



DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

**NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM**

2012-2013 Annual Report

**ANNUAL REPORT APPROVED BY THE DMNA BOARD OF
DIRECTORS BY ELECTRONIC VOTE ON 06/24/14**

Community Participation Program 2013 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association

Contact person: Christie Rock Hantge

Date of Board Approval: 06/24/14

1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2013, Please provide information about:

- **What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2013?**
 - Held 18 board meetings over the past 18 months. The board meetings were well attended by board members, with minimal absences. In addition, the meetings were attended by downtown residents, downtown workers, downtown business owners, and people who work for other organizations trying to improve the safety and livability of the downtown community. On average, there were 15 people who attended monthly board meetings.
 - Hosted two Annual Meetings; one on October 9, 2012, and one on October 8, 2013. 50 people attend the 2012 event held at the Central Public Library, and over 125 people attended the 2013 event held at Open Book.
 - DMNA Board members actively participated in the following groups:
 - CPED – Downtown Surface Parking Lot Advisory Committee
 - Downtown Improvement District – Hot Spots Advisory Committee
 - Downtown Court Watch
 - Downtown Neighborhood Associations Leaders Group
 - Downtown Park Committee (AKA “the Yard)
 - East Downtown Council
 - Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc.
 - Mill District Neighborhood Association
 - Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District
 - Minneapolis Downtown Council
 - 2025 Plan Residential Taskforce
 - 2025 Plan Homelessness Taskforce
 - Minneapolis Riverfront Corporation
 - Minneapolis Parks Foundation
 - MPRB – Above the Falls Citizens Advisory Committee
 - MPRB - Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee
 - MPRB - West River/James I Rice Parkway Trail Improvement Project Citizens Advisory Committee
 - Minnesota Council of Nonprofits

- Vikings Stadium Implementation Committee
- Vikings Stadium Public Realm Committee
- Webster School Initiative – Downtown School Committee
- 2020 Partners

The DMNA also helped coordinate two joint downtown neighborhood organization meetings (in partnership with the East Downtown Council business association, Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc., and the Mill District Neighborhood Association) in 2013 to present the Vikings Stadium plans and Ryan Companies Star Tribune redevelopment project to downtown residents and businesses.

- **How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2013?**

The two most challenging under-represented groups to do outreach to in the downtown community are renters and homeless people, or those transitioning out of homelessness. These groups tend to be transient in nature.

The DMNA seeks to engage renters via posting information about the organization’s Annual Meeting on bulletin boards in common areas of apartment buildings, as well as through social media. The DMNA also shares information with the First Precinct’s Crime Prevention Specialist, who has connections with apartment managers.

The DMNA cares deeply about the homeless population in the downtown community and has supported the work of Aeon, Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army, by writing letters of support for grant applications, as well as providing financial support for the rehabilitation of housing and events that help people transition out of homelessness.

The DMNA recently entered into a partnership with the Minneapolis Downtown Council and the Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness to increase the number of St. Stephen’s street outreach workers who work tirelessly to identify and address the needs of the downtown homeless population.

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

The DMNA used the following methods to reach out to the neighborhood:

- Web site: <http://www.thedmna.org>
- Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Downtown-Minneapolis-Neighborhood-Association/7303027778>
- Email list – Over 120 people on the list
- *Mill City Times* blog
- *The Journal*
- *Minneapolis Connects*
- First Precinct Crime Prevention Specialist

- Direct communication with surrounding Downtown neighborhood organizations, i.e. Elliot Park, North Loop, and Loring Park

All of these methods worked well to inform community members regarding DMNA meetings, activities and to gather input on specific neighborhood issues.

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

The DMNA does not use door-knocking due to the fact that the majority of downtown residents live in apartments or condominium buildings with security entrances. DMNA Board members help spread the word about events and activities via their homeowners associations and bulletin boards in common areas.

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

Depending on the agenda items, between 10-20 people attend monthly board meetings. 50 people attend the 2012 Annual Meeting and over 125 people attended the 2013 Annual Meeting.

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

The DMNA has eight volunteer board members. There are also a handful of other dedicated residents who regularly attend board meetings.

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

Depending on the agenda items, between 10-20 people attend monthly board meetings. 50 people attend the 2012 Annual Meeting and over 125 people attended the 2013 Annual Meeting. The DMNA also supports the Riverfront National Night Out event, which attracts several thousand downtown residents, and the Mill City Farmers' Market which attracts several hundred downtown residents and visitors every Saturday between May and October.

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

The DMNA does not have any print publications. The DMNA does advertise its events and annual meeting in the *Downtown Journal*. The circulation for this publication is nearly 30,000.

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

The DMNA distributes information regarding board meetings, neighborhood events and City of Minneapolis programs via its email list, Web site and Facebook page. The DMNA has over 120 names on its email list and it has 235 friends on its Facebook page. The reach on the organization's Facebook page ranges from 30 to over 320 depending on the topic.

The DMNA also shares information with the Mill District Neighborhood Association via the *Mill City Times* blog. According to DMNA Board members who also serve on the MDNA Board, the blog reaches over 1000 Mill District residents.

