



1996-1998



Founded in 1990, the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) is an innovative effort to change the future of the City's 81 neighborhoods and make them better places to live, work, learn and play. Through collaboration with government and others, neighborhoods organize residents, gather information, prioritize needs, identify resources and implement solutions that improve neighborhood and city livability.

The NRP is governed by a joint-powers agreement between the five government jurisdictions that serve the residents of Minneapolis: The City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation, and Minneapolis Public Libraries.

Residents use a six-step process to define neighborhood needs and prepare their neighborhood action plan: 1) Develop a proposed work plan and budget for the planning process; 2) Build wide, diverse citizen participation and gather information; 3) Draft a plan that includes a vision for the neighborhood, goals and specific strategies for implementation; 4) Obtain residents' review and approval of the plan; 5) Submit the plan to governmental jurisdictions for approval and funding, and; 6) Implement the plan.

moving

forward

As the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program enters its eighth year, I am pleased to present the third NRP progress report, *Moving Forward*.

T o g e t h e r

When the program began in 1991, six neighborhoods were chosen to participate in the NRP. By 1996, every neighborhood in the city had entered the NRP process. Today, 45 Neighborhood Action Plans have been approved and the NRP has invested more than \$100 million to revitalize Minneapolis neighborhoods.

While there is still much work to be done to continue to improve our city, so much has already been accomplished by many dedicated individuals. This report is just a glimpse of what city residents, nonprofit agencies, the private business sector and government staff can achieve when *new partnerships are forged to build community*—partnerships that allow us to identify common interests, access available resources, and implement *creative solutions* to the issues we all face.

change can happen

The NRP illustrates how *change can happen*. Nothing comes easily, but together we are reaching our goals. The challenge, and our commitment, is to continue to make our city a better place to live, work, learn and play.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Miller

Director

i t b e g a n

Neighborhood-based planning and priority setting are the heart of NRP.

From increasing the amount of affordable housing and improving existing housing stock to protecting the environment, building community centers to creating jobs, thousands of Minneapolis residents have become catalysts of change aimed at renewing a sense of common purpose in our communities.

we are building a city

The NRP began with a vision to make our city a better place to live, work, learn and play. As the Program enters its eighth year, Minneapolis residents and government staff continue to demonstrate an unfailing commitment to this shared vision.

The progress documented here attests to the countless individuals who give generously of their time and skills to create new partnerships, identify resources, and cultivate change. Together we are building a city we can be proud to call home.

Let's continue moving forward!

Sincerely,



*Jackie Cherryhomes
Chair, NRP Policy Board*

with a vision

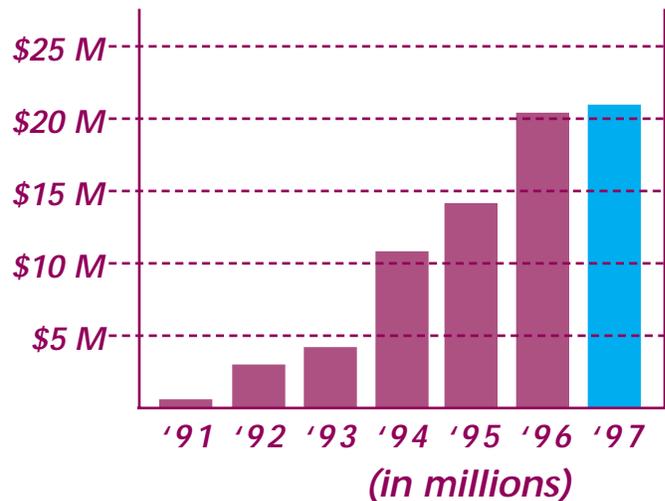
building community by building partnerships

As of May, 1998:

- *45 of 66 possible Neighborhood Action Plans have been approved.*
- *31 First Step Plans have been approved.*

nrp neighborhood expenditures

- *NRP has invested a total of \$74.7 million in Minneapolis neighborhoods since 1990.*
- *End-of-year obligations for neighborhoods have increased from \$6.2 million at the end of 1991 to 64.9 million at the end of 1997.*
- *Expenditures for neighborhood-based activities increased from an annual figure of \$2.9 million in 1992 to \$21.7 million in 1997.*



