

**Community Engagement Meeting  
Comments  
From Comment Cards**

**Question: What can the City do to help you (and your community) better participate in decisions? What is working now? What needs to change?**

**January 29: Van Dusen**

1. City press releases need a longer lead time-not just the same day! (Even though this may not always be possible).
2. What problems are being addressed by the Community Engagement Report?
3. Will the adoption of the Community Engagement Report mean that neighborhood organizations will have to merge or that neighborhoods will have to merge with the ending of NRP dollars in 2008?
4. “Community Engagement” is NOT limited to input on decisions-ideas come from the community/neighborhood groups as well.
5. Section II, Principle 4: Observations: 6) Neighborhood group participation and leadership is not always representative of the community. True. Solutions? Only a handful of residents show up at meetings and elections. Residents are angry about decisions and fiscal irresponsibility by a small group of board members who are “running the show”.
6. All neighborhoods must be held in equal regard. City Council seems to have power to arbitrarily nix projects/ideas/neighborhood responses. Makes it seem hopeless to participate. Inspections seems to have inordinate power-can be intimidating. City of Minneapolis website is really inscrutable.
7. What if a type of decision doesn’t fit a process that’s now established (the definition of thinking outside the box)-such as “wireless” who decides when to go the extra mile? And can “going the extra mile” be used (just as the present “system” is) to enact a decision that doesn’t necessarily reflect the best for all. Is it a game of “keep the game going until we outlast the naysayers” or true consensus, or Strategic Development of Informed Consent (which I favor)? Somewhat rhetorical question.
8. Listen to what neighborhoods think and say. Send City staff to every neighborhood meeting.
9. If NRP goes away, how will the City for Minneapolis fund neighborhoods?
10. Fund neighborhood groups. Without dollars, grassroots activity as we know it is doomed. From citizen and political standpoints, neighborhood groups are crucial to a healthy community.
11. Eliminate so called neighborhood groups (i.e. Whittier Alliance) because they are controlled by persons with their own agenda (i.e. architects, builders and business owners who’s only interest is profit at the expense of all. Nonprofits need to generate cash, so favors are sold and bargains are made that only

- benefit those interests who pay cold hard cash for favors. It's not fair that a few board members drive decisions for their own reasons (i.e. work and business conflicts).
12. (1) Give neighborhoods the power and influence to effectively engage.  
(2) Fund not only the engagement process but also the ability to conceive and direct the projects subject to decision.
  13. (1) Schedule hearings and meetings when working people can actually attend. (2) For the most part, the neighborhood organizations have done a good job of bridging the gap between City government and the citizens. Groups like the SSCO have done an amazing job of actually serving the community. (3) However, some of the neighborhood organizations have been less successful (and less interested) in working with renters. But the biggest problem is that City government seems to favor downtown developers over actual citizens and ignores citizen concerns.
  14. Change/improve the way in which the City recruits or communicates with residents to involve the diverse residents of neighborhoods. Diversity of Minneapolis is not properly represented at meetings or in the groups (voters) that make decisions that affect everyone. Invest/work to include youth and the younger people of the city. City Council people need to know their neighborhoods-learn what types of program, organizations, businesses, and services are available. Work to improve the services in the neighborhood. Utilize current business organizations to reach residents-schools-parks, etc. Consistency-Listen to the people. Accountability from the City.
  15. Foster greater participation by citizens in their local neighborhood organizations.
  16. (1) The City needs to take genuine awareness in the initiatives undertaken by individual neighborhoods. Neighborhoods each have unique identities that are not reflected in City decisions. (2) Would like to see consistent follow through after a decision has been made and be told Why.
  17. (1) All City staff need to know all neighborhoods and provide adequate notification to all who may be impacted by projects "just across the border". (2) Neighborhood groups are working well! Restorative Justice Community Action. (3) It all needs to begin in the community: before any licenses, zoning changes, etc. are granted, discuss them at the neighborhood level.
  18. The City must keep laws that notify residents and businesses affected by developers plans to gentrify a given area. And the residents and businesses affected must have power to stop the plan if they so choose.
  19. (1) Timelier notices, equal access to commissioners, staff and elected officials. (2) NRP makes things work in both directions. (3) City staff should be instructed to return phone calls. City staff should be instructed to notify neighborhood organizations before scheduling public meetings on zoning, developments etc. City staff should be required to remediate or respond to an issue or problem within a certain time frame.
  20. Explanation of decision-making process by City when community organization recommendation is not followed. Community org. needs to know it has been heard.

