

REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS REVIEW

Background and History

Between January 29 and February 8, 2007 the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and the City of Minneapolis conducted eight public meetings to receive comments about a report requested by the City Council to set the stage for a comprehensive review of the current community engagement system in the City. As part of that review and comment process, a community survey was also conducted.

This effort is another step in a community engagement review process that began in 2003.

On December 22, 2003 Council Member Dan Niziolek requested that the Health and Family Support staff "coordinate a project on community engagement and community building in Minneapolis". The Ways and Means Committee "requested that the City Coordinator develop a plan for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the community engagement and community building efforts and programs in Minneapolis".

The stated purpose was to ensure that the community engagement system would be cost effective, tie together all current efforts, create clear and shared responsibilities and expectations, and integrate formal and informal opportunities to ensure ongoing and meaningful participation by Minneapolis residents and their communities in achieving common goals with the City.

On February 4, 2004, City Coordinator John Moir submitted a report on Community Engagement to Barbara Johnson, Chair, Ways & Means/Budget Committee. The report was a response to Council Member Niziolek's community engagement proposal. The information in the report was a "plan to plan" the steps for improving staff/community interaction on key projects and issues. The plan was to reaffirm the City goal relating to community engagement, find a permanent "home" for the community engagement function and add a "Communications/Community Engagement" component to departmental business plans. The City Coordinator recommended that the Communications Department assume responsibility for coordinating the City's community engagement activities and that a Community Engagement Coordinator be hired for the City.

On February 13, 2004, the City Council passed resolution 2004R-63 "reaffirming the City's goal to enhance community engagement, placing responsibility for the Minneapolis Engagement and Community Building Project in the Communications Department, and adding a "Communications/Community Engagement" component to departmental business plans".

At its June 27, 2005 meeting, the NRP Policy Board "established a task force on NRP's future." [NRP/PR#2005-11] The Task Force consisted of 3 elected officials (Rep. Joe Mullery, Park Board President Jon Olson, and City Council President Paul Ostrow), 2

community interest members (Ken Kelash and Byron Laher), and 2 neighborhood representatives (Debbie Evans and Jeff Strand)

An interim report of the Task Force that contained 11 different funding mechanisms that could be used to provide continued financial support to the NRP Program was submitted to the NRP Policy Board at its September 26, 2005 meeting. In that report the Task Force recommended that a technical group of resource persons from each of the participating jurisdictions be convened to review the options proposed for consideration and provide pros, cons and implementation steps for each possibility. The NRP Policy Board passed a resolution accepting the preliminary report and requested each of the participating jurisdictions to select a financial activities expert to represent their jurisdiction and develop the pros and cons and implementation steps for the possible funding options.

Pat O'Conner (Hennepin County), Richard Theis (Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board), Cecile Bedor (Library Board), Marj Rolland (School Board) and Jack Kryst (City of Minneapolis) served as the Technical Advisory group and provided edits, pros and cons, and comments and suggestions. On February 6, 2006 the Technical Advisory group submitted its report to the Task Force.

Paul Ostrow, Ways and Means Committee Chair, requested that City staff provide a report to the Ways and Means Committee on the conclusions reached regarding the pros and cons of the suggested financing options prior to the presentation of the Task Force report to the NRP Policy Board.

In his report to the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Kryst outlined the process used to develop the options and made the observation that the funding discussion was taking place in the absence of a broader City and stakeholder discussion about the need, mission, size, or governance structure of an NRP Program after 2009. He suggested that formally directing staff to initiate this discussion would be timely and would provide a mechanism for analyzing the proposed funding options.

On February 24, 2006, the City Council passed resolution 2206R-094 requesting an assessment of the City's Organizational Capacity for Community Engagement. The resolution stated "that the City of Minneapolis is committed to the continuous improvement of the community engagement activities in the City and that many city departments devote significant financial and staff resources to community engagement activities." It indicated that "the City uses funds from the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and the general fund to support citizen participation activities of neighborhood organizations and that the federal funds committed for this purpose have been declining." The resolution also recognized that "NRP provided annual operating support for neighborhood organizations and that the statutorily obligated funding for the NRP ends in 2009."

The resolution instructed "City staff to convene a discussion with representatives of its local-government partners and community stakeholders to identify:

- a) the specific, ongoing community-engagement needs of local-government entities and community stakeholders;
- b) the level and type of government and stakeholder organizational capacity required to support such community engagement and;
- c) the resources required to support that level and type of organizational capacity."

The City Coordinator was directed "to return to the committee within 60 days with a detailed plan and time line for this discussion."

On April 19, 2006, the NRP's Task Force on the Continuation of NRP submitted its report and recommendations to the Policy Board. The report analyzed the potential funding sources that could be used to continue NRP and was subsequently transmitted to each of the governmental jurisdictions participating in NRP for their review and comment.

On May 4, 2006, City Coordinator Steve Bosacker submitted an update to the Ways and Means Committee on City Council resolution 2206R-094 that included a Recommended Plan and Time Line for assessing the City's Organizational Capacity for Community Engagement. The recommendation was to "establish a staff task force, under the direction of the City Coordinator, to complete a list of tasks and report back to the Ways and Means Committee at or before its meeting on September 12, 2006."

The recommended plan of action was to: "review previously completed studies and reports on the effectiveness of City of Minneapolis community engagement activities, interview the City's governmental partners and representatives of major stakeholder groups, summarize findings and draft process and outcome recommendations for consideration by the City Council." The Ways and Means Committee supported the recommended course of action and on May 12, 2006 the City Council passed a resolution supporting the recommended plan.

At its July 24, 2006 meeting the NRP Policy Board received a presentation from David Fey, CPED, Senior Policy Manager, on the proposed review of the City's Community Engagement activities. The Policy Board members indicated strong support for active involvement by NRP in this "Community Engagement" review.

On July 31, 2006, Council President Barbara Johnson sent the Policy Board a memorandum acknowledging receipt of the Task Force Report on NRP Funding Options and indicating that the City Coordinator had been directed to review current community engagement practices before the City would comment on the NRP funding proposals. Council President Johnson further stated that staff would have a report completed for presentation to the City Council and the NRP Policy Board in September. Part of that discussion would be about how to address the funding issue for the City's community engagement effort as a whole.

At the Ways and Means/Budget Committee meeting on November 13, 2006, City Coordinator Steve Bosacker submitted the Community Engagement Report and the Community Engagement Process Report. The Ways and Means Committee "received and filed the report and directed staff to distribute the report for comment and review." Comments were to be submitted by January 5, 2007.

The full City Council was scheduled to discuss and act on the recommendations of the Community Engagement Report in January.

On November 20, 2006 the Community Engagement Report was received by the NRP Policy Board. The Policy Board passed a resolution directing the NRP Director "to organize and conduct a series of public meetings to gather input and feedback from neighborhood residents and NRP neighborhood organizations concerning the "Community Engagement Report", NRP, citizen participation, and community engagement. A summary of findings and recommendations from the neighborhood meetings is to be provided to the March 26, 2007 NRP Policy Board meeting."

NRP Director Bob Miller contacted City Coordinator Steven Bosacker to let him know about the resolution of the Policy Board and about NRP concerns about the timeline for commenting on the Community Engagement report. It was agreed that: 1) NRP and the City would jointly sponsor the public meetings on the Community Engagement report, 2) the deadline for transmitting comments on the Community Engagement report would be extended to February 8, and 3) a survey for residents would be developed and conducted as part of the report review process. An informal NRP/City Community Engagement Committee (composed of Steven Bosacker (City Coordinator), Bob Miller (NRP Director), Joe Horan and Barb Lickness (NRP Neighborhood Specialists), David Fey (CPED Senior Policy Manager) and Clara Perrin (Community Engagement Coordinator)) was established to oversee and help implement the community review process.

The Public Meetings and Survey

Eight Community Engagement Meetings were scheduled at various locations throughout the city to encourage stakeholders to provide feedback, comment and suggestions about the Community Engagement Report.

Meetings were held:

Monday - January 29 Van Dusen Conference Center,
1900 La Salle Ave So

Monday - January 29 Burroughs School,
1601 W 50th St

Tuesday - January 30 - Plaza Verde,
1516 E Lake St

Tuesday - January 30 - Minnehaha United Methodist Church,
3701 E 50th St

Wednesday - January 31 - Marcy Open School,
415 4th Ave SE

Wednesday - January 31 - Firefighters Hall & Museum,
664 22nd Ave NE

Thursday - February 1 - North Regional Library,
1315 Lowry Ave No

Monday - February 5 - Mill City Museum,
704 2nd St

The meetings at Plaza Verde, North Regional Library and the Mill City Museum were simultaneously interpreted in Spanish, Somali, Oromo, Hmong, Vietnamese and Lao through the use of translation equipment loaned to NRP by the Harrison and Corcoran neighborhood associations. This equipment was provided through a grant from the McKnight Foundation. The translators and technical assistance were provided by the University Language Center. Copies of the Community Engagement Report, surveys and comment cards were provided to attendees at every meeting and were also available on line at the NRP and City of Minneapolis web sites. Free bus transportation was provided from Public Housing Hi-Rises and town homes to Plaza Verde and the Mill City Museum meetings. Outreach for the Community Engagement Meetings and Survey was accomplished in the following ways:

1. The Community Engagement Meeting flyers were translated into Spanish, Somali, Oromo, Hmong, Vietnamese and Lao by the University Language Center.
2. NRP Neighborhood Specialists contacted over 60 ethnic, cultural, educational and social service agencies and businesses serving people of color and New American populations. Flyers were also mailed to these agencies and businesses. The City Community Engagement Coordinator distributed a copy of the Community Engagement Report to 22 ethnic, cultural, educational and social service agencies serving persons of color and New American populations.
3. All neighborhood associations in Minneapolis were notified of the meetings and the survey availability. NRP Neighborhood Specialists e-mailed and hand delivered flyers and surveys to neighborhood offices throughout the city. Neighborhood association staff also picked up flyers and surveys for distribution at the monthly meetings as well as by various block club networks and at local businesses.

4. NRP Neighborhood Specialists hand delivered meeting flyers and surveys to Libraries, coffee shops and businesses serving people of color and New American populations.
5. Meeting announcements and survey availability were posted to various e-groups and blogs.
6. The NRP Link and various neighborhood newspapers published notices about the meetings and availability of the survey.
7. Flyers and surveys were delivered to the Minneapolis Public Housing Hi-Rise Representative Council staff.
8. Flyers and notices were e-mailed to the NRP e-mail list and mailed to the NRP Link network.
9. The City Community Engagement Coordinator provided copies of the Community Engagement Report to City elected officials, County Commissioners representing city neighborhoods, NRP Policy Board members, Department Heads and the DFD Citizen Participation Director. They were also sent to City Advisory Boards and Commissions, Independent Boards and Community Organizations.
10. The City and NRP web-sites had links to the Community Engagement Reports, the meeting schedule, an on-line survey and a pdf copy of the survey.

The Results

A total of 345 people attended the 8 Community Engagement meetings in spite of the bitterly cold weather. Highlights of the Community Engagement Report were presented by Steven Bosacker, City Coordinator, David Fey, CPED Senior Policy Manager and Clara Perrin, Community Engagement Coordinator at the various meetings. Meeting attendees were split into smaller focus groups to provide feedback and comments on the following questions:

What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions? What is working now? What needs to change?

In addition to discussion in the groups, comment cards with the same question were distributed for people to fill out if they wanted to share additional information. One hundred thirty (130) comment cards were returned.

The survey was available in hard copy, on-line printable document format (pdfs) and on-line live at www.surveymonkey.com. A total of 847 surveys were completed. The surveys that were submitted in hard copy or pdfs were entered to Survey Monkey by NRP staff and the Community Engagement Coordinator. Clara Perrin, Community Engagement Coordinator, received 5 comments from various on-line forums or blogs, 3 from City Boards, Commissions or Departments, 6 from individual residents, and 21 from neighborhood organizations.

Once the information from the surveys, comment cards, small group discussions and written comments submitted to the Community Engagement Coordinator was compiled, the data was provided to the NRP Policy Board and the City Coordinators office.

