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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM 2014-2016  
Application

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Organization Name:	Longfellow Community Council	
Address:	2727 26 <sup>th</sup> Avenue S.	
Website url:	<a href="http://www.longfellow.org">www.longfellow.org</a>	
Organization email:	<a href="mailto:admin@longfellow.org">admin@longfellow.org</a>	
Federal EIN:	41-1733974	
Board Contact:	Name:	Eric Day
Staff Contact:	Name:	Melanie Majors
	Phone:	612-722-4529, ext. 4
	Email:	<a href="mailto:melanie@longfellow.org">melanie@longfellow.org</a>
	Address:	2727 26 <sup>th</sup> Avenue S.
Board Approval:	June 19, 2014	

**1. Evidence of the organization's eligibility**

The Longfellow Community Council (LCC) is a community-based, 501(c) 3 citizen participation organization that represents the interests of community members, including approximately 400 business owners and 20,000 residents who live, work, learn and play within the Longfellow, Cooper, Howe, and Hiawatha Neighborhoods of South Minneapolis. LCC is the officially recognized citizen participation organization for the Greater Longfellow area.

The mission of LCC is to *improve the quality of life, to develop a sense of community, and to promote the social and economic well being of the people of the Longfellow, Cooper, Howe, and Hiawatha Neighborhoods.* The community's shared vision includes a future where the housing stock is maintained and affordable, the natural resources are preserved and protected, people feel safe and secure, the business community is viable, and youth and seniors engage in mutually beneficial activities. To achieve this vision LCC works hard to involve and empower all community members to be involved in their community and to take action on issues that have an impact on the quality of their lives.

**2. Community Participation Efforts**

Community engagement is the foundation of the work of Longfellow Community Council (LCC). LCC has been very successful in our outreach efforts to community residents, businesses, other community organizations, churches and schools. While LCC does not

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determine the issues or the priorities of the community, we use our resources to assist residents and businesses to respond to them.

### **Identifying and acting on neighborhood priorities**

LCC's most recently identified and defined priorities are enhanced community engagement, business development and support and regionalization.

### **Enhanced Community Engagement**

LCC will continue to act as a catalyst for change by bringing together the stakeholders in the community with those who make the policy decisions. With our systems in place for community engagement we will continue to work with the community and government to address emerging issues that include:

- Countering the increase in personal and property crimes in the community
- Education and resources focused on environmental issues
- Access to information of Block Club leaders which is currently unavailable to neighborhood organizations
- Changes to regulatory systems to make them easier to understand and navigate for individuals and businesses in the community
- Proper and efficient notification from the City of Minneapolis of policy changes related to housing and regulatory services

### **Regionalization**

Southside United Neighborhoods Group (SUN)

LCC has been participating in the SUN group for the past two years to establish a solidified working relationship among 11 neighborhoods so that we can collectively address shared issues and opportunities. We have recently developed a policy agenda that we are sharing with our City Council members and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB). The policy agenda is based on months of research that we have done together to identify and suggest solutions to shared issues. Working together we are representing thousands of constituents and removing the barrier of working on policy and systems change in isolation.

### **Business Development and Support**

Funding for business associations in Minneapolis has steadily decreased over the past 5 years. Business associations are mainly funded by membership dues, which are not sufficient to fully support the activities of the association.

The ability of business associations to advocate for themselves has been weakened by reductions in funding and limits their ability to advance their own policy and systems change agendas relative to the sustainability of small businesses.

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LCC had made strengthening the relationship with the Longfellow Business Association (LBA) a priority. Aside from providing affordable staff support to the LBA, we plan to work on the following:

- Development of a policy agenda with the LBA related to regulatory issues (parking, inspections, zoning)
- Work with the Minneapolis City Council to reinstate funding for business associations
- Develop relationships with other business associations and the SUN group to make regulatory systems more accessible

### **Impacting City decisions and priorities**

The residents, businesses, churches, schools and other community organizations in Greater Longfellow have a deep interest in the decisions and priorities of the City of Minneapolis. It is a priority of LCC to ensure that these stakeholders are informed about the work of the City as well as their role in shaping these decisions. LCC acts as a conduit between community members and the City Council and City departments. LCC committees are used at times as a venue for review of City policies and residential and commercial regulatory requests. Whether the community is in favor of or against a City decision, they want their opinions to be documented and shared with the City. Community members understand that there is value gained from presenting an opinion to the City that is based on the needs of the people most directly impacted by governmental decisions and policies.