21. The City needs to reach families through the schools.
22. Realize that the closer an organization is to its residents, the better understanding it has of the needs of the community. The City cannot hope to generalize the needs of more than 60 diverse neighborhoods within its borders. It is grassroots and neighborhood organizations that translate and actively address these needs through programs and events specifically tailored to their residents. If the city would further investigate such programs, it would realize the enormous but often overlooked support it receives from neighborhood organizations. Please keep the NRP funding going!
23. Some City departments engage the community well-others don't even try. Have the best teach the others how to do it right.
24. Make a commitment!!!
25. Inform the citizen and ask for input before decisions are made. Agencies should listen to and help citizens obtain their goal. If they can't, then tell them why.
26. Make clear the line of authority, who has the power.
27. Redue property taxes. Proper control over license fees. Street lighting. Provide help to small businesses. Fight graffiti.
28. Continue to support NRP. NRP works.
29. I love being involved with my neighborhood organization (SSCO). The SSCO provides a great way for me and my neighbors to come together and engage in our local community in an empowering way. I really hope the city of Minneapolis realizes the value of neighborhood organizations and brings them to the decision making table.
30. Outreach and education liaison. Neighborhood organizations work. More liaisons work.
31. I think the most important thing the City can do is actively seek participation, communication and conversation with all constituents in all communities; additionally, the city needs to respect and empower its communities following the conversation. Please recognize that all of us are important in the decisions that affect our city and hence our lives. Thank you.
32. East Phillips meets in empty apartments-you can help us fund a community center so we have a place to meet! NRP is working well-we have accomplished a lot. We need more funding at the local level. Also I'm worried about families and Minneapolis. We must have great schools and safety for families to stay. With 32 kids per class I'm pulling my kids out of Mpls. next year. We desperately need more youth programming. Our neighborhood has hundreds of aimless youth on the street.
33. NRP works, but sometime the funding gets "stuck" in pockets, and NRP meetings, i.e. funding should involve all citizens in the geographic area. Snow emergency phone calls work very well. Thanks. What needs to change: Fixing a "why" that some individuals have that prevents them (you, me, us) from participation. Realizing that participation is growth.

34. The City could do a better job of acknowledging responses formulated by citizens, particularly in zoning and planning decisions. I would also highlight the importance of neighborhood organizations in engaging the community.
35. (1) Allow for more of a “choice” than “1”. (2) Inform people that there is a cost of the “City’s improvements” through this program. (3) Allow residents to decide their needs rather than being “directed” by NRP staff. (4) Shift funding to more “needy” communities. (5) Cut “strings” that are endemic to government programs. (6) Remind staffers that this is a “community” program and not theirs. (7) Allow for open feedback so staff knows what works and what doesn’t. (8) Identify how NRP is supposed to improve the quality of life for poor people of color. (9) Don’t allow for “elitist” leadership to take control (i.e. Whittier). (10) Minimize staff. Nothing worse than being “top heavy”. (11) Hear from the communities. (12) Hire people of color.
36. I believe City government should let community organizations have more influence in the realm of land-use planning. Free-market development driven planning will (with time) gut the most powerful community comebacks. The city needs to work more closely with active neighborhood organizations to create long-term plans for economic development and cultural preservation.
37. (1) Support capacity building in neighborhoods to ensure widespread engagement, especially around planning. (2) Funding = empowering neighborhood organizations. (3) Grow stronger relationships between partners and move funding to neighborhoods.
38. Listen and communicate with the people who live here. Value our opinions in regard to new development. Always give us a voice and a vote. I’m getting the feeling that big developers are taking over and we’re beginning to lose our stake in some fabulous neighborhoods. Just look at uptown (and they’ve only just begun!). We as a neighborhood have had to remain extremely vigilant in order to prevent some really horrendous things from happening (i.e. loss of Soo Line gardens to developers, loss of Vera’s Garden to developers, destruction of Salem English Lutheran Church all of which would have been tragic losses in my opinion so continuing to give the community and its individuals a voice and a vote is imperative.
39. City staff needs to know boundaries (-) when City staff comes to neighborhood meetings (+). Squeaky wheel gets heard by bombarding Council members (some other way needed) (-). Public meetings before Council meetings are a sham (decisions have already been made) (-). Why ask for recommendations and then not listen (-). Know you’ve been heard-know why decisions are made (-). Work with schedules-don’t say “jump” now (-). Requests for input-but have at bad times and can’t get there. Impractical scheduling (-). Utilize TV better (-). NRP funds disappeared in 2<sup>nd</sup> phase (-). Communicate clear info about how to do community engagement (-). Don’t acknowledge letters (-). Democracy at work (+). Hard to know process (-). Neighborhood groups so valuable and are working (+). Neighborhood is effective convener of meetings-government doesn’t need