The informal NRP/City Community Engagement Committee analyzed the data to assess the major themes that emerged from the meetings, comment cards and surveys.

The Five Major Themes that emerged from the Community Engagement meetings, comment cards and surveys were:

1) Citizens want and deserve a culture of respect. Perhaps above all else, participants want to be part of a city that they can trust and that respects and values the voice of its residents. Elected officials and city staff need to become more effective listeners. Inquiries and input deserve responses. Neighborhoods want to be asked – not told – what is best for them.

Some stated that the community engagement review process – with its short notice that occurred over the holidays, its presenters limiting time for discussion, and its meetings being dominated by being talked at – was an example of what residents did not want from their city. Residents further reported being told by department staff, “I don’t have time to talk to you”. While there were also reports of helpful staff who appeared immensely committed to their jobs, it was noted that there needs to be a culture of respect, that community engagement shouldn’t be limited to just one department, and that it should be built into all that we do.

Supporting comments:

- *“Knowledge of those at the grassroots must be respected.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Follow through and accountability need to be improved.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Community Engagement is not limited to input on decisions-ideas come from community/neighborhood groups as well.” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“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.” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“Engagement is conversation—neighborhoods really want empowerment.” (Burroughs, Small Group)*
- *“City government wants input from the community but not influence.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“The community engagement report is another tool for keeping citizens away.” Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“Great chance to pour out our concerns, now the city needs to listen.” (Minnehaha Methodist, Individual)*

- *“Top down view of CE needs to be more bottom up.” (Minnehaha Methodist, Small Group)*
- *“Do you really want to hear our input?” (Minnehaha Methodist, Small Group)*
- *“You will get more participation if people feel their voice is important/being used in decision making process.” (Marcy Holmes, Small Group)*
- *“People don’t feel their input is going to make a difference.” (Firefighters, Small Group)*
- *“Listen, currently don’t listen- will our input make any difference?” (North Regional Library, Small Group)*
- *“Try listening to the community. Let the neighborhoods make decisions themselves for projects in their neighborhoods. Embrace neighborhood empowerment.” (North Regional Library, Small Group)*
- *“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?” (Mailed in individual comment)*
- *“Engage communities long before impending decisions. If neighborhood input is discounted or ignored why would neighborhoods trust and support the city government process?” (North Regional Library, Individual)*

2) Feed back and two-way communication are essential. Participants report receiving volumes of information – but they’re not certain that the city either receives or takes into account the information provided by residents. Residents report being asked for input when decisions are all but finalized. Information that is provided sometimes seems to go into a black hole. A feedback loop seems to be non-existent; residents want to understand what happened and why. These comments are consistent with responses to question #I-19 on the written survey, where the vast majority of the respondents agreed that “I can accept the outcome or final decision if I am given the opportunity to participate in the decision making process”.

It was also noted that the city needs to broaden its methods of outreach, involvement and communication. Some neighborhood residents added that this is a tough task and that they struggle with getting residents to participate at the neighborhood level too.

Supporting comments:

- *“Explanations need to be provided on decisions.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“CE recommendations need to be communicated in clear way so anyone can understand.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Consistent channels of communication are needed.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Consistent channels of communication and decisions with follow through and accountability.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Neighborhood decisions weight and influence is not understood.” (Burroughs, Small Group)*
- *“Come to the neighborhood before final decisions are made.” (Burroughs, Small Group)*

- *“Neighborhoods and residents must be genuinely invited to the table.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“You get more participation if people feel their voice is important/being used in decision making.” (Marcy Holmes, Small Group)*
- *“Report back to community how input was used – rationale for decision.” (Marcy Holmes, Small Group)*
- *“Info from city needs to focus more on quality rather than quantity.” (Mill City, Small Group)*
- *“Change/improve the way in which the City recruits or communicates with residents to involve the diverse residents of neighborhoods.” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“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.” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“Better 2-way communication. Keep funds coming to allow neighborhoods to continue outreach etc.” (Burroughs, Individual)*
- *“More communication with community and NRP and community organizations.” (Plaza Verde, Individual)*
- *“The city should use existing networks to communicate with citizens.” (Plaza Verde, Individual)*
- *“There should be less use of jargon and acronyms and more basic “101” explaining about the different organizations and their duties/goals.” (Firefighters, Individual)*

3) Small is beautiful and effective. Truly meaningful community engagement occurs when issues are specific, relevant and close to home. Minneapolis is a city of neighborhoods. Neighborhood organizations make a difference. At the community or city level, efforts become more generalized and neighborhood knowledge gets lost in the shuffle. The city must do a better job of making it easier for residents to participate by going to the neighborhood more frequently. It should also value neighborhoods’ “insider information”.

Similarly, the city should limit its use of jargon and acronyms and work to “keep it real”. People would rather work to improve their park, school, library or main street than go to a meeting to hear a report about reports – even if it is about community engagement reports. “Transparency” may be the city’s current buzzword, but in the course of eight community meetings and over 600 comments, the term came up three times.

Supporting comments:

- *“Small neighborhood groups are working; regional model does not engage more volunteers.” (Burroughs, Small Group)*
- *“Neighborhood groups are working but not supported enough.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“Continued support for and recognition of small, neighborhood-scale organizations.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*

- *“Block Clubs and neighborhood organizations are best at “door-to-door” level outreach.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“Neighborhood solutions for neighborhood problems.” (Minnehaha, Small Group)*
- *“Geographical-based/neighborhood based groups that are multi-jurisdictional – NRP made neighborhoods important.” (Firefighters, Small Group)*
- *“Smaller groups allow us to have a voice at the local level.” (Firefighters, Small Group)*
- *“Keep small structure (neighborhoods) and improve.” (Firefighters, Small Group)*
- *“Keep the small neighborhood system.” (Firefighters, Small Group)*
- *“Recognize the added value of neighborhood association actions/initiatives.” (North Regional Library, Small Group)*
- *“CE Report ignores neighborhood role.” (Mill City, Small Group)*
- *“Geographic-based small is a virtue; multijurisdictional is a virtue.” (Mill City, Small Group)*
- *“Realize that the closer an organization is to its residents, the better understanding it has of the needs of the community. It is grassroots and neighborhood organizations that translate and actively address these needs through programs and events specifically tailored to their residents.” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“The city can strengthen neighborhoods and citizen engagement by further empowering neighborhood organizations to get neighbors involved. Neighbors know the issues and should drive the city’s focus. Small neighborhoods (size of today’s or smaller) allow the most people to way in and influence solutions.” (Burroughs, Individual)*
- *“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.” (Burroughs, Individual)*
- *“Empower and fund neighborhoods.” (Plaza Verde, Individual)*
- *“Neighborhood associations are working-doing a great job involving, empowering and engaging community members. Without these, I fear community engagement will diminish significantly.” (Minnehaha Methodist, Individual)*
- *“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 and support those activities.” (Minnehaha Methodist, Individual)*

4) The city’s community engagement policy and practices must be improved.

Residents want community engagement processes that are timely, clear, and appropriate to their neighborhoods. There is some concern that, under the guise of “being consistent”, the city will create a “one-size-fits-all” process that doesn’t serve anyone particularly well, least of all New American and economically challenged communities. Residents want more “front-end” engagement, allowing for more voices to be heard. They believe that the extra time would be well-spent as long as the process is clearly communicated from the start.

There were also strong and often repeated comments that the city should build on what is already present. The perception by the reviewers of the report is that the report calls for a “new” but undefined system. Many residents have read the report and displayed considerable knowledge of its content during the Community Engagement meetings. Many of the comments were concerned that the achievements of the existing system, or the acknowledgement that a system presently exists, have been ignored and slighted. There were many comments that the accomplishments of neighborhoods need to be recognized.

Supporting comments:

- *“City must promote and empower neighborhoods.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Follow through and accountability needs to be improved.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Neighborhoods want to be proactive rather than react to a crisis.” (Burroughs, Small Group)*
- *“Concern about starting from scratch. Why not improve rather than completely new? “ (Burroughs, Small Group)*
- *“Communications, accountability, and follow through needs to improve.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“Neighborhoods and citizens need power to make decisions that matter.” (Mill City, Small Group)*
- *“Make a commitment!!!” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“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) is working together to create the city’s future.” (Burroughs, Individual)*
- *“The city needs to understand if you want people to be empowered and engaged, they need to have real authority, final decision power and money.” (Plaza Verde, Individual)*
- *“Give us the power to make some of those decisions. NRP is working now. The city’s attitude toward neighborhood organizations needs to change.” (Plaza Verde, Individual)*
- *“Reduce city level bureaucracy so that participating citizens can be heard. The community level NRP end of the system is the part that works.” (Firefighters, Individual)*
- *“Try listening to the community. Let the neighborhoods make decisions themselves for projects in their neighborhoods. Embrace neighborhood empowerment.” (North Regional Library, Individual)*
- *“Quit wasting our time on these “Community Engagement” meetings. This is what, Round V? Build on what we have and applaud the good work of neighborhoods.” (Mill City, Individual)*

5) Engagement will not happen without funding for neighborhoods. People are busy. Organizing takes time. Time costs money. Unless the city is willing to fund neighborhood organizations and their priorities, discussions about two-way communication and respect are ultimately meaningless.

The vast majority of participants indicated that they support neighborhood organizations, even though they often acknowledged their faults. Further, they support funding for neighborhood organizations through NRP. NRP works. It should be continued.

Both the city and neighborhood organizations must strive to increase their capacity to truly serve all residents. The infrastructure that supports community engagement and neighborhood organizations is critical. Community engagement is an investment that returns many times the value of the dollars invested.

Supporting comments:

- *“Neighborhoods must be funded to ensure communication with it’s many diverse constituencies.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“City must fund neighborhood groups.” (Van Dusen, Small Group)*
- *“Fund and strengthen existing neighborhood organizations.” (Burroughs, Small Group)*
- *“Provide money to make decisions real.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“Empower and fund neighborhoods.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“City should re-evaluate commitment to NRP and continue funding it.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“Things may need to be tweaked and run better. But that is no reason to end neighborhood programs.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“Empower and fund neighborhoods.” (Plaza Verde, Small Group)*
- *“NRP is user-friendly.” (Minnehaha, Small Group)*
- *“Recognize, support and fund NRP.” (Marcy Holmes, Small Group)*
- *“NRP has been very effective at bringing people together via the neighborhoods.” (Firefighters, Small Group)*
- *“Keep NRP and have a “regional group” so they can cooperate for the area as well .” (Firefighters, Small Group)*
- *“NRP funding for neighborhood associations is empowering.” (North Regional Library, Small Group)*
- *“NRP gives the residents voice.” (North Regional Library, Small Group)*
- *“Continue to support NRP. NRP works.” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“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.” (Van Dusen, Individual)*
- *“Continue NRP and keep neighborhoods strong!” (Plaza Verde, Individual)*
- *“NRP works, give it opportunity and support to evolve, grow, improve-their process was engaging/user friendly. “ (Minnehaha Methodist, Individual)*
- *“NRP has been a very positive vector for communication in this city.” (Firefighters, Individual)*

- *“Engagement without empowerment won’t happen and empowerment without funding is death.” (Burroughs, Small Group)*

Next Steps

After completing its assessment and description of the major themes from the data collection effort, the members of the informal NRP/City Committee Engagement Committee met to consider and propose next steps to the policy-making bodies.

The Committee identified the next steps as:

- 1) provide the results from the meetings, comment cards and survey to the people that have participated so far in this process, and
- 2) determine what an improved system that builds on existing structures and processes could look like.

A "work group" needs to be established to develop the model. The Committee felt that the Work Group should be an officially recognized partnership between the City and the NRP Policy Board, with a membership that includes City and other elected officials, city and NRP staff, board/commission members, neighborhood people, generic residents etc. The Work Group should be sized so that it can effectively accomplish its mission of drafting a Community Engagement model for community discussion.