The meeting agendas and minutes from committee and board meetings are posted on LCC's website ([www.longfellow.org](http://www.longfellow.org)) and are also shared on LCC e-lists. Meeting notices are published monthly in the Longfellow/Nokomis Messenger newspaper and on our website calendar.

### **Efforts to increase involvement**

Based on information from members in the community and thoughtful review by the LCC Board of Directors, LCC understands that the committee structure should not be the sole avenue for residents to be involved both with LCC and in the larger community. Although we host several annual events, programs and activities as well as partner throughout the neighborhood on various programs and events, we still strive to increase the level of involvement from community members.

LCC provides support to subcommittees that have specific focus areas and are not as structured as our standing monthly committees. Through this support we are able to engage more residents and provide a larger number of options for participation in the work of the community.

Transition Longfellow is a sustainability group that provides information, connections, support and encouragement to people who are ready to move from energy dependence to independence or inter-dependence, from food system insecurity to local food security, from an economic system that takes wealth out of the community to one that builds local assets

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and employs local people. Transition Longfellow shares information on best practices for sustainability from around the world and openly invites people from any community to participate in their work.

Longfellow Faith Forum is a collective of churches in the Longfellow and Seward communities that share a social justice mission to assist low income and underserved individuals in their respective communities. They meet regularly to work on projects and access additional resources from their parishioners who live in and outside of the community. Through this work the churches are able to pool their resources and to share their work beyond the boundaries of their communities.

Seward/Longfellow Restorative Justice is the only program of its kind in the City of Minneapolis as they are solely focused on youth. The issue of youth committing crimes in the community is a regional issue but there are limited resources to address it. Communities are limited in their access to youth offenders and the Restorative Justice program provides community residents with opportunities to work directly with young people who have committed crimes in Greater Longfellow and Seward neighborhoods and help them to understand the impact of their offenses.

In 2014, 2015 and 2016 LCC will focus on an elevated grass-roots approach to community engagement. We believe that our outreach will be more effective if we place a specific focus on getting individuals to reach out to their friends, neighbors, businesses, churches, schools and other local organizations that they are connected to. While this is not a new strategy to LCC, we now have more avenues than we have had in the past to accomplish this goal.

### **3. Building Organizational Capacity**

LCC's organizational capacity is strong in terms of structure. We have an active and representative board, knowledgeable staff to provide support to committees and organize activities and we provide staff support to the Longfellow Business Association (LBA), which creates a strong link between the businesses and residents in Greater Longfellow.

We engage and inform community members through six formal media sources (LCC website, Yahoo Groups, Facebook, the LCC Weekly Roundup, the LCC Insider Newsletter and a monthly LCC page in the Longfellow/Nokomis Messenger newspaper. We also flyer the community around meetings and events and work closely with block club and other community leaders. We continually strive to increase our visibility in the community so that Greater Longfellow residents are aware of our existence and resources.

LCC uses its resources to share information and develop the capacity of residents to determine the priorities and activities of the community. The LCC staff, board and committee members have a vast range of experience and knowledge that is shared and used to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. Limited funding does not allow

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for many outside training opportunities so LCC staff seek out free or low-cost training opportunities.

LCC plans and implements educational activities where residents, staff and board members can learn from each other and experts in the community. Examples of these activities include:

- Committee training, panel sessions on topics of community interest (community crime prevention, restorative justice, etc.) and community meetings with elected officials to learn about developments, schools and business concerns. LCC also organizes the monthly meetings of the Longfellow Business Association where topics range from tax implications for businesses to changes in regulatory standards.
- Partnering with community and other organizations. LCC engages regularly with community partners to maximize expertise and share information with the community. LCC's partners cover the spectrum of organizations and businesses in the community. Through our partnerships, LCC is able to significantly increase our outreach in the community and strengthen critical relationships.
- Board Training. LCC provides annual training of new Board members to prepare them for the length of their board terms. Board members are trained on parliamentary procedure, understanding organization financial documents, roles and responsibilities, organizational By-laws and member responsibilities.

