

## **Memorandum**

Date: September 20, 2005

To: Policy Board Members and Alternates

From: Robert D. Miller, Director

Subject: 2006 Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour

For the past three years, NRP has been the coordinator for the Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour. NRP became the coordinating organization for the event in 2003 when the Board decided that this major marketing and promotional opportunity for city living and the benefits of Minneapolis neighborhoods should not be allowed to disappear. The City of Minneapolis had sponsored the Home Tour for its first 15 years, with significant participation and assistance from the NRP, but decided in 2003 that the costs involved were too great to justify their continued support. The annual event promotes city living and brings thousands of home enthusiasts together for a weekend of viewing home improvement projects and visiting new home ownership and rental opportunities.

The 2005 event was one of the largest tours in history (63 homes or 26% more than in 2004) and drew more than 6,000 visitors. The average visitor saw 7 homes and the total number of visits exceeded 42,000. This attendance occurred even though the event competed with Mothers Day, Cinco de Mayo, the Komen Race for the cure and Mother Nature (i.e. rain on Saturday morning).

In 2005 we reestablished the partnership with St. Paul, invested in bulk purchases of supplies and materials that will be available for future years, had more homes nominated than we accepted and published a 36 page Home Tour Guide. The responses to the Tour were very positive and the evaluation survey of visitors showed that:

- 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 5.0 points from passport survey responders
- Visitors considered the homes “Interesting” (4.6 out of a possible 5.0 points) and “Got Ideas” for their own projects (4.2 out of a possible 5.0 points).

When NRP assumed responsibility for the Home Tour, the expectation was that staff would do all that we could to ensure that the direct costs of the Tour are covered by sponsorships and ad revenues. We have accomplished this. The number of pages in the Home Tour Guide increased because of advertiser interest and the number of sponsors hit an all time high of 16. Only four of

the sponsors were public jurisdictions or agencies. All of the direct costs and more than 50% of the indirect costs for the 2005 Home Tour were covered by sponsorship revenue.

The Home Tour continues to be a major opportunity for NRP and the City to publicize programs and projects that improve the city's housing stock and showcase the results of NRP's housing investment.

The NRP staff is committed to the future of our neighborhoods and city, and I am recommending that we begin immediately working on the 2006 Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour. I am planning to include the staff time and direct costs for coordinating the 2006 Home Tour in the budget I will be proposing to the Policy Board. We believe that starting our Home Tour planning efforts at this time will help make the 2006 event successful.

I am, therefore, recommending the following resolution:

**RESOLVED:** That the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) Policy Board (Board) agrees that the NRP should coordinate a 2006 Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour; and

**RESOLVED FURTHER:** That the Board authorizes the Director to: (1) enter into any contracts or agreements needed to implement the 2006 Home Tour; (2) expend funds from the approved 2005 and 2006 Administrative Budget for this purpose; (3) create the accounts and files needed to document the revenues received and the expenses incurred for the Home Tour; and (4) use the NRP name, logo, and Web site to promote and advertise the Home Tour; and

**RESOLVED FURTHER:** That the Director shall provide a report to the Board on the revenues and expenditures, attendance and other results of the Tour within 120 days of the date the Tour is held.