In 1997:

- *Thirteen Neighborhood Action Plans were approved.*
- *More than \$8 million was spent on housing. Eighty-seven percent of that was spent for home improvement and home-buyer assistance programs in 40 neighborhoods.*
- *Over 1,100 trees were planted. Since 1992, more than 7,500 trees have been planted with NRP funds.*
- *Site improvements were completed at six parks.*
- *Five Minneapolis public schools received new or improved playground facilities.*
- *Computer centers were added to four Minneapolis public schools.*
- *Comprehensive improvements to Nicollet Avenue were completed between Franklin Avenue and 28th Street South.*
- *The fourth Southside Housing Fair was conducted in March by 14 neighborhoods and attended by more than 3,000 residents and 120 businesses.*

nrp

highlights

- *Construction was completed on the new Whittier Elementary School and Neighborhood Early Learning Center.*
- *Renovation of the Pratt Community Education Center was completed. Celebrating its centennial this year as the oldest public school building in Minneapolis, Pratt is now handicap-accessible and features a new "Village Green" and playground.*
- *Streetscape improvements were completed in the Dinkytown area of the Marcy Holmes neighborhood.*
- *Plans began for the construction of "East Village", a mixed-use project in Elliot Park that includes 176 low-income and market-rate apartment units and 10,000-15,000 square feet of commercial space.*
- *In partnership with Hamline University, NRP initiated the Community Leadership Institute leadership development program. Two sessions were completed.*
- *Between 1993 and 1997, NRP conducted more than 140 training sessions attended by a total of nearly 4,000 residents.*

“We think of this as an elegant, exquisite lady.”

–Glenda Key, Key Method

The swarm of turrets, towers and Gothic arches that adorn the Romanesque-style Van Dusen mansion cast an ornate shadow of local history over the 1900 block of LaSalle Avenue in Stevens Square.

this old house

Built in 1894 by grain industry mogul George Van Dusen, the mansion has been home to a host of private owners, a school house and Aveda’s Horst Institute. Nearly a century after its construction, however, the grand landmark was scheduled for demolition. Deemed too costly to renovate, the site sat vacant for over a decade while a small homeless population took up unofficial residence. Vandals, too, descended on the abandoned property and the Van Dusen fell quietly into ruin.

The Stevens Square Community Organization (SSCO) set out to save their neighborhood treasure and contributed \$300,000 in NRP funds toward renovation of the mansion. “We were not about to turn our backs on local history,” said one neighborhood volunteer. The investment helped La Crosse businessman Robert Poehling to purchase and renovate the private residence



and an adjacent commercial space now occupied by local florist Roger Beck.

The project received a 1997 Heritage Preservation Award and a record-breaking 5,000 visitors toured the mansion during the Tenth Annual Minneapolis-St. Paul Home Tour. Once slated for the wrecking ball, the Van Dusen now sits proudly on the National Registry of Historic Places.

With the assistance of \$226,000 in NRP funds from Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc. (EPNI), area businessman Ronald Bates leveraged nearly \$460,000 from the MCDA and FirstStar Bank to purchase and renovate the historic Hinkle-Murphy mansion in Elliot Park.

Many financial institutions favored more cost-effective new construction, but with persistence Bates found partners who valued historic architecture. The newly-restored Hinkle-Murphy mansion reopened on September 18, 1997, exactly 111 years after it was originally built. Key Method—a local medical company—is the mansion's first tenant. In the end, the project cost less than the projected cost of new construction.

Collaborative renovation projects like the Van Dusen and Hinkle-Murphy mansions bring economic growth and stability to Minneapolis. Rather than attracting graffiti, vandals and crime, the refurbished mansions attract new business and provide jobs for residents.

rē • vive: to *rouse*



from a state of *inactivity* or *quiescence*.