to do it all (+). Government is representative-do that at neighborhood level (-). Restorative justice is working well (+).

40. Community engagement system needs: 1) A group representing neighborhood residents that is formally recognized by the city. 2) A dedicated funding source for neighborhood groups and their professional staff. 3) A mechanism that holds elected officials accountable and guarantees representational participation.

### January 29: Burroughs School

1. The flow chart should go in the other direction. City should support neighborhood initiated projects and give them jurisdiction over the most local decisions and support that. NRP funding needs to continue – Engagement without empowerment won't happen and empowerment without funding is dead.
2. The city needs to change its culture to support a model of active citizen partnership where everyone in the city (neighborhoods, residents, businesses, policy makers, and city staff) are working together to create the city's future.
3. Better 2-way communication. – Keep funds coming to allow neighborhoods to continue outreach etc. – How do we know if our input is being used? - Involve Neighborhood Boards more.
4. Outstanding meeting – Timely responses – Keep it up - Worthwhile
5. The city can strengthen neighborhoods & citizen engagement by further empowering neighborhood organizations to get neighbors involved. Neighbors know the issues & should drive the city's focus. Small neighborhoods (size of today's or smaller) allow the most people to way in & influence solutions.
6. Why were neighborhood organizations as a whole not brought into development of the CE plan? Neigh. Orgs. were not asked to be involved until NRP not the city decided to have these meetings.
7. #1- Keep neighborhood organizations strong – they work! Involve neighborhoods earlier in the decision making process. Neighborhoods also need to be enabled to initiate change. #2- The city needs to recognize the importance of engaging residents at the neighborhood level – It empowers residents to get involved and have a direct affect on their immediate neighborhood.
8. As a neighborhood resident who is not real involved in my neighborhood association or political process I feel the neighborhood board, etc. is the key to connecting effectively with and reaching the most residents.
9. 1. Simplify the structure! 2. Keep economic power in neighborhoods through NRP to really enable engagement!
10. Give neighborhood organizations real power in their neighborhoods. They are the ones who are best at engaging the community, and if they had REAL, clearly defined roles in the decision making that goes on in the city, more people would get involved in these groups. If there's nothing but advisement at stake, why bother? Let them tell the city what they already know is best.

11. Involve the neigh. orgs. in decisions prior to after final decisions are made.  
\*A great deal of effort has gone into creating the neigh. Organizations and we need to keep them strong. \*John & Jane Doe are much more likely to express concern or enter into dialog with their “neighbors” on the Board of their Neigh. Org. They aren’t going to try to call someone at the City level and navigate their way through the maze of city officials.
12. Less presentation - More interactive
13. I don’t like the way the report attempts to limit the definition and “systematize” community engagement. By boxing it in, a lot is left out in terms of C.E. More “engagement” of the general public and interested groups is needed to develop a truly open and trusting environment for community engagement. – In the CE report – a lot of the recommendations are actually only observations. – Get the Park & Recreation Board involved! Report quote – “did not respond to our request for an interview”