2. 2013 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?

1. October 8, 2013, Annual Meeting

The biggest highlight of 2013 was the organization's Annual Meeting held on October 8, 2013, at Open Book. The DMNA facilitated a debate between candidates running for the Third Ward City Council seat. This was an excellent draw for downtown residents.

In addition, elections to the DMNA Board of Directors took place. The community elected four residents of the Mill District, a neighborhood within the greater Downtown East neighborhood, to the DMNA Board of Directors. The hope is that these new board members will help increase participation from other Mill District residents in DMNA activities and events.

Over 125 people attended the 2013 Annual Meeting. This was the best Annual Meeting turnout the organization has had in the past five years. The board is looking forward to building on this success in 2014.

2. Helping Address the Needs of the Homeless Population in Downtown

The DMNA continues to be engaged in finding ways to meet the needs of the homeless population in downtown Minneapolis. Over the past 18 months, the DMNA has met with representatives from numerous other downtown organizations that are also seeking to address the problem; including the Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness or Heading Home Hennepin, St. Stephen's Human Services, Youth Link, and the Minneapolis Downtown Council's Downtown 2025 Plan Taskforce to End Homelessness. In addition, the DMNA Board visited several downtown homeless shelters and toured a number of transitional housing facilities. As a result of these meetings and conversations, the DMNA Board recently voted to allocate \$60,000 in NRP Phase II monies to support the hiring of additional St. Stephen's street outreach workers.

3. 2013 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2013:

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

Some of the DMNA's 2012-2013 accomplishments include the following:

- Held 18 board meetings over the past 18 months. The board meetings have been well attended by board members, with minimal absences. In addition, the meetings were attended by downtown residents, downtown workers, downtown business owners, and people who work for other organizations trying to improve the safety and livability of the downtown community. On average, 15 people attend monthly board meetings.
- Held two Annual Meetings; one on October 9, 2012 and one on October 8, 2013.
- Sent representatives to the 2013 Neighborhoods USA Conference.
- Renewed membership in 2020 Partners.
- Renewed membership in the East Downtown Council.
- Contributed \$4,500 in CPP funds to the Mill City Farmers Market in 2012 and \$6,000 in 2013.
- Contributed \$10,000 in NRP funds to HCMC's Pediatric Literacy Program.
- Contributed \$6,000 to the Friends of Triangle Park for permanent plantings and seating in Triangle Park, which is a gateway to the downtown community.
- Contributed \$25,000 to increasing the lighting on 4th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues North in the Warehouse District.
- Elected four members of the Mill District Neighborhood Association to the DMNA Board on October 8, 2013.
- Provided numerous letters of support for land use and liquor license applications for downtown developments and businesses.
- Provided letters of support to Aeon, Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army Harbor Light Center for their respective applications to the City's Emergency Solutions Grant program and other financing programs offered by the State of Minnesota.

The DMNA also had board members who actively participated in the effort to re-open Webster School to serve families with children living in the downtown community, and the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District's Hot Spots Advisory Committee, which looks at ways to prevent criminal activity via environmental design.

4. *Housing*

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

The DMNA Board spent 30% of its time between July 1, 2012 and December 31, 2013, discussing housing related issues. The DMNA has been considering how to use its NRP Phase II Housing dollars to address the issue of homelessness in the downtown community. During this time, the DMNA met with representatives from the following organizations to learn more about their work and to strategize about how the NRP funds could best meet their respective organizations' needs:

- Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness / Heading Home Hennepin
- Minneapolis Downtown Council Downtown 2025 Plan Taskforce to End Homelessness
- St. Stephen's Human Services
- Youth Link

5. *Financial Reports*

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

Please see attached 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?

The DMNA spends quite a bit of time reviewing land use applications and liquor license applications. As a result, DMNA staff spends quite a bit of time interacting with City staff people from CPED; including Planning and Zoning and Heritage Preservation, as well as Regulatory Services. DMNA staff also works closely with City staff people at CPED Finance. Finally, DMNA Staff spent time communicating with the neighborhood specialist within the NCR Department related to the 2014-2016 CPP application and 2012-2013 CPP Annual Report. Most recently DMNA staff communicated with the neighborhood specialist who helped facilitated a strategic planning session for the DMNA Board in early 2014.

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?

Yes

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.

Yes

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? __5__

4. City Departments

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

The DMNA also communicates frequently with the City's Regulatory Services Department with regards to liquor license applications, expansion of premises applications, and extended operating hours applications. The DMNA has been mostly satisfied with the communication related to liquor license applicants, but would encourage the department to require all licensing applicants to contact the neighborhood directly, well in advance to the public meeting notice being mailed and prior to the public hearing. The DMNA appreciates meeting with the applicant in advance of the public hearing. The DMNA is hopeful the Regulatory Services Department will take this request to heart.

5. City Assistance

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

At this point, the DMNA is satisfied with the assistance the NCR Department provides to the neighborhood.

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? ___5___

6. Other comments?

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