

**East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA)
2012 Annual Report
Community Participation Program**

Contact person: Monica Smith, Coordinator

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1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2012, Please provide information about:

What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2012?

2012 outreach efforts included two mailings (NRP program brochure and Annual Membership/Ice Cream Social/Smith Triangle Park Survey mailing); 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).

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

EIRA organizes two large annual social events: Ice Skating Social in January and the Ice Cream Social in August. These popular events are very well attended. EIRA also holds two annual membership meetings (April and October). The October meeting featured a fascinating presentation by Minneapolis parks historian David Smith.

The East Isles Green Team (founded in October 2011) had a number of very success events in 2012 including: two green films; a green family fun event; Earth Day clean up and compost event; potluck social; raingarden project; and the first East Isles Super Sale.

EIRA helped to promote two Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) planning events: the Community Advisory Committee for Levin Triangle Park renovation and the Lake Calhoun/Lake of the Isles Charrette.

How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2012?

We reached out to our under-represented community (renters) by sending two mailing to every resident in East Isles and including EIRA Board meeting minutes, notifications and ads in the local newspaper (*Hill and Lake Press*), which is delivered to every residential property (including apartment buildings) in the neighborhood.

The Green Team contacted property managers of apartment buildings (via phone and mail) to seek their support to promote the Super Sale to residents. Green Team event

fliers were posted in the lobby of apartment buildings to invite renters to participate. A mailing was sent to property managers of apartment buildings along the Midtown Greenway to share information about new lights being installed along the Greenway.

More than half of the EIRA Board of Directors and Alternates elected in May 2012 live in multi-unit buildings (three renters, four people who live in multi-unit buildings and five people who live in single-family homes).

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

Direct contact is the most effective strategy for engaging residents. Our monthly e-newsletter is great tool to communicate events, programs and issues.

The Green Team engaged in a number of effective outreach strategies:

- Created lawn signs to promote their Potluck Social and Green Film event in June and the Super Sale in September.
- Created a door-hanger to promote the Super Sale that was delivered to single-family homes and duplexes in the neighborhood.
- Attended neighborhood National Night Out block parties and gave brief presentations about Green Team events.
- Posted fliers of upcoming events on community bulletin boards.

What did not work so well? Why?

Our website is cumbersome and doesn't work well as a communication tool. We are in the process of developing a new website.

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

EIRA had direct contact with approximately 200 people in 2012.

How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?

EIRA had 50 individuals volunteer for various activities in 2012.

How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?

Approximately 800 people participated in our activities during 2012.

How many people receive your print publications?

EIRA's mailing list contains over 2,200 households.

How many people receive your electronic communications?

EIRA's email distribution lists contained 360 contacts in 2012.

2. 2012 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?**

Midtown Greenway Lighting

The NRP Phase II process identified visibility and safety of the Midtown Greenway's at-grade crossings as a priority. Our plan dedicated \$20,000 toward a lighting project. The NRP Steering Committee approached Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis to provide additional funding that resulted in the installation of seven additional lights on the Greenway between James and Hennepin Avenues. The new lighting was installed in September 2012.

Demonstration Raingarden

The East Isles Green Team received a grant from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization to design and create a demonstration rain garden at an apartment building (2871 Humboldt Ave S) in the neighborhood. The property owner provided matching funds and East Isles NRP contributed \$500 to the project. Twenty people helped construct the garden in October 2012. Educational outreach about raingardens continues this year.

Super Sale

The Green Team organized the first annual Super Sale that included 39 homes and multi-family buildings in the neighborhood. This promoted the Green Team's goal to reduce, reuse, recycle and was a wonderful community-building event.

3. 2012 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2012:

- **What were your organization's major accomplishments?**
- **How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?**

NRP Phase II Implementation

The NRP Steering Committee implemented a number of NRP Phase II initiatives in 2012. A brochure mailing went to all East Isles residents to announce the new offerings. Programs included home improvement loans; home security grants; support for Senior Chore Program; affordable housing loan; Midtown Greenway lighting; green initiatives; and support for The Bridge for Youth.

Strategic Planning/Neighborhood Priority Plan

The EIRA Board engaged in strategic planning over the course of several months culminating in a half-day board retreat. The planning helped the board to define priorities

for their work going forward. Neighborhood priorities were identified to bring to the broader community at EIRA's Semi-Annual Members meeting in October 2012.

The Semi-Annual meeting was advertised in the local paper (*The Hill and Lake Press*), through our e-newsletter and on our website. The meeting included a guest speaker (Minneapolis parks historian David Smith) to help boost attendance.

The meeting featured a presentation of the priorities identified by the Board as well as an open forum to share new ideas. EIRA President Dan McLaughlin led attendees through a priority setting exercise. The results were used to create our Neighborhood Priority Plan.

4. *Housing*

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

5. *Financial Reports*

Please provide an income and expense report for your organization for the year. (Please include all funding sources).

Please see separate document.

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 Meg Tuthill and her staff. CM Tuthill attends our monthly board meetings to share information about City news and issues.

EIRA Zoning Committee worked with Licenses & Consumer Services regarding liquor licenses for four East Isles businesses.

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 Tuthill is very helpful.
- Communication from the City regarding single-sort recycling was excellent.

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.

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?

NCR can inform City departments of priorities identified through the Neighborhood Priority Plan (NPP) process and proactively work to connect the department and the neighborhood to focus on the priorities.

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. We look forward to learning more at the “Engaging Tools for Engaging Renters” workshop at the NUSA conference.

EIRA would like to acknowledge the help and guidance Robert Thompson has given us over this past year. Robert was our NRP Specialist so his knowledge of the organization’s history is very helpful.

We would also like to thank Bob Cooper for his responsiveness and willingness to help us sort through questions and arrive at effective solutions.

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?