### January 30: Plaza Verde

1. Fund neighborhood organizations.
2. Neighborhood organization funding, empowerment
3. Where do neighborhood policing plans, community policing, block clubs, neighborhood crime & safety communities, & precinct advisory committees fit in? Community policing reports/study should have also been included.
4. Empower & fund neighborhood organizations
5. Accountability & communication for all needs to improve, as does follow through & follow up.
6. The city has skills & resources that can be helpful & applied citywide but those should be resources for neighborhood associations.
7. City needs to understand if you want people to be empowered & engaged, they need to have real authority, final decision power & money.
8. Since I’m new to Mpls., I would like to see better representation of community members that are most disenfranchised. What are their needs & wants & how can neighborhoods & the city better help? When community members are empowered to help themselves & to have more involvement in the process they will feel greater ownership. Pride & ownership!
9. Give us the power to make some of those decisions. NRP is working now. The city’s attitude toward neighborhood organizations needs to change.
10. Our SAFE/CCP officer is spread too thin & overworked due to decision several yrs ago to give each CCP Specialist more areas to cover. Not acceptable but our ideas & protests were overlooked.
11. It seems that a very small slice of Mpls population has the ability to contribute to decisions – ability limited/defined as – language barriers – citizens too busy to take a lot of time to understand these processes – all of the hoops to jump through to actually see action. Mostly, it is hard for me – a Mpls resident (w/a four yr. Degree) to understand all the different agencies – committees – city council – who I need to contact to get an action to happen.

12. Why was there no American sign language interpreter present?
13. Why don't the city & the county seem to communicate with one another? I call agency A about a problem but am told to call Agency B, who tell me to call agency A. ARGH!!!
14. Help us rehab all the boarded up houses! There are 4 on my street & block, & others that are vacant or for sale. What's wrong?
15. Help me, to help my neighbor, to understand, they are a part of the decisions and without their input, we might miss their needs.
16. Encourage community initiatives that dovetail with city activities (i.e. n'hood comp. plans & crime prevention plans). Continue to build on the community capacity we have built. What works now? Neighborhood organizations.
17. (1) What works - \$\$ allocated to neighborhood recognized as citizen participation recognized groups contracting with the city. (2) What needs to change – how these studies are initiated. (3) What can city do? Many projects successfully initiated by neighborhoods need to be duplicated – the process of how they succeeded.
18. Figure out how to financially support highly effective neighborhood organizations that have been successful in areas that need it the most.
19. (1) Better explain the decision –making structure. What body makes what decisions and why? (2) Better electronic outreach (via the web) about impending decisions.
20. NRP is working – small is good. City listens to NRP – there's input from neighborhood to city. It works. It empowers people when they have the opportunity to make decisions on how to spend money.
21. Continue the process that has worked in the past. Keep the neighborhoods small – not regional areas. Better communication between neighborhoods and city.
22. Provide a flow chart of decision-making process. A list of activities/programs/org. that are involved in CE was provided in the presentation. Do these activities equal representation in decision making/recommendations?
23. Invite us to the table: not the committee table but a true table that allows \$ for n'hoods for true participation.
24. Continue NRP & keep neighborhoods strong! The city should use existing networks to communicate w/citizens. Citizens shouldn't have to travel to city hall to give feedback on neigh. issues. Engagement should not be top down, it should be driven by the people. "The power of government is derived from the people."
25. Empower & Fund Neighborhoods.
26. More communication with community & NRP and community organizations.