Continuation of NRP and incorporating a major role for neighborhood organizations in planning and decision-making were clearly important themes to the residents who participated in the Community Engagement Report review process. Much of what NRP and the neighborhoods do falls within promoting and encouraging community involvement (i.e. determining what role stakeholders have in shaping issues and prioritizing them before there is a pending decision).

Before any future effort is made to develop a more effective Community Engagement system, however, it would be appropriate to determine the level of support for the continuation of NRP and the neighborhood groups from elected officials from both an authority and a financial resource perspective. Exact numbers may not be needed but commitment is. **Both the future Community Engagement Process and the role of NRP in helping to shape an improved process will be affected by the answer to this question.** Funding isn't just about doing things, its a powerful symbol that citizenship and participation in community is valued.

The charge of the Work Group should be to:

1. Define and clarify Community Involvement, Community Engagement, and Community Empowerment

- a. What groups or people are involved in setting policy, developing plans, and making recommendations on pending decisions now? Who should be involved in the future?
 - b. When is involvement appropriate? When should engagement occur? When should decision-making authority be delegated?
 - c. What are the rules now? What rules should be used?
 - d. Who has the authority now? Who should have the authority?
 - e. What resources need to be dedicated for the improved process to be successful?
 - f. How do the discussions and recommendations of the Work Group address the five major themes identified from the Community Engagement feedback sessions?
2. Model the "feedback behavior" that was articulated as desirable at the Community Engagement meetings.
- a. At what points should the Work Group ask for feedback from stakeholders?
 - b. In what form do they ask for feedback and on what?
 - c. How will the Work Group communicate and inform neighborhoods and others of its activities?

The Committee members noted that the City and others may have to make financial resource decisions before an improved Community Engagement/ Community Involvement process is fully developed and accepted for implementation.

Appendix

12-22-03 Ways and Means Minneapolis Community Engagement and Community Building Project - Requests that the City Coordinator coordinate a Community Engagement and Community Building Project and report back in two cycles on progress

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2003-meetings/20031229/wm20031229agenda.asp#TopOfPage>

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2003-meetings/20031229/docs/43-Community-Engagement-and-Comm-Bldg.pdf>

2-9-04 City Coordinator reports to Ways and Means requesting that the Communications Department be designated to prepare a report on Community Engagement

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2003-meetings/20031229/docs/43-Community-Engagement-and-Comm-Bldg.pdf>

2-13-04 City Council designates the City's Communications Department to coordinate Community Engagement efforts.

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2004-meetings/20040213/20040213-proceedings.pdf>

6-27-05 NRP Policy Board adopts a resolution establishing an NRP Future Funding Task Force

<http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBMinutes2005/PBM20050627.pdf>

9-26-05 Preliminary Report submitted by the NRP Future Funding Task Force

<http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBMinutes2005/PBM20050926.pdf>

2-06-06 Jack Kryst provides an update to the City Council on NRP Technical Advisory Group

http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2006-meetings/20060210/Docs/NRP_PolicyBoard_CR.pdf

2-24-06 - City Council adopts resolution 2006-094 (referenced above) directing the City Coordinator to plan a process to identify: a) the specific, ongoing community-engagement needs of local-government entities and community stakeholders; b) the level and type of government and stakeholder organizational capacity required to support such community engagement; and c) the resources required to support that level and type of organizational capacity on an ongoing basis.

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2006-meetings/20060224/20060224-proceedings.pdf>

4-24-06 NRP Future Funding Task Force presents it's findings to the NRP Policy Board Members and Alternates.

<http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBMinutes2006/PBM20060424.pdf>

5-12-06 Update by the City Coordinator on 2-24-06 resolution and recommendation to study Community Engagement “Best Practices” and report back to council.

<http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBMinutes2006/PBM20060424.pdf>

11-13-06 City Coordinator submits report of the staff work group in response to City Council direction of 5/12/06

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2006-meetings/20061117/WMagenda20061113X.asp#TopOfPage>

11-20-06 Policy Board receives Community Engagement Report

http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBAgenda2006/StaffReps/SR20061120_51.pdf

11-20-06 NRP Policy Board directs NRP staff to organize and conduct a series of public meetings about the CE report.

<http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBAgenda2006/PBA20061120.html>

1-22-06 NRP Policy Board directs staff to report on results and survey at 2-26-06 meeting.

<http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBAgenda2007/PBA20070122.html>

2-26-06 NRP Policy Board receives results from CE meetings and survey

<http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBAgenda2007/PBA20070226.html>

[Download Small Group Session Comments from Community Engagement Meetings](#)
[Download Written Comment Card Summary from Community Engagement Meetings](#)
[Download Public Comment Summary on the Community Engagement Report](#)
[Download Community Engagement Survey Results](#)

Attachments

Attachment A-Small Group Session Comments from Community Engagement Meetings
Attachment B-Written Comment Card Summary from Community Engagement Meetings
Attachment C-Public Comment Summary on the Community Engagement Report
Attachment D-Minneapolis Neighborhoods' Response to Community Engagement Report
Attachment E-Community Engagement Survey
Attachment F-Community Engagement Survey Results
Attachment G-Community Engagement Survey Results Analyzed

Small Group Session Comments from Community Engagement Meetings

Van Dusen Community Engagement Discussion

(1/29/07)

Main Points

Knowledge of those at the grassroots must be respected
All neighborhoods need to be held in equal regard
Respecting & empowering and recognizing grassroots knowledge
Neighborhoods must be funded to ensure communication with it's many diverse constituency.
Recognize neighborhood groups value in increasing two way - top down & down to up communication
Show me the money

What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions?

Actively seek participation from all citizens
Hard to find info on WWW
Gov't is representational
Explanations needed to be provided on decisions
Great inconsistency on willingness/ability to work with models within city that other depts could use.
Restorative Justice good example of how it works
1. Decisions already made
2. Departments involved but not engaged with citizens
3. Squeaky wheel - who really has grease
4. Inconsistent & confusing vs. consistent
5. Community group staff is important (cat herders)
Begin to reach out to youth
Squeaky wheel - not fair that bombarding city council is what seems to get results
Public hearing is sham - decision has already been made - e.g. DT Transportation (didn't have real input)
Discouraging when take time & effort - find that meeting is sham
NRP funds disappeared - now we hear there is a budget surplus
N'hoods don't have power - e.g. disregard n'hood on land use recommendations
Board takes time formulating letters but decisions seem to be made - ongoing problem but no feedback.
CLPC got heard on development. It was fun to be heard
Inconsistent process - hard to know what process will be from dept. to dept or board
Two-way communication about process e.g. talk to communities about decision making process
Requests w/input coupled w/barriers - e.g. impractical schedules / meeting times
What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions?
Listen to two-way communication between City & neighborhood orgs.

City must promote and empower neighborhoods (really listen)
More communication should occur between departments within City
Info needs to be available through schools, park, and community centers
Like it when city staff come to neighborhood - two way
Condense (focus) info
City must fund neighborhood groups
City website (some of the website) is good but it needs improvement
City staff need to know n'hoods & boundaries - e.g. notices only go to one n'hood
No real power in our decisions - if city says "no" nothing can be done. There should be a process for impacting decisions.
City does not utilize TV channel the way they could -wasted time e.g. radio broadcast, broadcast schedules, re: broadcast council meeting
CE recommendations need to be communicated in clear way so anyone can understand
What can the city do to help?
 Information spread through school
 Meeting places
 Continue NRP funding & empowering neighborhoods
 Create and maintain an open online forum
 Use a variety of communication tools & languages
 Dialogue with and in community
 Improve responsiveness of City staff to phone calls
CE model process - standardize approaches but is still vague - no "two-way" arrows between stakeholders - city

What is working now?

Neighborhood communications to their residents is working (especially if they have paid staff)
Communication between neighborhoods & NRP has been very good. If it goes away we need a replacement
NRP
Info dissemination
Geographic based activities - Decentralized format
Tech innovation

What needs to change?

Follow through and accountability need to be improved
City needs to be more aware of what neighborhoods are doing
Gov't doesn't necessarily need to be convener - community natural place for input
Consistent channels of communications are needed
Consistency in decisions is needed
More opportunities should be available for this kind of engagement
More effort must be made to connect with diverse constituencies
Better P.R. but in plain language.
Consistent channels of communication and decisions with follow through and accountability

Need to know why - even if city disregards - i.e. communicate back to n'hood why decision was made the way it was.
Reemphasize importance of groups
Attitude toward neighborhoods & group assets
Recognize NRP and neighborhoods. They should be highlighted/valued
Increase two-way communication

Burroughs School Community Engagement Discussion

(1/29/07)

Main Points

Neighborhoods with ability to determine uses of funds are critical to CE
Neighborhoods want to give input to the city before decisions are made
Residents want to participate in setting the agenda
Neighborhoods want to be proactive rather than react to a crisis
Communication is the key. The best way to accomplish this is to use the already existing neighborhood organizations which represent thousands of citizens
Concern about starting from scratch. Why not improve rather than completely new?
Who is empowering who? Are people empowering city govt. to do their will? Or is it the reverse?
What is a stakeholder and who defines stakeholder?
What will be the outcome of participation?
Explain Board's accountability - not understood and how "firm" are decisions
Neighborhood decisions weight and influence is not understood
Has there been true CE in developing CE report or system?
Is adopting model binding and will it be followed? How will compliance be measured?
City leaders set the tone & expectations for city staff
Engagement is conversation --- Neighborhoods really want empowerment
Investment of volunteers is on different hours than City Hall - Board meetings, festivals, community communication

What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions?

CE applied by department heads has to be consistent and a priority.
Make certain community involvement is not mistaken for community engagement.
Simplify structure for CE
Contact person refers to someone else & on & on. Story changes & no longer same story
Contact person drops issue - Need to use a "Feedback Model". Person should tell what happened to topic i.e. "referred to", "denied", etc.
City Hall should embrace a "Listening Model", neighborhood groups & "engagement"
Consistent contacts are needed in each department --- long term relationships should be established between City and neighborhoods.
Things the City should not decide on & leave up to "smaller" jurisdictions, communities, neighborhood groups, etc. should be identified
Define roles of City vs. neighborhood
Create a working, living model, not a handbook

What is working now?

Small neighborhood groups are working; regional model does not engage more volunteers. Keep it small.

Neighborhoods have made changes on a neighborhood level. POP was too big to fairly disseminate dollars.

What needs to change?

Apply resources to a new effort to capture CE definitions from ALL stakeholders

Flow chart is needed of people bringing issues to the City - neighborhoods initiate & City respond

Use more visual communication to provide consistent feel

CE has to begin earlier in any process.

Fund and strengthen existing neighborhood organizations (e.g. Cedar Riverside) as a means of communication

Come to the neighborhood before final decisions are made

Expand the report flow chart to better define which decisions neighborhood organizations should be involved in and which need to be handled by our elected officials (e.g. budget & major personnel = no; development & re-zoning, libraries = yes (these directly affect neighborhood orgs. and residents)

Create a monthly information package to notify neighborhood orgs. about changes, issues & updates (e.g. safety, schools, libraries, etc.). Neighborhood organizations 's get barraged with e-mails and information.

Plaza Verde Community Engagement Discussion

(1/30/07)

Main Points

City government wants input from the community but not influence. "Real influence involves financial involvement in communities determined by the people"

"We take pride & ownership in our communities when we see what has been initiated & worked on by us"

Real influence, democracy & community engagement have bigger arrows coming from bottom than top. "By the people, for the people".

Communications, accountability, and follow through needs to improve

Empower and fund neighborhoods

Neighborhood groups are working but not supported enough

City government wants input from community but not influence"

Pay attention to what we say through the neigh. assoc.

NRP is still critically needed esp. in certain n'hoods. Recognize & support successful efforts by n'hoods to improve community.

City has not properly acknowledged end of NRP as a problem.

Purpose of current CE input process is unclear.

What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions?

Provide a specific place to go to address/resolve problems (311, Office of Getting Things Done)

Leaders need to listen to grass roots in decision-making

Funding pool should be available based on specific criteria, projects, outcomes.