Completed in 1887 by architect William Channing Whitney, the Hinkle-Murphy mansion is Minnesota's earliest example of the Georgian Revival home and the last of many historic Elliot Park mansions still standing. The house was formerly owned by flour merchant William A. Hinkle and William J. Murphy of the Minneapolis Tribune.

account- ability

There are over 15,000 jobs, 230 small businesses and 180 non-profit organizations in the Phillips neighborhood. Until recently, however, there was no mechanism in Phillips to help limit the outflow of capital generated by the developing neighborhood economy.

“We needed a financial institution that served the community and kept the dollars in our community,” said neighborhood resident Karen Law, “an institution run by the folks who needed the services most.”

So neighbors developed a strategy to establish the Wendell Phillips Community Development Federal (WPCDF) Credit Union. "Through dialogue created by the NRP process we determined that we could increase the number of times dollars are recycled within the community and boost economic capacity overall," observed Sam Grant, now a member of the credit union's Board of Directors.

The Phillips neighborhood contributed over \$175,000 in NRP funds to purchase a vacant commercial building at 1100 East Franklin Avenue. An additional \$260,000 was leveraged from a number of other supporters, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Minneapolis Foundation and the Community Development Financial Institution. Fellow credit unions throughout the state also contributed nonmember deposits totaling \$795,000.

The credit union field of membership includes Phillips and ten nearby neighborhoods which represent at least 17 diverse cultures. To accommodate members, WPCDF Credit Union offers services in English, Spanish, Hmong and Somali.

The credit union also offers an Individual Development Account (IDA), which grants low-income residents a capital match equal to or

greater than the amount of each dollar deposited. The account can be used for homeownership, micro-business or higher education investments.

Since its grand opening in August 1996, WPCDF Credit Union has awarded nearly 90 loans totaling approximately \$280,000 and membership has grown to over 450 account holders. "This credit union has given residents a sense of dignity," said Manager Jill Hein. "NRP has been instrumental in that process."

**"This credit union
builds a culture of
cooperation."**

-Sam Grant,
WPCDF Credit Union Board Member

“Pleasant streets aren’t an option, they’re a necessity.”

–Twin Cities restaurateur

The Nicollet Avenue commercial corridor had been in decline for years. Plans for its improvement were completed in 1995 by volunteers from Stevens Square-Loring Heights, Whittier and Loring Park neighborhoods. Today, completed improvements span over 1.2 miles from Grant to Lake Street, and the \$4.5 million public and private investment illustrates how the NRP process was designed to work.

word on the street

The facelift was designed to move traffic more smoothly through the busy area, provide parking, promote a pedestrian-friendly environment, increase safety and beautify the area. Improvements include a new street, new and wider sidewalks, and overhead and pedestrian safety lighting. Boulevard trees, benches, waste receptacles, bike racks and signs were also added. The three neighborhood organizations involved contributed more than \$500,000 in NRP funds to initiate planning and construction.

“Physical streetscape elements add real value to property and businesses,” said Ray Harris, who worked to implement the plan. A “new and improved” Nicollet will undoubtedly draw additional patronage to the more than 170 small businesses located along the avenue.

“This plan is a terrific opportunity to move the neighborhood forward,” said Joanne Christ, one of many Nicollet Avenue restaurateurs.

Last August, a Blacktop Frolic was held to celebrate the reopening of Nicollet Avenue. At the event, Nicollet Avenue Team member Karen Ives observed that the community has made Nicollet “a viable place to live, work, and shop. This is a place we want to be.”

Project partners include the Minneapolis Community Development Agency, Minneapolis Public Works, the Minneapolis Traffic Department and the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

“Without this kind of reinvestment in our area,” said one volunteer, “we’d just be left behind.”



Activist Mansoor Alyeshmehni (r) and fellow volunteer Tom Berthiune celebrate the reopening of Nicollet Avenue.

community assembly

A neighborhood is like a patchwork quilt. When residents join together for a common purpose we create something greater than the sum of our parts; we create community.