## January 30: Minnehaha Methodist

1. Neighborhood assoc. are working – doing a great job involving, empowering & engaging community members. W/o these, I fear community engagement will diminish significantly.
2. We need better internet information and a good city website that ties all programs to one major website.
3. Great chance to pour out our concerns, now the city needs to listen. (1) The City can put issues out before decisions are made. They should really listen to the people and respond. (2) Keep neighborhood groups FUNDED – not just thru 2009 – they are essential; people need to be able to talk face to face (not on hold for an unknown city employee) to get info, voice concerns, learn how to make our neighborhoods a part of the city's foundation and positive growth and life. –What is working now? - our NENA.
4. I heard that there were focus groups & interviews of citizens for this CE report. I am very well connected in Field Regina Northrop & I do not know of one person who ever was interviewed or was part of a focus group. Also the response time was totally inappropriate – holidays was exactly chosen to make sure no one responded.
5. Earlier notices. I read about this today in the Messenger.
6. Mayor's desire to control neighborhoods – needs to change. What are the next steps? No funding information in this report. Small groups do not work in this type of meeting - Is this a city module? - NRP works - Why is CE coming up now?
7. N.E.N.A. needs to be funded to help citizens deal with community problems. What is our recourse on solving community problems, laws not enforced short of law suits put on citizens? We want to be heard and esp. listened to.
8. NRP worked, give it opportunity and support to evolve, grow, improve – their process was engaging / user-friendly. City can better use community newspapers to engage neighborhoods.
9. (1) The city needs to recognize that citizen engagement is more than being involved in “an impending govt decision.” It is a collaborative process where citizens can be involved @ many levels to improve their neighborhood & the vitality & health of both the neighborhood & the city. (2) Neighborhood organizations serve a vital role in engaging citizens on a wide range of issues including zoning, planning, public safety, etc. The city needs to recognize that & support those activities. (3) The city benefits from having an engaged community – that uses its creativity, hard work, & energy to improve their neighborhoods in ways that are unique to their neighborhood. Foster that & recognize it with \$ support. (4) Policies should be allowed to come up from the community – not just commenting on what the city has come up with as an idea. Build that into the process. (5) Refund NRP! This is true Comm. Engagmt. Process.
10. What can city do? Find resources (money) to help support neighborhood staff and newsletter. What is working now? Communications and support from NRP staff over many years. What needs to change? Plan in place to



support NRP after 2009. The work that has been done to improve our neighborhoods over the past 20 years is so important.

### January 31: Firehall Museum

1. **This is working. Individual community representatives vs a smaller number opens communication broadly. It allows individual communities a voice. NRP has been a very positive vector for communication in this city. Occasionally the voice of the community is not heard by our representatives (Councilpersons). There is real wisdom (often) in the voice of the people who live in individual communities.**
2. **Inform people of issues that are coming up for a vote.**
3. **Read the detail of neighborhoods given in this project. Look at similarities/examples from all areas of city.**
4. **Re-design the NRP power-sharing organization.**
5. **Continue (full) funding for the NRP subsequent to 2009 to continue the citizen /resident empowerment facilitated by and through the program.**
6. **As a neighborhood group – Logan Park has seen its operational support cut by the city from \$10,000 per year to much less. We are forced to cut meetings & communication with our residents as a result. Does this support the findings of the report? We are looking for alternate sources of money to stay in operation. But this takes time.**
7. **There should be less use of jargon & acronyms and more basic “101” explaining about the different organizations & their duties/goals. Participation: The smaller neighborhood organizations know how to reach their neighborhoods. For those who don’t use the internet, a small section in the Star Tribune could help people learn about city information.**
8. **Keep NRP as is in the community. (Its working why change it)**
9. **The city should involve the neighborhoods or engage neighborhoods earlier in a planning process, not just announce & respond to reaction. Likewise the neighborhood groups should use a significant portion of time & material resources to engage the community and encourage their feedback. After getting that feedback neighborhood organizations should represent that feedback even if the board members views may differ.**
10. **Reduce city level bureaucracy so that participating citizens can be heard. The community level NRP end of the system is the part that works.**
11. **For starters – you picked 2 people to write on the flip charts that are controlling their neighborhoods. What would you have learned if “All” comments were used instead of only their views. Change: Would like more specific “free” help to n’hoods. Planners, grant writers, etc.**
12. **The worst thing about the current neighborhood NRP funded system is how some neighborhoods have spent significant amounts on office and paid staff and have become arrogant self serving clicks who don’t really represent the neighborhoods in which they are based.**
13. **Get immigrant populations involved in the process – have translators available etc. Get youth involved.**

14. The city can further empower the neighborhood organizations to reach out to neighbors and engage them. Sustain empowered neighborhood organizations that aren't absorbed into a bigger group. Let neighborhoods influence city priorities.