City support (\$) for n'hood events and initiatives it takes credit for as city efforts (I.e. Powderhorn fireworks display)

Understand if they want people to be empowered, be engaged, they have to have real authority - resources to organize & do projects & programs

Provide money to make decisions real.

Clearer information about how people can get involved in city processes.

Better communication about what city resources are available. (loan programs, fix up funds)

Continued support for and recognition of small, neighborhood-scale organizations

What is working now?

Cost effective for city to keep NRP. Tons of free citizen labor from NRP volunteers.

Saves hundreds of thousands of dollars of planning money.

Comm. Engagement builds community & civic engagement

Problems are addressed by those closest to problem. Strength comes from those closest to problem.

Green Institute

Community engagement driven cameras, shot spotter, greenway. BOTTOMS UP not down

People have fought way through

Election system is working

City does chose who it funds

Council member attendance at N'hood meetings

Council member Schiff's & others newsletter

Existing working relationships between city staff, council, & community

Council members attend mtg's

Funding neighborhood orgs

NRP process

City support for neighborhood initiatives

Small, local scale of neighborhood orgs. "Small is beautiful"

Helping communities/neighborhoods get stuff done

Arrows going both ways - they listen now.

City boards & commissions work for the people who are on them (not well known)

Is public television working

What needs to change?

If you want to influence community give them money

City should re-evaluate commitment to NRP and continue funding it. Especially for neighborhoods in dire need.

Top Heavy

Things may need to be tweaked & run better. But no reason to end neighborhood programs.

Who is engaging who: the community is engaging city not vice versa

Are City electors empowering city or is the city empowering city electors?

Does not seem MPLS is following true democratic model.

The community engagement report is another tool keeping citizens away

Neighborhood organizations need money for capacity, need to be supported in work

TIF money < get back to original money it's warped into something else

Community organizations are a tool we use to push things through even though powers downtown (contractors) don't feel the same way.

NRP works "bottom up" not "top down". Report focus is top down

How reports & surveys are initiated does not work.

City needs to keep supporting successful & effective community organizations & projects.

N'hoods & residents must be genuinely invited to the table.

See "regular faces" at these meetings. Those who most need to be involved are not engaged or included.

Block Clubs and N'hood orgs are best at "door to door" level outreach - this is not properly acknowledged or valued by city.

Need a clear flow chart - "weight: of activities on pg. 6 not explained - who has the most say, and where?

Where is this meeting & this process leading?

Community capacity building at the grassroots level should be better acknowledged & utilized by city

The energy put into this report and these meetings could have been "put to work" to start fixing the system now instead of just talking about it - need an overall vision.

Report feels "top-down"

Language such as "impending decision" is ominous

Need flow chart to understand process - MPLS gov't harder to understand than Washington D.C.

Roles of overlapping jurisdictions is very confusing e.g. Library Board, Met Council.

No clear system for building requirements, zoning, codes, etc.

Culture of respect w/city staff

Every 5-10 yrs have to start over again w/community engagement discussion

Clearer engagement processes are needed

Feedback about outcomes is important (Will the survey really impact anything?)

Did our effort result in something?

Last minute decision making & rushed big projects

Just because someone says they represent a community, doesn't mean they do. Check w/neigh.

Not enough interest in boards or commission

Know difference between public & private relationships. Don't take it personally.

People are just expressing frustration.

Communication & engagement w/immigrant pop.

General disconnect of citizens

Vision statement needed.

Why community voice is important
Benefits of relationships!!
Return to Democracy!!
Have to go downtown, middle of day, not time specific or time changes
Systemize between dept's & community engagement on on-going basis.
Not explaining process, unclear
Certain developers have learned to work the system
Empower & fund neighborhoods
Funds to address issues (blighted housing) others
When individuals have issues, city has not made it easy to communicate & affect change,
improve conditions (safety, traffic, others)
Takes a long time to get things done
Lack of follow through

Minnehaha United Methodist Church Community Engagement Discussion

(1/30/07)

What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions?

What about money for neighborhoods?
Tell us about the meetings earlier and use a variety of sources--
Online
TV/Radio
Welcome Wagon
Library/Parks
Do you really want to hear our input?
Recognize that residents have busy lives
Elected reps must be responsive
Use neighborhoods to help get word out
Centralized city info
Customized to neighborhoods?
Better defined rules for engagement

What is working now?

Initiatives from neighbors
Neighborhood solutions for neighborhood problems
NRP does CE process because it is a non-city community empowerment program
NRP & participation works. What is the future of this process?
NRP is user-friendly.
Keep community decision-making decentralized. Build on NRP model - use the NRP
public input process for other city decision-making.

What needs to change?

Report premises questioned
Top-down view of CE needs to be more Bottom-up
Report assumes CE not working

Separate NRP funding discussion from City-CE process & funding
City encouraged to support NRP extension past 2009 in the MN Leg.
Metrics/yardstick needed to assess Community Engagement

Example metrics:

Satisfaction w/results

Surprised (or not) w/actions/results

Random sampling/scientific measurement is essential in measuring results

Present some data – clearly.

More CE (i.e. engagement of residents) is needed in formulating the CE process

Do a better job of getting the word out

Want to know that our input is valued & has some effect

Neighborhood organization's & elected officials are listening & responsive

Streamline processes but not lose our power to have a n'hood solution w/city resource

Not enough dialogue on what's broken that needs to be fixed

How do / can n'hoods help the city engage residents

If the city is looking for feedback - allow time for stakeholders to respond; people need time to be made aware, time to process and talk, and time to respond. More time on front end.

More citizen participation & input on funding decisions

Need to know funding priorities

Clarify process & next steps and share with neighborhoods

Clarify roles & responsibilities of partners

Define accountability for all partners

Web site of city hard to use - not well designed.

How can Neighborhood help the city participate in the Neighborhood discussion of issues & making decisions?

Engage residents early in discussion - before proposed decision.

Share power

Make it easier to hear what the Neighborhood says

Continue to fund NRP - define for what purpose

Use community papers to disseminate info

What is broken that needs to be fixed?

Lack of dialog?

How can engagement happen without an impending decision - e.g. problem to solve

Call Council representative

Participate in neighborhood organizations

Organize Block Clubs

Use 311

Develop a Handbook on how to address issues

Neighborhood groups working on larger issues

Funnel info up from the Neighborhood level

City departments need to listen & respond to citizen engagement

Empowerment different from engagement

Example = master planning process where citizens empowered

City doesn't enforce laws that are on the books. What can citizens do?

Marcy Holmes Community Engagement Discussion

(1/31/07)

What can city do to help us better participate in decisions?

Buck stops??? Here?

Clear lines of responsibility

Like idea of "President's Council" from neighborhood associations to cross-pollinate

Build a huge spirit of inclusiveness that people believe

Invite everyone to the table

City council meetings should travel to neighborhoods

Complete budgets need to be transparent, clearer to people & in timely manner

Go beyond "written word" to build consensus

You'll get more participation if people feel their voice is important / being used in decision -making

Offer leadership in getting communities more engaged w/their schools.

More interaction / cooperation between neighborhoods

City priorities/longterm goals should be:

The understanding of importance of education as crime prevention

Priorities and goals should underpin all decision-making (core values)

Make rest of state proud & supportive of our city

People are too busy / how to engage?

What is working now?

Parts of NRP

Neighborhood organizations

- more participation at neighborhood level vs district level

City should support - neighborhood newspapers, neighborhood websites, newspaper websites

311 system

Local police precinct cooperation

Engaged city council members / good relationships

Council members' e-newsletters/updates

Third Ward Summit w/residents & city officials

NRP

Neighborhood orgs.

Odemtotu pf meogjbprjppds

Neighborhood initiated proposals for change

Community input and control over how resources are spent thru NRP provides important information for what's really going on

Community orgs. Provide greater access to information about what's going on.

What needs to change?

Lack of accountability / follow-through, esp. Housing Inspections with outstanding orders

Quit using "lack of funding" as excuse for inaction

Develop more/new leaders - not same old folks
 More "proselytizing" / outreach
 Other methods
 Govt. 101 primer needed / start @ grade school level & new immigrant communities
 Everything takes so LONG...
 Why are all the boards separate (MPRB, Library, Bd of ED, etc.)
 Some public hearings don't function well

- Better technology
- Bigger room

 Differentiate jurisdictions / what each does
 Help with Independent zoning from an attorney
 Money to hire outside person to help with process issues
 Meetings that affect you should happen in the neighborhoods & at night
 Ombudsman for zoning & planning issues
 Grievance procedure for planning actions (& other boards & commissions)
 Recognize, support & fund NRP
 City leaders & staff have respect for community members
 Review policies that bypass community input like administrative review
 Council members recognition of NRP
 Council members that are "home grown" from the neighborhood and community
 Property info on website
 If city asks for input needs to be valued not ignored
 311 (weekend hours)
 Earlier public release of agendas & reports
 Use of consent calendar (Planning, zoning board of Adj.)
 Boards & Commissions should be fair, balanced, transparent
 Civility - respect
 Better communication & notice of citywide issues to citizens
 Need non-geographic groups/boards
 City should provide resources to make neighborhood orgs. work
 Inform of budget/money ahead of time
 Review successes and failures of past

- Apply principle of measurable outcomes to develop best practices from previous system

 Concern that we are "throwing the baby out with the bathwater"
 Don't start all over - improve what we've got
 Would like to have full picture over entire decision process

- communicate input up front
- less information over time
- current process went to quickly from planning to reaction
- communication broke down - not consistent

 Have info ahead of time so community is able to plan - not react
 Need to understand the whole process to effectively influence decisions
 How is input used in decision process
 Hearings are not public engagement
 Front end is defining - community and communication. Engagement is formality

- no way to revisit

more of a show than authentic conversation
no chance to shift direction
Arrogance from elected officials
City controls questions, expertise.
Charge is framed to what they want the answer to be
Citizen involvement to define scope of work
Community needs to understand regulations and questions when community input is required (i.e. zoning)
Give citizens knowledge of the tools they have to work with
Broker priorities by having control over resources
Public hearings should be held at times when people can attend. Other opportunities should be available for input other than at times of decision
Improve ways that information is disseminated
Be clear about the critical question for decision
Speak to that issue
Report back to community how input was used - rationale for decision
Explain limits of power - both city and community
Clear expectations
Assure that there are as many ways / options as possible to participate
Encourage everyone to participate.
Everyone must be included in the decision process.

Somali Subgroup

Very important to be involved
Information is a key
Immigrants attend meetings and want elected officials to come to their meetings
Regular meetings are needed with officials and organizations that can assist with meeting community needs.
Direct relationships are needed/cut out the middlemen
City needs to establish a relationship with SWIM to help better solve problems
Direct contacts are needed with decision makers
More information and education is needed to help address community needs

Firefighters Hall & Museum Community Engagement Discussion

(1/31/07)

What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions?

Go to a meeting to be informed
Communicate with the community
Get to the place where the community is asked by the "City" prior to making a decision
Find new ways to include people in the process
Encourage and support greater collaboration between groups
Involve us early in planning vs. okaying a decision
Get young people involved
Put a face on the City at a community level - ombudsman

What is working now?

Geographical-based/neighborhood based groups that are multi-jurisdictional
NRP vulcanized the City - made neighborhoods important
Neighborhoods tend to know what they "don't" want vs what they "do"
Small groups (neighborhoods) making decisions and moving them up
Smaller groups allow us to have a voice at the local level
Neighborhoods can use their resources to improve property values
People engage because they know resources (\$) are available
NRP very effective at bringing people together via the n'hoods, bringing resources together to make things happen
Neighborhoods know the business of neighborhoods better than the City - give us more resources to get things done
Funding stream creates independence

What needs to change?

311

311 - depth of info is lacking, not complete (for example no info available on appropriate signage, parking of vehicles - which kind)

City can ignore decisions made by neighborhoods (how can we expect consistency when this can happen) / capriciousness

Hard to make "dirty things" transparent

If NRP as it is now goes away what does the city plan to put in it's place? Since NRP has been so effective, what could they propose that would be as effective?