Last September, the Marcy Holmes neighborhood installed the symbolic Southeast Community Quilt at Marcy Open School. Created by over 100 volunteers from the Marcy Holmes, Southeast Como and Prospect Park neighborhoods, the quilt began as a way to involve students in neighborhood arts programs.

For \$50, residents and business owners sponsored and designed each quilt square. Proceeds help support Marcy School arts programs. “Students love the quilt,” observed Parent-Teacher liaison Robin Nelson. “Every square is fabulous.”

The project received a \$600 grant from Marcy Open Community Arts (MOCA), established in 1995 by the Marcy Holmes NRP Plan to facilitate neighborhood fine arts activities. Co-authors of the MOCA grant proposal, Melissa Bean and Tish Murphy oversaw the year-long project.

The quilt was featured at both the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Weisman Art Museum. Though it may make a few more guest appearances throughout the city, its permanent home will always be Marcy Open School.

in good company

One in seven seniors suffers depression associated with isolation, decreased mobility or low income. To maintain a satisfying and healthy lifestyle, a number of seniors have moved into the new Brown Krause Manor, an affordable shared-living home for active seniors located in the Powderhorn Park neighborhood.

In addition to private living spaces, individual bathrooms and storage for ten residents, Brown Krause Manor features plenty of shared living areas: kitchens, dining and living rooms; a four-season sun room with exercise and game equipment; laundry facilities; and an indoor garage. An elevator and wide hallways help to make the building handicap-accessible, and the metro bus stop lies just outside the front door.

The building was designed especially for seniors, notes Brown Krause resident Willard P. Jones, who participated in the planning of the Manor. "Everything was taken into consideration for that purpose." At \$400 per month, the units are specifically priced to be affordable for those on a fixed income.

Designed by architect Milo Thompson, the Manor encourages interdependency. "It's based on a family model," Thompson said at the open house celebration. "Residents share the major portion of the house just as any family would."

The house is based on a model that State Senator Linda Berglin visited in California in 1984. While over 200 such residences exist in the United States, Brown Krause Manor is Minnesota's first shared living facility.

The "shared living" concept provides social interaction and promotes independent living within a

healthy support system. Partners involved with the project have collaborated with health providers and other community resources to ensure that quality health care is available to all Brown Krause Manor residents.

The facility was built by Powderhorn Community Council and financed by a number of public and private investors including Hennepin County, which contributed \$200,000 in NRP funds.

Not long ago, most of the 3600 block of Chicago Avenue stood vacant. Along with recently constructed houses and plans to rehabilitate the former home of the Boys and Girls Club across the street, Brown Krause Manor is helping to transform this area of Powderhorn Park into a vital part of the community.

*"you have all
the **privacy**
you want, yet
you're **not**
alone."*

*-Willard P. Jones,
Brown Krause Manor resident*

“Everybody uses

the little library that could

The Hosmer Community Library—Central neighborhood’s “little red brick castle”—has been a local fixture since 1916. Approaching its eightieth year of service, however, Hosmer faced a bleak future; the Minneapolis Library Board announced that it was considering closing the facility because it was not longer able to serve patrons’ modern-day needs. Hosmer Library had become obsolete.

Those who disagreed with the Board’s assessment rallied to preserve their irreplaceable community resource. Soon, hundreds of neighbors

were participating in the design of a “new” building that would eventually emerge from Hosmer’s historic red brick. “We reached out to the community and politicians to show a real need for this library,” said Bryant resident Clorasteen Wilson. “This means a lot to me.”

The Central Neighborhood Improvement Association and the Bryant Neighborhood Organization together contributed more than \$157,000 in NRP funds for a new Technology Learning Center in Hosmer’s lower level. Additionally, the Powderhorn Park and Kingfield Neighborhood Associations allocated a portion of their NRP funds to expand the library’s special collections department by 25 percent.

The undeniable commitment of these four neighborhoods caused the Library Board to reconsider Hosmer as a viable community library. Based on the positive recommendation of the Capital Long Range Improvement Committee, the Board secured over three million dollars from the City for the renovation and expansion of Hosmer Community Library.