#### **4. Building neighborhood relationships**

LCC recognizes the value of establishing and nurturing relationships as a vital part of our work. We maximize the use of resources through our relationships with other neighborhoods, local businesses, government entities, residents, churches, schools, parks and other organizations in the community. We also recognize our role in creating opportunities for community stakeholders to determine ways in which to build a sense of community.

LCC's ability to work and partner with organizations, businesses, individuals and other entities in the community has long been one of the keys to our success. The size of Greater Longfellow gives us an advantage over other communities because of the number of potential local partners that exist in our own community. Longfellow's borders also create an environment of interest from organizations outside of the community who want to be involved with the Mississippi River, Minnehaha Park, the Hiawatha Light Rail and the Midtown Greenway.

One of LCC's most important partnerships is with the LBA. LCC provides the staff support that helps to maintain the organization. LCC staff develop the agenda for monthly meetings, write funding proposals, organize and manage the annual membership drive and coordinate development and production of the business directory. Among many other tasks, LCC also

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provides the accounting, communications and website management for the LBA.

LCC does not compete with other organizations for funding. Instead, we have found various ways to support the efforts of other groups in the community who offer a benefit to residents. An example is our partnership with the Lake Street Council (LSC) who have consistently applied for and were awarded City of Minneapolis Great Streets funding for East Lake Street. LCC has also applied for and been awarded these funds but we collaborate with LSC to make sure that the funds we are applying for are not in direct competition and are most appropriate for the determined applicant. LCC has continued to write letters of support for LSC and to advocate for LSC with City staff.

LCC worked with Corcoran neighborhood in the original conceptualization of Southside United Neighborhoods (SUN), a multi-neighborhood collaborative working together to discover ways to share resources and create economies of scale in our work.

Key partners in LCC's community and housing development work include but are not limited to:

- Corcoran Neighborhood Association
- Bryant Neighborhood
- Bancroft Neighborhood
- Central Neighborhood
- Powderhorn Neighborhood Association
- Standish Ericcson Neighborhood Association
- Nokomis East Neighborhood Association
- Seward Neighborhood Group
- Longfellow Business Association
- Minneapolis Consortium of Community Developers
- Longfellow, Brackett and Hiawatha School Parks and staff
- Minneapolis Public Schools
- Hennepin County Community Works
- Councilmember Andrew Johnson
- Councilmember Alondra Cano
- Councilmember Cam Gordon
- City of Lakes Community Land Trust (CLCLT)
- Center for Energy and Environment
- CURA (Collaborators)
- Sanford Youth Corp
- Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice Partnership
- Midtown Farmer's Market
- Women's Environmental Initiative (WEI)
- Volunteers of America
- Master Development
- Sherman & Associates
- Lake Street Council

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- Falls 4 All Universal Access Playground Group
  - Minnesotans United for All Families
  - Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO)
  - Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR)
  - Make Mine Solar
  - Minneapolis Park Board

**5. Involvement of under-engaged stakeholders**

Our engagement and planning efforts will continue with a strong emphasis on engaging a greater number of community members that will be reflective of the ethnic and social make-up of our community

LCC employs a part-time Community Organizer who is bilingual and who works with Latino-serving and focused organizations in Greater Longfellow. Our community is made up of many different groups and we are cognizant of the fact that different groups respond to different forms of engagement.

Examples of the different constituencies in Longfellow include:

- Youth
- Seniors
- Businesses
- Schools
- Non-profits
- Parks
- Renters
- Home owners
- Bikers
- Community Developers
- Communities of color

LCC has taken intentional steps to ensure and encourage underrepresented groups to participate in our programs, events and activities that include:

- providing childcare at community meetings
- translating materials and documents
- flying areas of the community where populations are more transient
- working with various community organizations who target underrepresented groups
- targeted outreach to the broader community through surveys and focus groups, largely through our HCCW project and a federal CARE grant.