Where is the acknowledgement - from the Council - that NRP has accomplished so much Empowerment - not just engagement

Suspicious about why we are talking about this again, why there is no talk in the report about budgets. How does the city define "community"?

Power is being taken away

Greater transparency -

The report has a model that shows how it could be improved, but where is the description about how it works now?

More "why" when things don't happen or things happen counter to n'hood requests

Why not let the City contract w/NRP to do the CE? (this could eliminate confusion, duplication, inefficiencies - the City currently contracts w/other entities w/in city departments) and this should be pushed out through the n'hoods

Does this suggest disinvestments in neighborhoods that will result in blight?

What about issues like eminent domain, aggressive developers, old houses being torn down to accommodate larger interests including the City

What will you do w/this?

Will we be asked again to discuss this - we are not convinced our engagement on these issues has been sufficient

Jurisdictional repetition

How are overlaps between City, County, State, etc. being addressed?

Continue to fund neighborhood org. (costs up/funding down - why?)

CMs - better communication budgets

Communication + 2 way = engagement

Designated neighborhood coverage for city departments (other boards)

- CPED Inspections
- MPRB Regulatory Services

Not only impending decision but which decisions

Decisions on completed plan not on plan

Priority setting < not just yes or no

Instead of creating -- fitting into existing boxes

Economic part - incentive to get ideas

Simplify language - lose the acronyms

Will the powers that be look at the information?

Will we hold them accountable?

Keep small structure (neighborhoods) & Improve

Keep NRP & have a "regional" group so they can cooperate for the area as well.

Larger area projects. Add an intermediate level

Neighborhoods - bring in more voices. Not limited to the "usual suspects"

Neighborhood organizations are not a buffer to prevent participation.

City wants more engagement but keeps cutting funding

Joint office/community area for shared resources

Tasks for levels better delegated

Need specific structure to avoid "turf wars".

Structure driven by task

Groups driven by "passion" for the issue

Encourage use of 311 and One Stop liaison. Avoid acronyms! But get them to WORK

Make the city user friendly

Proactive with city rather than reactive

Keep small neighborhood system

- Work up from there
- Not a buffer

City business held out in the communities vs downtown

People don't feel their input is going to make a difference

How can people plug into existing groups to influence decision-making?

What we don't need is putting \$\$ into neighborhood organizations that become self-serving entities unto themselves.

What do neighborhoods have to show for their effort?

Lack of community participation/participants don't represent diversity

Block clubs have weakened from the past where they use to be feeders to neighborhood organizations.

Network with your immediate neighbors

People feel decisions have already been made prior to neighborhood meetings

Lack of connection with the youth

Not having community schools takes away from community cohesiveness

North Regional Library Community Engagement Discussion

(2/1/07)

What can the City do to help you participate in decisions?

- 1) Continue and expand use of block Clubs to cultivate community engagement
- 2) Provide money for home loans at reasonable rates
- 3) Reduce crime - respond to 911 calls

Not sure how individuals participate now.

Block club leaders / don't know each other. Crisis brings them together

Newspaper articles

City emails

Support for citizen patrols

Who at the city is the decision maker?

Where is the chain of command for getting info to neighborhood?

As resident feels meetings are chaotic no structure over long period of time.

City needs to communicate meetings/decisions better to neighborhoods

City needs to state purpose for mtg.

More people in neighborhood need to be communicated with.

Community websites/blogs.

Recognize that not everyone is on-line.

Need city at block club crisis meetings and on the citizen's schedules

City depts. don't communicate with each other.

Block clubs need assistance.

Strengthen blocks, give funding for funding micro businesses

Organize around other things besides crime.

Block Club leaders, who give permission, would like their names listed online.

Community newsletters need info from city.

Bridge gaps between youth, ethnicities, online use, poverty issues

Need more info about City's Budget and where the dollars are going, and what the resources are!

Joint meetings with other block clubs

City is selective about what they hear from residents - they create the agenda.

City meetings are too formal - take too long!

One-way communication at podium

Process - communicate - results

Why are we repeating history with this process?

Do we remember lessons learned

Find the green dream book and have City Council members read it. (special emphasis)

Communications that don't just go through the neighborhood associations / low tech

Funding for communications and to have a "seat at the table"

Find out why Park Board did not participate in C.E. Report. (special emphasis)

Use the Mayor's website as e-mail system

Neighborhoods should be part of planning not just a rubber stamp.

Hearings & Boards, Commissions Mtgs - different times after 4 p.m.

More "authority" to N.A.

City website of issues organized by neighborhood (over lay with NRP website)
 Good Community Engagement involved in determining the C.E. Plan
 Diversity By Language (special emphasis)
 E-mail/Blog method of posting
 Input/views, on issues with acknowledgement, for people who can't make meetings
 Empowerment + C.E. + \$
 Recognize the added value of N.A. Actions/Initiatives
 Create motivation & value to participate by integrating city info into current
 neighborhood activities.
 Have city staff & officials attend neighborhood meetings.
 Condense info into topic abstract & timeline.
 Inform Early! & Often!
 Create in the resident a value of participation as officials being good & effective
 Early engagement / on-going participation
 Fund the infrastructure needed to support engagement

- Childcare
- Interpreters
- Evening meetings
- Variety of communications

 More direct engagement w/community from city departments /employees -
 Early! & Often!! Notification (i.e. - City Inspection)
 LISTEN - currently don't listen - will our input make any difference
 Believe majority people don't know which neighborhood they live in - City do better job
 of letting people know which neighborhood they are in.
 Council meeting should have NRP decision makers present.
 Do we actually have say? We (N'hoods) are not even on the chart
 Funding > continued for NRP
 N'hood need the means (\$) to make change (Highest priority of group)
 Residents want a say in how funding is use
 Have some council meetings in n'hoods and stagger so people who work can attend.
 Get council meetings, library board & park board meetings (all boards) on dish TV &
 radio (more than just cable) in 4 major languages
 All public documents in libraries and parks (at city expense, not library or park expense)

What is working now?

Crime rate is going up
 311 is not working / (is a waste of \$ & time)
 NRP coming to McKinley mtgs.
 CCPSAFE - Harrison - Tim Hammett
 Police advisory Cmte.
 NRP funding for neighborhood associations is empowering.
 City is interested in Econ. Dev. in North MPLS.
 NRP gives the residents voice
 Leader perspective: Most N'hood staff and boards work well. These are a lot of alliances
 and joint efforts between n'hood's and other organizations
 Front desk city staff great but those with title not so good

Garbage collection
911 usually
311 usually, for something and many
NRP!!
Stacy rocks!
People know how to org. block clubs
Cultural organizations are working
3rd Ward Care Task Force
More Council Members working with neighbors in their own neighborhood.
Neighborhood Associations*
Council Member Barb Johnson who comes to meetings
My block club - CCP-Safe Crime rate working

What needs to change?

639 foreclosures Near North/ hsg
City must respond to 911 calls
Standing cmtes of city hall
Some mtgs in communities
More parking
City advisory/boards are not user friendly
Create policy that requires city staff to directly (in person) engage with neighborhood groups. (Look to St. Paul)
Engagement should be automatic Not only when we scream!
All city topics/reports should have summaries
When budget is the deciding factor --- Tell us!
DON'T make decisions before engagement!
Market NRP
Community Dev. Corp. More informative than CPED
Provide \$ and technical support for communication system thru n'hood org.
N'hood organization needs to be in decision-making schematic
City should be open to receiving input and ideas versus us waiting for them
More engagement of people of color >> NRP good @ homeowner but need more for rental
General communication
Because city understaffed (i.e. inspections example: I don't have time to talk to you.)
A lot of trouble with inspections over the summer.
Being unable to get a hold of an Inspector
CCP/SAFE b/c don't have the necessary staff
Police Dept. > response
Not well organized
Morale low
Poor Coverage
We have some council member that d/n talk to NRP staff and NRP staff d/n talk to council member with n'hood caught in middle and lose.
Need to have a good plan for communication
Don't throw out all the neighborhood work

Investigations on lesser crimes are not happening i.e. burglaries, etc. are ignored.
City staff living outside city don't have a clue what it is like to live here.
Libraries closed
Safety Center on West Broadway needs to happen.
Perception - needs to change that cops are the solution
- Need jobs, econ dev. etc.
- More than just cops.
Code of silence by elected officials and upper city leadership needs to end > Oh you don't need to know
City has gone into a spin/marketing campaign needs to end > City is focusing on looks not substance.
Less emphasis on cops and safety
More on kid safety (over crowded schools and closed libraries)
Closing of n'hood libraries frustrating
Next NRP > More for youth
Equity for North Minneapolis
What can the City do?
Get rid of the word City > I want to know who to contact
> Get rid of 311 b/c the don't put a face on for city and no accountability

Mill City Museum Community Engagement Discussion

(2/5/07)

Why are we here?

Concern about future of neighborhood groups and their role in decision-making
CE Report ignores neighborhood role
Safety & future of W. Bank School of Music

What can the City do to help you better participate in decisions?

Put a process in place that actually engages the community (20 minutes of input is insufficient) and use the neighborhood structure that exists.
Respect and honor neighborhood work on and decisions about issues like zoning and neighborhood planning.
Examine the need for all of the commissions and eliminate redundancies - get down to essentials.
Help organize inter-neighborhood meetings (info sharing mtgs to benefit neighborhoods)
Support neighborhood orgs. Including financial support
Reject broad district model because doesn't engage as many volunteers.
2nd layer of bureaucracy is a negative
Strengthen investment in NRP process - and continue it for 20 years.
Strengthen CE
Don't continue NRP past 20 yrs.- Should be self supporting

What is working now?

People know who to call (out to neighborhoods and in to city)
Neighborhoods are geographically based >strong, clear

Some city council members do come out to neigh. and invite engagement
NRP funding is working.

311

NRP validates residents concerns for their neighborhood.

Avoids top down

Voice is heard through current system.

Report places citizens in reactive mode. NRP allows neighborhood initiatives to move up the ladder.

The neighborhood initiative is working

Neighborhood is quicker to notice and respond to changes in population and other local issues and respond

Geographic-based-small is a virtue; multijurisdictional is a virtue

Implementation funding has leveraged millions of dollars and volunteer hours and has successfully addressed local problems.

What needs to change?

Slow down process on notification - need longer lead-time

City should come out to find out how to help orgs. Be more inclusive.

Info from city - needs to focus more on quality rather than quantity.

Criteria (CDBG) for funding doesn't meet the needs in the neighborhoods.

Need more education & outreach around elections.

Council member should inform about priorities and upcoming decisions so the neighborhood can discuss and weigh in.

Organize and lobby

City's website needs overhaul -

1) Search function is ridiculous

2) Connection to neighborhood organization's needs to be stronger

3) Better explanation of how neighborhood organizations relate to City Council

Problem of Representation

Need a better process to inform citizens of neighborhood

The CE Report is an example of the problem

Don't see empowerment and ownership by neighborhoods in the city's analysis -

Neighborhood accountability

Neighborhoods and citizens need power to make decisions that matter.

An example: an imbalance of power. Decision of the Neighborhood can be summarily dismissed.

Neighborhood organizations need to be validated that they matter

One funding source of non target Neighborhoods.

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 2nd 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 dove-tail 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 1st 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?