#### January 31: Marcy Holmes

1. Hawa Gedi
2. Don't waste our time with meetings like this.
3. 1. All budgets (city, Library Bd., Parks etc.) need to be available & clear so that all citizens can read them. And accessible in time for useful citizen input. There has to be clearer accountability – 2. My recent experience with the library bd. was a fiasco. The library board blamed the city council/the mayor blamed the library board – and no one takes responsibility for the closing of libraries.
4. Invite my participation - Educate me on the key elements of the issues - Make sure “self interest” does not govern the issue but what is best civic practice. Work for the greater good!
5. Is MPHA responsible for indoor lights? Out for 2 days regardless of calls, or can one also call 311 regarding this? Marian Mohamed 2809 St. Mary's Place, Mpls 55414 612-729-1139.
6. I attend this meeting as a second-class citizen since I represent a business association. Business associations have been muffled by the process since the neighborhood association have the power. What needs to change? Allow the business associations to have an equal voice.
7. 1. More lights in neighborhood S.E. 2. Information at regular meeting through SWIM, ESIVS etc.
8. Keep the neighborhood organizations!! Continue the close involvement of our council person w/neighborhood . Continue funding NRP for citizen help. Cease and desist w/Rybak trying to take the money and run. This whole process looks and feels like Rybak and city manager “take the money and run” operation. Dealing with 80 neighborhoods seems infinitely better than dealing with 500,000 citizens.
9. Greater attempt to convince us (neighborhoods) that the city doesn't believe/follow pre-destination i.e., decisions are already made, city's just going thru the motions of community involvement, sorry – “engagement”.

#### February 1: North Regional Library

1. Finding ways to communicate with all people – cultural and language barriers often preclude many from participation.
2. Can we give more authority to neighborhood associations? (empower + Input + \$)
3. Try listening to the community. Let the neighborhoods make decisions themselves for projects in their neighborhoods. Embrace neighborhood empowerment.

4. This meeting (specifically the presentation of the report) was very nebulous/abstract. I felt it was difficult to understand what was really being discussed.
5. (1) Notifications (2) Listen to neighborhoods and acknowledge (3) Include us in decision-making. City does not have our best interest I feel because they have no bond to our communities because they don't live in our communities.
6. (1) Decisions should never happen before direct community engagement. (2) Generate policy that requires city staff to participate, in person, at neighborhood meetings early & often! (3) Create motivation & values within community by integrating city staff & issues in regular neighborhood activities.
7. Engage communities long before impending decisions. E.g. an ongoing conversation is needed. What is happening to funding of neighborhood programs? If neighborhood input is discounted or ignored why would neighborhoods trust and support the city government process?
8. ?Georgina? The meeting "leaders" needed to meet the people where they were – trying to dictated to conversation was a waste of time!
9. Provide the infrastructure (childcare, interpreters, good and varied communication) to support CE. Create in the citizens and officials a culture/value of participation – good & effective. Use all means possible to create it, including the water bill.
10. CLIC is an important opportunity for "community engagement". Why are the meetings held from 10am – noon? This does not allow anyone to apply for the opportunity to serve for free. The Mayor should not have 7 representatives!
11. Method of absentee voting, input, etc for those unable to attend events, mtg. etc.
12. We need NRP going after 2 yrs. Fix up more homes.
13. The city must hear its citizens – we pay taxes and work. Why does the city not care for this city as much as its residents do? Keep funding for NRP. Improve & expand police force. Create new ways to reduce crime & improve the quality of life. Can be done by empowering neighborhoods & residents to make their own change.
14. (1) Recognize that neighborhood orgs have brought value far in excess of city funding in terms of funding (supplementing NRP funds w/grants), creativity (unique ideas), & priorities (w/o NRP some neighborhoods would still be waiting for funds to begin revitalization). (2) Create citywide web site that lists issues being considered by city committees & council organized by neighborhood – one place where I can find out what issues affect me. Need to be posted 7-14 days before city discusses them. As city dept. documentation is available, add links to the materials on the issues site. (3) See CE as an investment that returns many times the value of the \$ invested. Engagement provides hundreds/thousands of good minds to work on issues; added \$ neighborhoods bring in extends what can be done; neighborhoods have grown program income, making \$ go further. City can't do this.

