

## **Memorandum**

Date: June 20, 2005

To: Policy Board Members and Alternates

From: Robert D. Miller, Director

Subject: 2005 Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour

The 2005 Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour, conducted May 7 and 8 marked the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of this annual event to showcase city living. NRP has been coordinating the Tour for the past 3 years after the City of Minneapolis decided that they could no longer conduct this promotional effort. Neighborhoods and NRP have been emphasizing improvement of the city's housing stock since NRP was initiated in 1991 and the Home Tour has been a major venue for presenting neighborhood and resident accomplishments.

When NRP assumed responsibility for this activity three years ago, we committed to covering as much of our direct costs as possible with sponsorships, streamlining the homeowner participation and volunteer process and increasing the exposure of the Tour. This year, with \$62,800 in sponsorship monies committed, we will cover all direct costs and almost half of the indirect costs for the NRP staff time that supported the Tour. An Expense and Revenue statement is attached. Although all costs are in on the Tour, revenues remain to be collected from five sponsors, three of which are government entities.

### Results:

The number of homes presented increased by 26% from last years figure to 45 in Minneapolis and 18 in St. Paul, for a total of 63 locations. This was one of the largest tours in the history of the event.

As part of our efforts to make the tour more cost effective, we asked homeowners to secure their own volunteers to staff their homes and they did so with enjoyable results – they had a good time with friends, family, neighbors and community organization volunteers whom they knew and trusted and the number of volunteers that NRP had to recruit decreased. NRP did, nonetheless, recruit more than 60 volunteers to help.

The number of visitors (approximately 6,000) increased slightly from the annual average for the past few years, and the number of homes each person visited (according to returned passports) jumped to almost 7. The total number of visits exceeded 42,000 –

almost the same as 2003. The Home Tour had one of its best attendance years ever but had to overcome competition with Mother's Day, Cinco de Mayo, the Komen Race for the Cure, and rain on Saturday morning.

Other items of significance:

- The City of Saint Paul, though it became a partner late in the game, made an official commitment, provided sponsorship dollars, and helped increase the number of Saint Paul locations, including two very interesting loft conversions and two historic mansions.
- We invested in purchases of supplies and materials that will be used in future years. We also hired an outside coordinator (Margo Ashmore, experienced with all aspects of multi-venue self-guided events), to coordinate the Tour and take an objective look at further streamlining and focusing the event.
- More homes were nominated than were accepted – and most of the homes nominated would have been accepted had there not already been enough to handle. The tour has reached a point of popularity where residents and developers are more willing than ever to place properties on the Tour.
- The Home Tour Guide vendor sold significantly more advertising than in previous years, and between the increased advertising and increased number of houses (13 more than 2004) the guide was expanded to 36 pages, making the Tour look very well established and giving the visitors a lot of interesting reading. We added driving directions on the two page maps of the Guide, which got a positive reaction (4.2 out of a possible 5 points) from participant's survey responses.

Almost 25% of the visitors on the Tour returned their Passport surveys. These surveys provided some very interesting findings:

- Despite the weather and Mother's Day, participants visited a lot of homes (an average of 6.8 per participant).
- Almost 30% of the visitors lived outside of Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- The Tour met the expectations of more than 97% of the visitors
- The Tour is viewed as "Very Well Run" and received an average rating of 4.8 out of a possible 5 points by passport survey responders.
- The homes were rated as "Interesting" (4.6 out of a possible 5 points) and visitors "Got Ideas" for their own projects (4.2 out of a possible 5 points).
- The distribution system for the guides works well: local papers, the Star Tribune and the libraries were the places that visitors got Home Tour Guides.
- The percentage of the participants visiting the Tour's website (MSP Home Tour) increased to almost 25% of the survey respondents.



# 2005 Home Tour Expenses and Revenues

## 2005 HOME TOUR REVENUE

AS OF JUNE 20, 2005

Year	Month	Day	Amount Received	Sponsor
2005	3	22	\$ 2,200	AIA MINNESOTA
2005	4	6	\$ 2,000	GMHC
2005	4	6	\$ 2,000	M.A.Peterson
2005	4	6	\$ 2,000	NORTHEAST BANK
2005	4	6	\$ 4,000	HENNEPIN COUNTY
2005	4	13	\$ 2,000	LANDER GROUP
2005	4	13	\$ 2,000	STANDARD HEATING
2005	4	13	\$ 2,000	STONEBRIDGE CONSTRUCTION
2005	4	28	\$ 2,000	ANGIE'S LIST
2005	4	28	\$ 4,000	BRIGHTON DEV CORP
2005	5	11	\$ 4,000	CEE
			\$ 28,200	
			<b>Amount Payable</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
			\$ 13,600	City of St. Paul
			\$ 8,500	City of Minneapolis
			\$ 8,500	JAS Properties
			\$ 2,000	MN Housing Finance Agency
			\$ 2,000	The Lowry
			\$ 34,600	