**Community Engagement Report - Written Public Comment -
February 8, 2007**

Community Organizations (* Neighborhood Organizations that signed a resolution in response to the CE Report)

1. *Whittier Alliance – Marian Biehn, Executive Director and Paula Horan, Board Chair
2. *Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association – Kim Ferencik, Board President
3. *Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association – Deborah Girard, MHNA President
4. Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association - Melissa Bean, Executive Director
5. *Hawthorne Area Community Council – Tait Danielson Castillo, Executive Director and Terra B Cole, Board Chair
6. *Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc – Susan Braun, Executive Director
7. *Stevens Square Community Organization – Julie Filapek, Executive Director
8. *Kingfield Neighborhood Association – Sarah Linnes-Robinson, Executive Director
9. Armatage Neighborhood Association, Noah Schuchman, President
10. Kenny Neighborhood Association – Ruth Olson
11. Victory neighborhood Association – John Trombley, Chair
12. *Harrison Neighborhood Association, Mitch Thompson, Board President, Larry Hiscock, Director/Lead organizer
13. East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association,
14. Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association - Joseph Ring, President and Florence Littman, Co-Chair.
15. *Lyndale Neighborhood Association – Mark Hinds, Executive Director
16. *Citizens for a Loring Park Community – John Van Heel, President
17. Shingle Creek Neighborhood Association – Lynn Hauger, Chair
18. *Longfellow Community Council – Ralph Wayman, Board President
19. Lind-Bohanon Neighborhood Association – Ann Moe, Chair
20. *Southeast Como Improvement Association – Wendy Menken, President
21. Nokomis East Neighborhood Association – Rita Ulrich, Executive Director
22. Standish Ericsson Neighborhood Association – Todd Fierst, Board President

Residents

1. Sheryl Senkiw, Lind-Bohanon
2. Kathy P Teberg, Prospect Park
3. James L. Hruby, Whittier
4. David Fields, Elliot Park
5. Stephen Ficker, Prospect Park
6. Wizard Marks, Central

Online Forums (informal)

1. January 7, *Minneapolis Issues Forum*: “Community Engagement” (2 comments)
2. January 20-24, *Minneapolis Issues Forum*: “Minneapolis Community Engagement” (10 comments)
3. January 30-Feb 2, *Minneapolis Issues Forum*: “Discussion of Community Engagement Report” (12 comments)
4. February 01 – 07, *The Northeast Beat Blog*: “Community engagement meetings tonight” - (6 comments)

City Boards and Commissions / City departments

1. *Ethical Practices Board*, Susan Trammell for Patricia Kovel-Jarboe, Chair
2. *Housing Board of Appeals*, Lauren Maker, member
3. *Lauren Maker*, Grants & Special Projects

Clara Perrin
Community Engagement Coordinator
301 M City Hall
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Ms. Perrin:

Enclosed please find a resolution approved by our organization's board of directors on ____ [date] ____, in response to the publication of the draft *Community Engagement Report*.

Our organization, along with others that have signed on to the resolution, believe that Minneapolis is best served by a vigorous grassroots democracy, and that genuine community engagement requires a sustained effort involving outreach, education, community building, leadership development, and collective action on the neighborhood level to engage people in their communities.

For many years, Minneapolis neighborhood-based organizations have been successfully engaging people in policy, planning and community development activities on the neighborhood level in partnership with the City. Minneapolis has been immensely strengthened by the passionate, dedicated, and active engagement of its citizenry through neighborhood-based organizations, which have developed the human infrastructure necessary to:

1. Involve thousands of people in volunteer activities, planning, policy-making and resource allocation decision on behalf of local communities.
2. Work collectively towards a comprehensive vision for a specific geographic area of the city, balancing the multiple interests and issues that come together in a specific community.
3. Provide people with a vehicle and voice to realize their collective neighborhood vision.
4. Build community by fostering relationships among diverse groups of neighbors.
5. Undertake the research and prep work necessary to educate people to make informed decisions about local and city-wide planning and policy issues.
6. Through the strategic allocation of Neighborhood Revitalization Program funds, leverage millions of dollars in public and private investment in Minneapolis.
7. Establish Minneapolis' national reputation as a model of effective citizen participation.

For many years, Minneapolis neighborhood organizations have been an integral part of Minneapolis' process of community engagement, and have successfully undertaken the important work necessary to involve people in the communities where they live. This history is not appropriately acknowledged in the *Community Engagement Report* as drafted, not have neighborhood organizations been appropriately involved in the discussion that led to its drafting. We welcome the opportunity now to work with the City to build upon the strong foundation of community engagement in Minneapolis, to strengthen our practices, and to be accountable for their results,

Cc: City Coordinator, Steven Bosacker
CPED Senior Policy Manager, David Fey
Mayor R.T. Rybak
Minneapolis City Council Members
Hennepin County Board Commissioners
Minneapolis Park Board Commissioners
Minneapolis Library Board Trustees

Minneapolis Neighborhoods' Response to the *Community Engagement Report*

We the undersigned neighborhoods present the following recommendations:

Recommendations

1. We reject the premise of the Community Engagement report that “community engagement always involves an impending City government decision” (*Community Engagement Report p.4*) Rather, we think the premise for a successful community engagement system should be based on a grassroots effort to involve people in their communities on an ongoing basis through outreach and recruitment, volunteerism, community building, public education, leadership development, and community action.
2. In order to improve the current community engagement system there needs to be a broad-based community discussion on the importance of community engagement to Minneapolis' future. This discussion needs to include: Minneapolis residents, neighborhood associations, the City Council, community organizations, and the business community. We do not believe that the report, public meetings, and survey constitute a community discussion.
 - a. The discussion should answer the following questions:
 - How can the current community engagement system be built on and improved?
 - How does Minneapolis ensure it has a healthy community engagement system that engages Minneapolis' diverse residents and stakeholders as active partners in the creation and implementation of Minneapolis' future over the long-term?
 - What is the value of community engagement to Minneapolis?
 - What role should residents, neighborhood organizations, other community organizations, and City government have in a community engagement system?
 - What are the resources necessary to realize a successful community engagement system and from where and how should those resources be allocated?
 - How should accountability for community engagement be measured?
3. A successful community engagement system should be based on the following principles. These principles are based on those developed by the City Council during a 2003 study session.

- a. Minneapolis' residents should be active participants in shaping Minneapolis' future.
- b. Decision processes must be clear, open and predictable, and involve citizens at each stage of the policy and planning development process.
- c. Roles and authority must be clear and well understood
- d. Communication must be two-way and consistent
- e. Representative participation is needed at all levels
- f. Genuine engagement (not just input) is essential
- g. Local and Citywide plans should be related and consistent
- h. Community engagement is best accomplished by a decentralized system that engages people in the communities and neighborhoods where they live, when they are available
- i. Community engagement requires focused and sustained outreach, education, recruitment, community building, and leadership development

Neighborhood organizations, City departments, and elected officials need to be held accountable for their ability to engage constituents in the decision-making processes. Consistent goals and benchmarks must be identified through an open process and adopted by all organizations, departments and officials involved in community engagement, and resource allocations should be tied to these accountability measures.

Minneapolis Community Engagement Survey

I. To what extent do you Agree or Disagree with the following statements: (Leave the response blank if you “Don’t Know” or have “No Opinion”)

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
1. It is important to me that I be involved in government decision-making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I feel that I can influence decisions made by the City Government.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I understand the current organizational structure of the City.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The City's decision-making processes are clear and open.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The City's decision-making processes are predictable and consistent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. City elected officials are held accountable for their decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. City staff are held accountable for their decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Communication about City decision-making is open and two way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The materials and information that the City provides me on pending issues is clear, complete and understandable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Anyone who wants to participate has access to the decision-making processes of the City.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. A community engagement system should seek out and facilitate the involvement of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. The City should seek input from participants in designing how they participate in the City's decision-making processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. The community engagement system should provide participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. The community engagement system should communicate to participants how their input affected the decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. When I offer input, receiving information on the final decision is important to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. The elected officials of the City usually consider my opinion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. The City is truly interested in my involvement involved in the City decision-making processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. More voices in a decision-making process result in better decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I can accept the outcome or final decision if I was given the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I feel I can best influence City decisions by being involved with:				
a. City elected officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. City staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My neighborhood association/organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. My local business association/organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. My ethnic or cultural organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. My faith-based group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
g. My issue-based advocacy group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. My block club	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. My apartment or homeowners group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. My community development organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. My input to the following groups is valued and influences their decisions:

a. City elected officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. City staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My neighborhood association/organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. My local business association/organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. My ethnic or cultural organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. My faith-based group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. My issue-based advocacy group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. My block club	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. My apartment or homeowners group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. My community development organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

II. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with these observations about the City's current community engagement system. (Leave the response blank if you "Don't Know" or have "No Opinion")

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
1. City decision-making processes are complex, confusing, inaccessible and hard to predict.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. There is a lot of confusion about who has the authority to make different types of City decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. City communication is not accessible or consistent, and tends to be "one-way" communication of information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. It is important to ensure representative participation in community engagement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. All participants in the community engagement system must be held accountable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Genuine engagement (not just input) is essential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Planning by government jurisdictions and at the neighborhood-level should be coordinated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Change must occur to build trust and participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

III. Please respond to the next questions by checking all of the options that apply to you.

1. What sources do you use to get information about City decisions? (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mass media (TV/radio/major newspaper) | <input type="checkbox"/> Faith based groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Block Clubs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood newsletters | <input type="checkbox"/> City employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Employer Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City website | <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone system/311 | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic and cultural organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government sponsored cable TV | <input type="checkbox"/> Elected officials | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please describe) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends and neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic e-mail | |

2. What methods do you use to participate in or give your opinion to City decision-makers? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend public hearings | <input type="checkbox"/> Organize or participate in protests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serve on a City Board or Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> Call the media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in blogs or e-mail groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Send letters to the editor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter to neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Join a group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organize a block | <input type="checkbox"/> Get together with my neighbors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend meetings dealing with specific issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the City website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend ethnic or cultural community meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Contact elected officials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend regularly scheduled neighborhood meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend a City Council Committee meeting | |

IV. The following recommendations were proposed in the City Community Engagement report. How involved do you think the community should be in:

	Very Involved	Somewhat Involved	Not Involved
1. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all official advisory groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Establishing predictable, base-line community engagement expectations for each type of decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Developing accessible, consistent, two-way communication systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

V. The City will need to clarify which groups it relies on to engage the community in different decisions. For each type of City decision described below, please tell us which groups should engage the community. (Check as many as you want.)

<p>Citywide Decisions: Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the City's five-year goals and strategic plans • Developing Citywide plans and zoning codes • Developing Citywide projects (i.e. wireless internet access project or the 311 phone information system) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> City boards and commissions <input type="checkbox"/> City appointed short-term advisory committees <input type="checkbox"/> block, neighborhood or business organizations <input type="checkbox"/> cultural, ethnic or issue-specific organizations
<p>Community Decisions: Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing small-area, multi-neighborhood or corridor plans and projects (i.e. Midtown Exchange or 35W access project) • Approving community-specific zoning and regulations • Approving community-specific policies or programs (i.e. those affecting youth, seniors or immigrants) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> City boards and commissions <input type="checkbox"/> City appointed short-term advisory committees <input type="checkbox"/> block, neighborhood or business organizations <input type="checkbox"/> cultural, ethnic or issue-specific organizations
<p>Local Decisions: Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site-specific zoning and development approvals • Neighborhood planning activities, including development and approval of Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) action plans • Approval of block or neighborhood projects or program funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> City boards and commissions <input type="checkbox"/> City appointed short-term advisory committees <input type="checkbox"/> block, neighborhood or business organizations <input type="checkbox"/> cultural, ethnic or issue-specific organizations

VI. Please tell us a little about yourself by responding to the following questions. (These questions are optional)

Which neighborhood do you live in? _____

How long have you lived (to the nearest year) in Minneapolis? _____ yrs.

How long have you lived in your present neighborhood? _____ yrs.

What is your gender? _____

What is your current age in years? _____ yrs

What is your ethnicity? _____

In the last year I have attended at least one:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. City sponsored public hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Block club meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Meeting with City staff | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Apartment or homeowners group meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Neighborhood association/organization meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Community development organization meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Local business association/organization meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> j. Issue-based advocacy group meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. Ethnic or cultural organization meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f. Faith-based group meeting | |

Thank you for taking the time to help us improve the community engagement system in Minneapolis! The results of this survey will be posted online at www.nrp.org.



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NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM
105 5TH AVE S STE 425
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55401-9821

Attention: Barb Lickness



IMPORTANT SURVEY ABOUT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The City of Minneapolis recently summarized and reported several years of observations and recommendations about how the City engages residents and other community members in the City's decision-making processes. You can find this report – and information about upcoming public meetings – at: www.nrp.org or www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/20061121CE_Report.asp or by calling Clara Perrin, Community Engagement Coordinator, at (612) 673-3163.



The Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and the City of Minneapolis want to know what you think about this important topic. Your responses to the following questions will help us improve the City's community engagement processes. Please mail your completed survey to the NRP at the return address above, or fax it to (612) 673-5138. We need to receive your response by no later than February 8, 2007.

Thank you for your interest and assistance.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Miller
Director, NRP

Steven Bosacker
City Coordinator

This survey can be made available in alternative languages by calling Alina Schroeder at (612) 673-3220 and is available on-line as a pdf online at: www.nrp.org. Meetings Are Accessible: Requests for accommodations are welcome. Please call (612) 673-5140 or email to nrp@nrp.org

		average score	agree strongly (total responses)	agree somewhat (total responses)	disagree somewhat (total responses)	disagree strongly (total responses)	no response	Total Responses
	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:							
13	The community engagement system should provide participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.	1.85	702	90	9	1	45	847
15	When I offer input receiving information on the final decision is important to me.	1.83	674	120	5	1	47	847
14	The community engagement system should communicate to participants how their input affected the decision.	1.81	656	136	5	1	49	847
11	A community engagement system should seek out and facilitate the involvement of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision.	1.74	646	133	12	10	46	847
12	The City should seek input from participants in designing how they participate in the City's decision-making processes.	1.71	603	183	15	2	44	847
1	It is important to me that I be involved in government decision-making.	1.60	555	258	21	3	10	847
18	More voices in a decision-making process result in better decisions.	1.31	397	313	64	9	64	847
19	I can accept the outcome or final decision if I was given the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.	1.24	351	355	65	11	65	847
2	I feel that I can influence decisions made by the City Government.	0.38	145	406	186	98	12	847
3	I understand the current organizational structure of the City.	0.23	105	398	223	99	22	847
16	The elected officials of the City usually consider my opinion.	-0.28	38	275	290	132	112	847
10	Anyone who wants to participate has access to the decision-making processes of the City.	-0.31	64	260	286	172	65	847
9	The materials and information that the City provides me on pending issues is clear complete and understandable.	-0.40	31	273	305	171	67	847
7	City staff are held accountable for their decisions.	-0.47	37	226	304	172	108	847
17	The City is truly interested in my involvement involved in the City decision-making processes.	-0.47	31	245	289	186	96	847
6	City elected officials are held accountable for their decisions.	-0.47	43	243	323	190	48	847
5	The City's decision-making processes are predictable and consistent.	-0.66	17	201	355	195	79	847
8	Communication about City decision-making is open and two way.	-0.76	22	176	348	229	72	847
4	The City's decision-making processes are clear and open.	-0.76	16	188	374	229	40	847

Notes:

- Each "Agree strongly" response is scored as 2, each "agree somewhat" is scored as 1
- Each "Disagree strongly" response is scored as -2, each "disagree somewhat" is scored as -1

	average	agree strongly	agree somewhat	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly	no response	Total Responses
20 I feel I can best influence City decisions by being involved with:							
c. My neighborhood association/organization	1.32	438	242	58	27	82	847
a. City elected officials	1.07	307	326	71	38	105	847
g. My issue-based advocacy group	0.79	162	314	93	34	244	847
b. City staff	0.58	181	328	145	65	128	847
d. My local business association/organization	0.67	172	260	118	44	253	847
j. My community development organization	0.63	162	228	89	62	306	847
h. My block club	0.52	171	246	145	60	225	847
k. Other	0.71	37	37	17	11	745	847
i. My apartment or homeowners group	0.06	101	151	155	84	356	847
e. My ethnic or cultural organization	0.01	96	159	182	83	327	847
f. My faith-based group	-0.09	98	158	181	110	300	847
21 My input to the following groups is valued and influences their decisions:							
a. City elected officials	0.11	84	311	196	103	153	847
b. City staff	-0.27	45	238	242	132	190	847
c. My neighborhood association/organization	1.25	383	246	54	33	131	847
d. My local business association/organization	0.57	130	219	98	49	351	847
e. My ethnic or cultural organization	0.36	94	170	97	56	430	847
f. My faith-based group	0.42	117	182	83	71	394	847
g. My issue-based advocacy group	0.83	165	231	73	35	343	847
h. My block club	0.81	185	212	72	46	332	847
i. My apartment or homeowners group	0.30	87	152	87	61	460	847
j. My community development organization	0.51	121	185	86	56	399	847
k. Other	0.38	22	41	15	17	752	847

	Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with these observations about the City's current community engagement system	average	agree strongly	agree somewhat	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly	no response	Total Responses
7	Planning by government jurisdictions and at the neighborhood-level should be coordinated.	1.70	567	155	20	2	103	847
4	It is important to ensure representative participation in community engagement.	1.68	575	145	21	7	99	847
6	Genuine engagement (not just input) is essential.	1.63	557	166	34	3	87	847
5	All participants in the community engagement system must be held accountable.	1.57	499	200	32	5	111	847
8	Change must occur to build trust and participation.	1.53	471	206	31	9	130	847
2	There is a lot of confusion about who has the authority to make different types of City decisions.	1.15	332	306	89	15	105	847
1	City decision-making processes are complex confusing inaccessible and hard to predict.	1.05	267	372	88	18	102	847
3	City communication is not accessible or consistent and tends to be 'one-way' communication of information.	1.04	294	304	110	16	123	847

Notes:

- Each "Agree strongly" response is scored as 2, each "agree somewhat" is scored as 1
- Each "Disagree strongly" response is scored as -2, each "disagree somewhat" is scored as -1
- average score is calculated on weighted scores (2 for each "strongly agree", etc.)
- Ranking is based on total scores of strongly agree or somewhat agree minus total score of strongly disagree or somewhat disagree

What sources do you use to get information about City decisions? Please check all that apply.	total responses
Neighborhood organizations	645
Mass media (TV/radio/major newspaper)	635
Neighborhood newsletters	629
Friends and neighbors	489
Elected officials	364
City website	353
US Mail	330
Electronic e-mail	254
City employees	215
Block Clubs	211
Family	197
Government sponsored cable TV	157
Telephone system/311	132
Faith based groups	109
Ethnic and cultural organizations	72
Other (please specify)	57
Employer Groups	43

What methods do you use to participate in or give your opinion to City decision-makers?	total responses
Attend meetings dealing with specific issues	597
Contact elected officials	519
Attend public hearings	460
Attend regularly scheduled neighborhood meetings	450
Get together with my neighbors	380
Go to the City website	319
Participate in blogs or e-mail groups	212
Send letters to the editor	192
Organize a block	185
Attend a City Council Committee meeting	185
Organize or participate in protests	177
Join a group	165
Write a letter to neighbors	155
Attend ethnic or cultural community meetings	110
Call the media	107
Serve on a City Board or Commission	67
Other (please specify)	53

The following recommendations were proposed in the City Engagement report. How involved do you think the community should be in:	Very involved	Somewhat involved	Not involved	no response	Total responses:
Planning by government jurisdictions and at the neighborhood-level should be coordinated.	423	290	35	99	847
It is important to ensure representative participation in community engagement.	502	215	19	111	847
Genuine engagement (not just input) is essential.	585	145	13	104	847



The following recommendations were proposed in the City Engagement report. How involved do you think the community should be in:

Citywide Decisions such as:

- Setting the City's five-year goals and strategic plans
- Developing Citywide plans and zoning codes
- Developing Citywide projects (i.e. wireless internet access project or the 311 phone information system)

City boards and commissions	604
City appointed short-term advisory committees	479
block neighborhood or business organizations	566
cultural ethnic or issue-specific organizations	304

Community Decisions such as:

- Developing small-area multi-neighborhood or corridor plans and projects (i.e. Midtown Exchange or 35W access project)
- Approving community-specific zoning and regulations
- Approving community-specific policies or programs (i.e. those affecting youth seniors or immigrants)

City boards and commissions	478
City appointed short-term advisory committees	458
block neighborhood or business organizations	638
cultural ethnic or issue-specific organizations	390

Local Decisions such as:

- Site-specific zoning and development approvals
- Neighborhood planning activities including development and approval of Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) action plans
- Approval of block or neighborhood projects or program funding

City boards and commissions	394
City appointed short-term advisory committees	335
block neighborhood or business organizations	658
cultural ethnic or issue-specific organizations	333

Section VI

What neighborhood do you live in?

Longfellow	54	Sheridan	4
Armatage	47	Waite Park	4
Lind-Bohanon	32	Wenonah	4
Shingle Creek	27	Near North Willard-Hay	4
Nokomis East	26	Bottineau	3
Victory	26	Bryant	3
Whittier	25	CARAG	3
Bryn Mawr	21	Columbia Park	3
Audubon Park	20	Fuller Tangletown	3
Webber-Camden	19	Fulton	3
McKinley	18	St. Anthony East	3
Elliot Park	17	St. Anthony West	3
Lyndale	17	Hale Page Diamond	3
Corcoran	16	Cedar-Isles-Dean	2
North Loop	15	East Calhoun	2
Prospect Park	15	Keewaydin	2
Standish Ericsson	15	Marcy-Holmes	2
Stevens Square	15	Nicollet Island/East Bank	2
East Phillips	14	Northeast	2
Cleveland	13	Field Regina Northrop	2
Ventura Village	13	Camden	1
Cedar-Riverside	12	Cooper	1
Powderhorn Park	12	Hiawatha	1
Folwell	11	Howe	1
Seward	11	Kenwood	1
Windom Park	10	Logan Park	1
Kenny	9	Marshall Terrace	1
Kingfield	9	Morris Park	1
Linden Hills	9	North Minneapolis	1
Midtown Phillips	9	Phillips	1
Bancroft	8	Uptown	1
Central	8	Weenonah	1
Harrison	8	West Calhoun	1
Jordan	8	Willard Hay	1
Hawthorne	7	Downtown East West	1
Phillips West	7		
Southeast Como	7	no answer:	126
Holland	6		
Loring Park	6		
Lowry Hill	6		
Windom	6		
East Harriet	5		
East Isles	5		
Lynnhurst	5		

In the last year, I have attended at least one:

City sponsored public hearing	407
Meeting with City staff	325
Neighborhood association/organization mee	610
Local business association/organization meeting	175
Ethnic or cultural organization meeting	151
Faith-based group meeting	223
Block club meeting	347
Apartment or homeowners group meeting	118
Community development organization meeting	267
Issue-based advocacy group meeting	311
Other (please specify)	78