*Hosmer Library
symbolizes
a community spirit
that transcends
neighborhood
boundaries.*

Hosmer Library. It's a community place"

—Mary Lawson, Minneapolis Public Libraries Director

The 1997 Grand Reopening of Hosmer unveiled new furniture and restored woodwork, an expanded checkout area, a new meeting room, a separate children's room and a collaborative glass art installation featuring the work of neighborhood youth and elders. The Technology Learning Center features a digital projector, nine computers with internet and CD ROM capabilities, printers, a full-time instructor, and free computer access and training. A more recent Central NRP grant will add four more computers. In all, over \$245,000 in NRP funds were contributed to Hosmer Library.

Since the renovation was completed, use of Hosmer Library has increased dramatically. According to Head Librarian Roy Woodstrom, circulation rates have tripled and the number of daily visitors is over ten times what it used to be. "NRP dollars give us the potential to give back to the community," said Woodstrom. "Now residents can share a sense of ownership and pride."

For many, the reopening of Hosmer opened a floodgate of memories. Bryant resident and project volunteer James Thomas, Sr. remembers when his kids would actually run to the library. He wanted to see Hosmer better serve the needs of today's children. "With all the dedication that has been put into this," Thomas said, "it can do nothing but succeed."

rē • vi • tal • ize: to give

new life or vigor



City residents and community leaders gathered to celebrate the Hosmer Community Library Grand Reopening in October, 1997.

laying the groundwork

Over 225 volunteers assembled at Jefferson Elementary School in the Lowry Hill East neighborhood last August to construct the new Jefferson Community Playground. The castle-like structure is handicap-accessible and features slides, swings, bridges, pulleys and toddler's equipment made from 95 percent recycled materials.

The community-built playground was initiated in the Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association and East Isles Residents Association Neighborhood Action Plans. Approximately \$222,000 in NRP funds were committed from the two organizations to replace fifteen-year-old equipment that had become rickety and unsafe.

NRP funds were also used to plant eight trees and install a wrought iron and brick fence along both 26th Street and Hennepin Avenue. The new playground will serve 730 Jefferson Elementary students and at least ten nearby neighborhoods.

Additional playground amenities include a prairie butterfly garden and a proposed dry creek bed—a “natural science lab” where students can learn about the area’s natural watershed, vegetation and protection of the environment.

The project quickly became “more than just a playground,” said Catie Chi Olson of the East Isles neighborhood. “It grew and grew and grew.” Neighborhood NRP funds leveraged an additional \$66,000 investment from Minneapolis Public Schools for new benches and landscaping and a \$10,000 grant from Norwest Bank.

Soon local businesses such as the Uptown Theater and Old Chicago Pizza got involved, hosting special events and promotions to raise additional funds for the community playground.

“Not only is this a wonderful place for children to play,” said Jefferson School Principal Colleen Baumtrog during the dedication ceremony held in September, “it’s a symbol of community support for Jefferson School.”

Partners involved in the playground planning and construction process were neighborhood residents, Americorps volunteers, the Minneapolis Public Schools Facilities Department, the South Hennepin Business Association, the Jefferson Elementary PTA, the Minneapolis Jaycees and many other local community organizations.

According to one playground architect, a community-built project encourages residents to increase neighborhood capacity and develop greater ownership of the project. “It requires a real investment by the total community.” Undoubtedly, this is the most significant outcome of the Jefferson Community Playground.

“Neighborhoods
can **work together**.
This was truly a
community-
building effort.”

—Scott Engel,
Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association

on the home front

When sixteen percent of the nearly 3,500 housing units in Powderhorn Park neighborhood were rated as substandard just four years ago, the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association (PPNA) developed the Powderhorn Park Comprehensive Housing Resource Program and made housing a priority in its NRP Plan.