We continue to use census data released in 2011 to assess changes in neighborhood demographics. LCC staff, the Board of Directors and committees also use the census data

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in our planning to set expanded outreach goals and to determine strategic methods of outreach.

There are other underrepresented groups on Greater Longfellow that LCC is working to engage more closely with. We partner with and work with other local community organizations and churches to do outreach to these groups (youth, seniors, Somalis).

**6. Housing Activities**

Housing continues to be a priority of the work of LCC. We continue an NRP funded low interest loan program along with an emergency deferred loan program. LCC contracts with the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) to administer our loan programs but also to act as a counselor for community residents to connect them with the most reasonable loan and grant programs available.

Our housing committee, the Neighborhood Development Committee (NDC) serves at times as a review committee for upcoming regulatory requests for both residential and commercial development and works closely with local developers on new projects. Recently, Longfellow Station was completed at 38<sup>th</sup> and Hiawatha. This development offers 180 new units of housing in the community and is part of a larger plan to spur development along the light rail corridor. LCC worked with the original developer of this project for 3 years on a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) – the first completed CBA in Minnesota. The community and staff of LCC were heavily involved in the planning and development of this project through 2008. The original project developer lost the building to foreclosure but the efforts of the community were a large part of the overall successful development of the housing.

LCC is currently working on a mapping project in concert with the Center for Urban Affairs (CURA). Our mapping project covers the entire geography of Greater Longfellow and is intended to capture a real picture of the development assets and needs in the community. In order to engage and interest more people in our housing and residential work, we want to be able to show people where our resources are best focused. We also want to be able to accurately show our growth and sustainability over time. While the map is for the community it is also being developed by the community.



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**7. What else would you like the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission know about your organization?**

LCC has a long and successful track record in community engagement. This work is not new to LCC but we continually work to expand our efforts and to partner with organizations and individuals who add value to the community. Greater Longfellow is the largest neighborhood in Minneapolis, combining four neighborhoods (Cooper, Howe, Hiawatha and Longfellow). The residents, businesses and organizations in Longfellow have provided leadership on important community issues and provide financial and resource support to many of our partners in the community. City funding and support is critical to our sustainability and our ability to deliver on the requests of the community for assistance and resources. We focus our time and energy on helping stakeholders and residents in the community to realize their goals for the community where they have made the choice to live, work and play.

**Longfellow Community Council  
2014-2016 CPP Budget**

<b>Cost Category</b>		<b>2014 Budget</b>	<b>2015 Budget</b>	<b>2016 Budget</b>
<b>1</b>	Salaries	80,000	80,000	80,000
<b>2</b>	FICA / SUTA (Payroll Taxes)	6,000	6,000	6,000
<b>3</b>	Payroll fees (ADP)	3,000	3,000	3,000
<b>4</b>	Health Insurance	15,000	15,000	15,000
<b>5</b>	Mileage	500	500	500
<b>6</b>	Advertising	12,000	12,000	12,000
<b>7</b>	Accounting / Bookkeeping	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>8</b>	Bank / Legal Charges	1,000	1,000	1,000
<b>9</b>	Computer Equipment	2,500	2,500	2,500
<b>10</b>	Computer Tech Support	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>11</b>	Copier Lease	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>12</b>	Dues, Subscriptions and Memberships	500	500	500
<b>13</b>	Meeting Supplies	0	0	0
<b>14</b>	Insurance (Liability)	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>15</b>	Insurance (Workers Compensation)	600	600	600
<b>16</b>	Office Supplies	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>17</b>	Postage	800	800	800
<b>18</b>	Printing	2,351	2,350	2,347
<b>19</b>	Public Relations and Special Events	800	800	800
<b>20</b>	Rent	9,000	9,000	9,000
<b>21</b>	Sponsorships	1,000	1,000	1,000
<b>22</b>	Telephone/Internet/Fax	7,500	7,500	7,500
<b>23</b>	Utilities	300	300	300
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160,351</b>	<b>160,350</b>	<b>160,347</b>