbors attended monthly CARAG Neighborhood Meetings in 2011 despite many efforts to attract participation like providing food, running shorter meetings, and seeking more engaging topics.

- CARAG Committee Meetings (Crime & Safety, Livability & Engagement, NRP Implementation, Transportation, Zoning): Committee meetings drew a mix of CARAG Board and resident participation in 2011.
- Community Events (Chilly Chili Fest, Super Sale, Garden Tour, Ice Cream Social, Annual Meeting, Etc.): Community events were the most successful method for drawing out participation by CARAG neighbors. These fun, community-building activities drew residents of all ages including young renters who generally do not participate in the organization.
- Neighborhood Revitalization Program Phase 2 Implementation: NRP implementation did not draw as many new participants as expected. Reductions in NRP funding left some volunteers discouraged with the NRP program..
- Community Energy Services program participation: About 50 CARAG property owners attended CES workshops and followed up with home energy audits.
- Uptown Neighborhood News (Articles & advertisements) The UNN is an important method for communicating to CARAG neighbors- especially those who are not often online.
- Website ([www.carag.org](http://www.carag.org)) The CARAG website was redesigned in 2011 to create a more streamlined communication tool for community events, activities, and programs. Also, the site is integrated with CARAG's Facebook and Twitter pages to connect with online users- especially the young renters who make up a large portion of the neighborhood.
- CARAG E-Update (Email list: The E-Update reaches almost 500 subscribers.
- Facebook & Twitter Almost 200 CARAG neighbors are following CARAG on Facebook while there are more than 400 followers on Twitter.
- Flyers promoting events and programs: CARAG delivers flyers to all houses and apartments in the neighborhood, as well as some businesses to promote major events and activities. Many renters, however, may not receive the flyers because they live in buildings with security entrances.
- Block club organizing: Efforts to hire and retain a CARAG Safety Coordinator were unsuccessful resulting in very little block club organizing.

### 3. *Stakeholder Involvement*

Reviewing your submission for CPP funds for 2011, how did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities? Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful?

CARAG has had success reaching young renters who make up a sizable portion of the neighborhood by using social media like Twitter and Facebook, as well as through flyers and the CARAG website.

Please also provide the following:

- A. How many people currently serve on your board? Are there vacancies? Nine members serve on the CARAG Board. There are no vacancies.
- B. Approximately how many individuals have participated in committee meetings in the last year? 75
- C. How many people attended your annual meeting? 80
- D. How many households regularly receive your publications (such as newsletters or newspapers)? Uptown Neighborhood News is delivered to 1,800 households in CARAG and is available online. Almost 500 subscribers receive the CARAG E-Update e-newsletter.
- E. Approximately how many people participate in other activities of the organization?  
**500**

4. *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 occupied a major part of your time? What worked well, what could be improved?

**CARAG interacts most often with representatives from the NCR department and our Council Member's office. Other City departments generally only communicate with CARAG via one-way, bulk email messages or mailings.**

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

Is the information that you receive from the City understandable and useful?  
***Communication from the City is inconsistent and its' quality depends upon individual staff and departments. In some cases, it appears that there is no awareness that the CARAG organization exists and can assist in communicating to our neighbors.***

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.

***The timeliness of communication depends upon individual City staff and departments.***

4. *City Departments*

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

5. *City Assistance*

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

NCR may be able to communicate with City departments informing them that CARAG can be a partner in communicating and engaging citizens.

NCR does a fine job of engaging with the CARAG organization- not only sending information, but also hearing feedback .