First, PPNA launched a four-year housing repair grant program specifically targeted to low-income residents and seniors. The grants range from \$1,500-\$4,000 each, and are awarded based on income level. Now in its third year, the grant fund has helped to improve 225 properties with 110 matching grants and 115 non-matching, low income grants.

*“This program
cultivates
an atmosphere for
needed change.”*

*-Carol Jacobson,
PPNA Organizer*

“My home was falling apart,” recalled one neighborhood resident. “With the fix-up grant from PPNA, I completed urgent repairs and began projects I wouldn’t have been able to otherwise.”

In 1995, PPNA developed a database of useful housing information for residents. With data from Hennepin County, the Minneapolis Planning Department, the Assessor’s Office, and Rental Licensing Registration, the database is continuously updated. Coordinators hope to soon include Real Estate Advisory Board data.

In conjunction with the database, a volunteer-run library serves to educate residents who want to track and solve housing issues. The library boasts free internet access and materials on virtually any housing topic.

On average, more than 20 visitors stop by the PPNA Housing Database and Library daily to access information on housing conditions and property values, foreclosures, contractors, tenant rights, loans, home purchasing programs, block clubs and more. Other neighborhoods are examining the database as a model for their own housing resource programs and organizations nationwide have submitted purchase inquiries.

taking it to the streets

In February of 1997, a third housing improvement strategy drew to a close; with \$140,000 in NRP funds, PPNA's Down Payment Grant Program awarded 42 grants to first-time home buyers. In turn, the program leveraged nearly 2.8 million dollars of investment in the neighborhood's housing stock by new owner-occupants.

"This gift has instilled in me a sense of civic responsibility," said Jeanne Sterner, a down payment grant recipient who has gone on to become a dedicated neighborhood volunteer. "Normally, I wouldn't have gotten involved, but I wanted to give something back to my neighborhood."

In all, over \$2,300,000 in NRP funds have been committed to the PPNA Comprehensive Housing Resource Program. An additional \$5,200,000 has been leveraged from United Way, the McKnight Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, MCDA, Abbott Northwestern Hospital and other organizations.

Today, the impact of the program is evident. In 1997 alone, PPNA was involved in more than 25 housing development projects including inspections, new construction, rehabilitation, and home ownership programs.

"Our housing program establishes a sense of community and creates bridges with non-profits, businesses, and government agencies throughout the city," observes PPNA Organizer Carol Jacobson.

With the assistance of Community Crime Prevention (CCP)/SAFE and Minneapolis Solid Waste and Recycling, residents of Hawthorne neighborhood in North Minneapolis have created a new solution to their ongoing litter problems: the Hawthorne Clean and Green Program.

Local block clubs recruit neighborhood adolescents to help collect trash in the community. Minneapolis Solid Waste and Recycling collects the bags once they have been filled.

Last summer an average of 160 children participated each week. Funding from the Edina Community Lutheran Church, the General Mills Foundation and the CCP/SAFE Block Connections grant program provided each child with an hourly stipend. An additional \$11,000 in Hawthorne neighborhood NRP funds will help fund the program next summer.

CCP/SAFE team member Hillary Freeman praises the Clean and Green program as a deterrent for crime among adolescents, noting that misdemeanor crime and vandalism have decreased on those blocks participating in the program.

The Clean and Green program not only cleans up the neighborhood, but builds collaboration in the community, especially between adults and children. "If children see adults giving back to the community," observes local block club leader Dave Ellis, "they will do the same."



NRP staff

Pictured from left to right, front row: Ryan Kragerud, Pamela Taylor. Middle row: Carsten Slostad, Peggy Summers, Patricia Motley, Stacey Sorenson, Willie Willis. Back row: Beverly Banks, Jake Houle, Dez Mountin, Matt Negaard, Bob Miller, Paul Maki, Barb Lickness, Dave Anderson, Alicia Cox-Jenkins. Not pictured: Joe Horan, Erik Takeshita, Jack Whitehurst.

Published by the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program, June, 1998.

Editing and design by Jake Houle
Photography by John Akre, Ryan Kragerud and Jake Houle



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