15. We need more ways to communicate with the city other than neighborhood associations. Some of our neighborhood associations are run by folks who don't listen to the people but are on their own little power trip and who bully people/other neighborhood groups. (Folwell Neighborhood)
16. Fully fund NRP & NRP neighborhoods \* Add NRP neighborhoods to city engagement decision making policies & procedures.
17. I've been @ commission mtg/public hearing where the councilmember (also chair) was not paying attention to the public testimony and the Mayor's staff person appeared to be surfing the web. Obviously, this did little to gain the trust of the residents who showed up on an important issue. The Mpls Observer used to do a good job of pointing this out but perhaps the city should hold itself accountable.
18. Have city officials continually engage with neighborhood organizations to inform citizens about programs (i.e. the inspections that occurred in North Mpls). May have been more successful if the discussion had occurred early. Bring back the city calendar. Tell citizens they have to be the democracy they want to do.
19. Don't understand advisory boards & comm. that city has. Couldn't name 2 comm. let alone 5! My resident voice is heard through NRP neighborhood assoc. & I think I can do what's best for my neighborhood through Assoc.
20. Narrow this question, please. Which decisions? Funding? Opening/closing a neighborhood library? Train city employees who take phone calls from the public on a regular basis to at least say their 1<sup>st</sup> name when you call (example: solid waste mgmt, park & rec.). It would be so nice to have a simple (not anonymous) connection. Communicate examples of CE to "newbies". Acknowledge successful community engagement activities that were initiated by citizens, their committees, their communities.

### February 5: Mill City

1. The City can keep open doors and open resources to respond to and support citizen and neighborhood group initiatives. Input on decisions is a reactive activity. Citizens need empowerment to initiate ideas and action. Programs like NRP provide tools and possibilities for empowerment.
2. What can the City do to help you and your community better participate in decisions? Empower, don't "engage" me – too patronizing. What is working now? NRP has led to countless MAJOR n'hd successes: Whittier School, eat street; Bottineau library; tot lots; home improvements – the City is so much better off for it.
3. City needs to tell neighborhoods about goals. NRP town meetings work in my neighborhood. Elected officials need to state their goals & projects to neighborhoods.
4. Quit wasting our time on these "Community engagement" mtg. This is what - Round V?. Build on what we have & applaud the good work of neighborhoods.

5. Summit of past elected's on burning issues – Civic model on larger basis? – Reduce # of standing advisory bodies. Has more CE coincided w/rapid decline in Q/L. Why? ?What became of NRP report of 2000? ?Where is LEADERSHIP in this? ?City on-line report card? ?Citywide mtgs (by ward) on budget etc.
6. Engage vs. inform – Use NRP philosophy to support & uphold & implement grass root efforts in creating a “sense of place”. To name a few in Loring Park: thru the Neighborhood Organizations we have “Eat Street”, Nicollet Streetscape, Loring Park, Housing Corridor – Nicollet, Loring Hill Dev. Guidelines, Prosecution of misdemeanor crimes through Restorative Justice
7. 1) What can the City do to help you and your community better participate in decisions? Staff, fund, support Neighborhood Groups. 2) What is working now? Council member interacts w/NG. 3) What needs to change? Funding should reflect responsibility. Criteria for funding neighborhood groups based primarily on housing stock unfair to neighborhoods with needs caused by multicultural concerns & poverty.
8. It appears that the city is just going thru the motions of neighborhood organization input, and I question the city's ongoing method of including and valuing a collaborative effort with neighborhood orgs. in creating a CE Plan.
9. Without undermining value & authority of Neighborhood Associations, make efforts to engage individuals. Facilitate inter-neighborhood dialogue. So many are facing similar issues & city encouragement of collaboration could be efficient. MORE, BETTER INFORMATION. Not overload, not redundant – but concise, clear, accurate info on pending issues & the potential consequences that various solutions could cause.
10. What needs to Change? More education & outreach around elections – fast & effective implementation of IRN.

**By Mail-Session Unknown**

1. Create a person in each agency that is a liaison for particular n'hoods-like CPED. 311/911 and one stop are great-more of this type of programs. Staff needs to see responding to residents inquiries as part of their job and answer phone/emails in timely fashion. (Many do-thank you!).
2. The current system set-up is pretty good. But the city is definitely not listening to resident' and business owners' opinions. It's sickening!!! What's the point of participating when the city's agenda gets put through no matter what the residents would like to see happen?