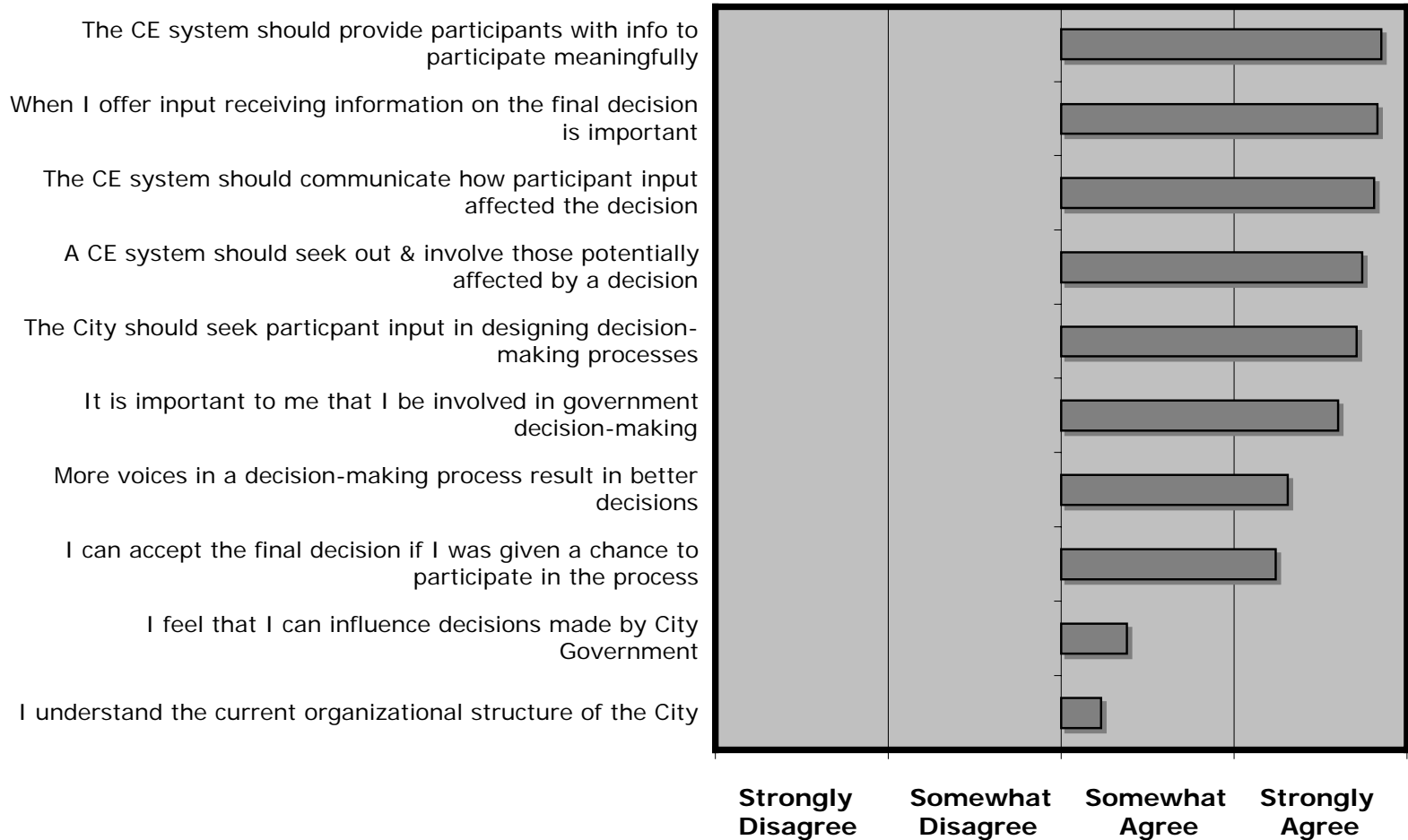
How long have you lived in...	Mpls	present n'hood?
less than three years	70	136
3-5 years	44	68
6-9 years	83	90
10-19 years	182	154
20-29 years	121	83
30-39 years	96	51
40-49 years	66	27
50 + years	74	23

<u>What is your age?</u>	
19-Oct	4
20-29	63
30-39	157
40-49	160
50 +	328

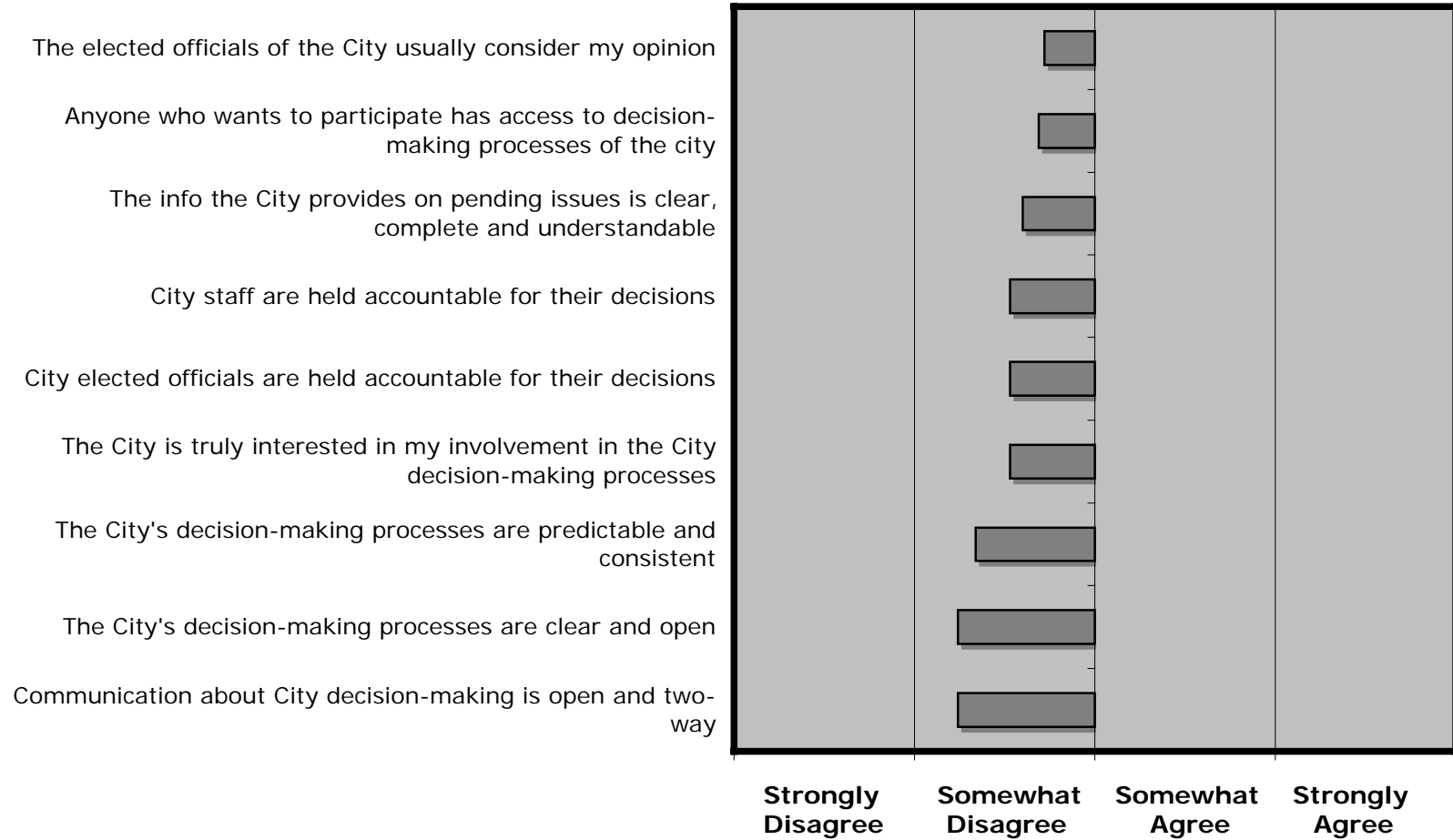
<u>What is your gender?</u>	
Female	316
Male	401
	717

<u>What is your race/ethnicity?</u>		
American Indian	2	0.3%
Asian	5	0.8%
bi racial/mixed	10	1.5%
Black/African American	23	3.5%
East African	3	0.5%
Latino/Hispanic	6	0.9%
Native American	3	0.5%
unspecified/other	26	4.0%
White/European/Caucasian	580	88.1%
	658	

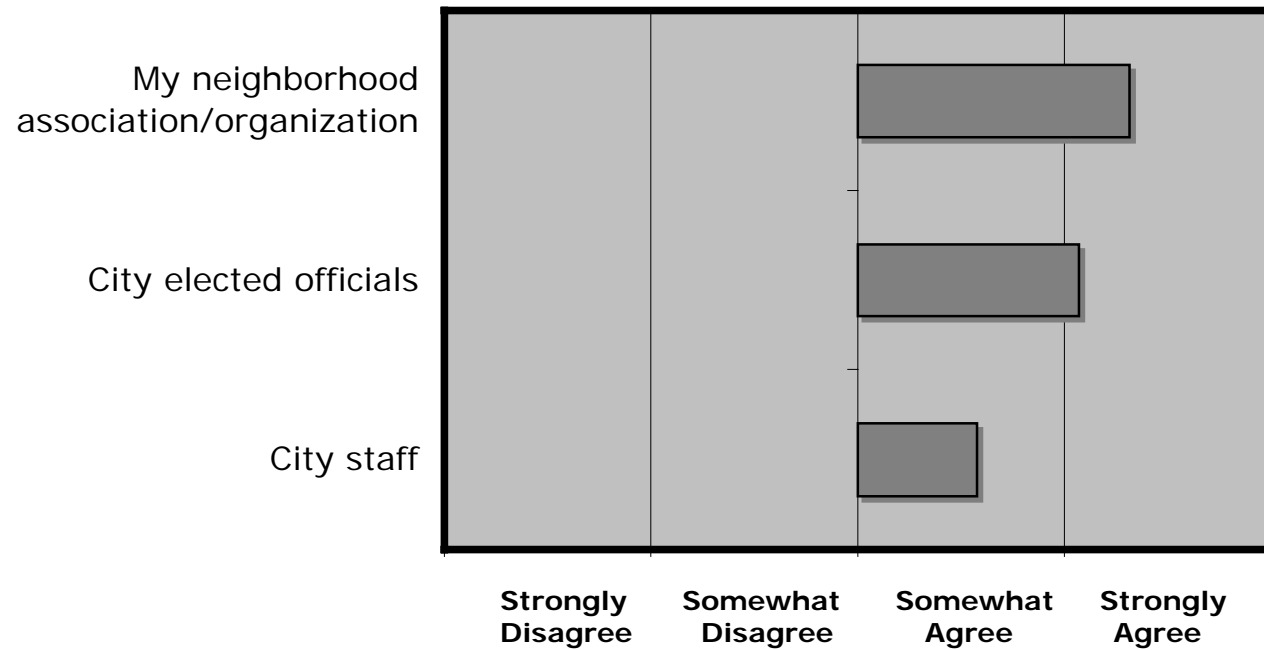
To What Extent Do You Agree or Disagree With the Following Statements:



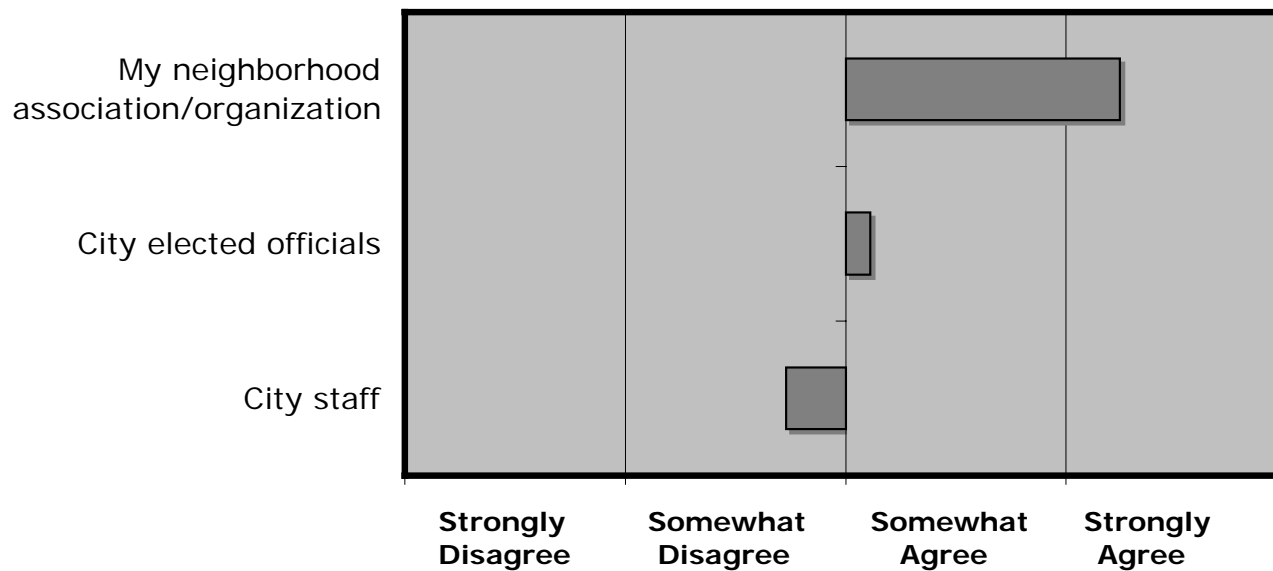
To What Extent Do You Agree or Disagree With the Following Statements:



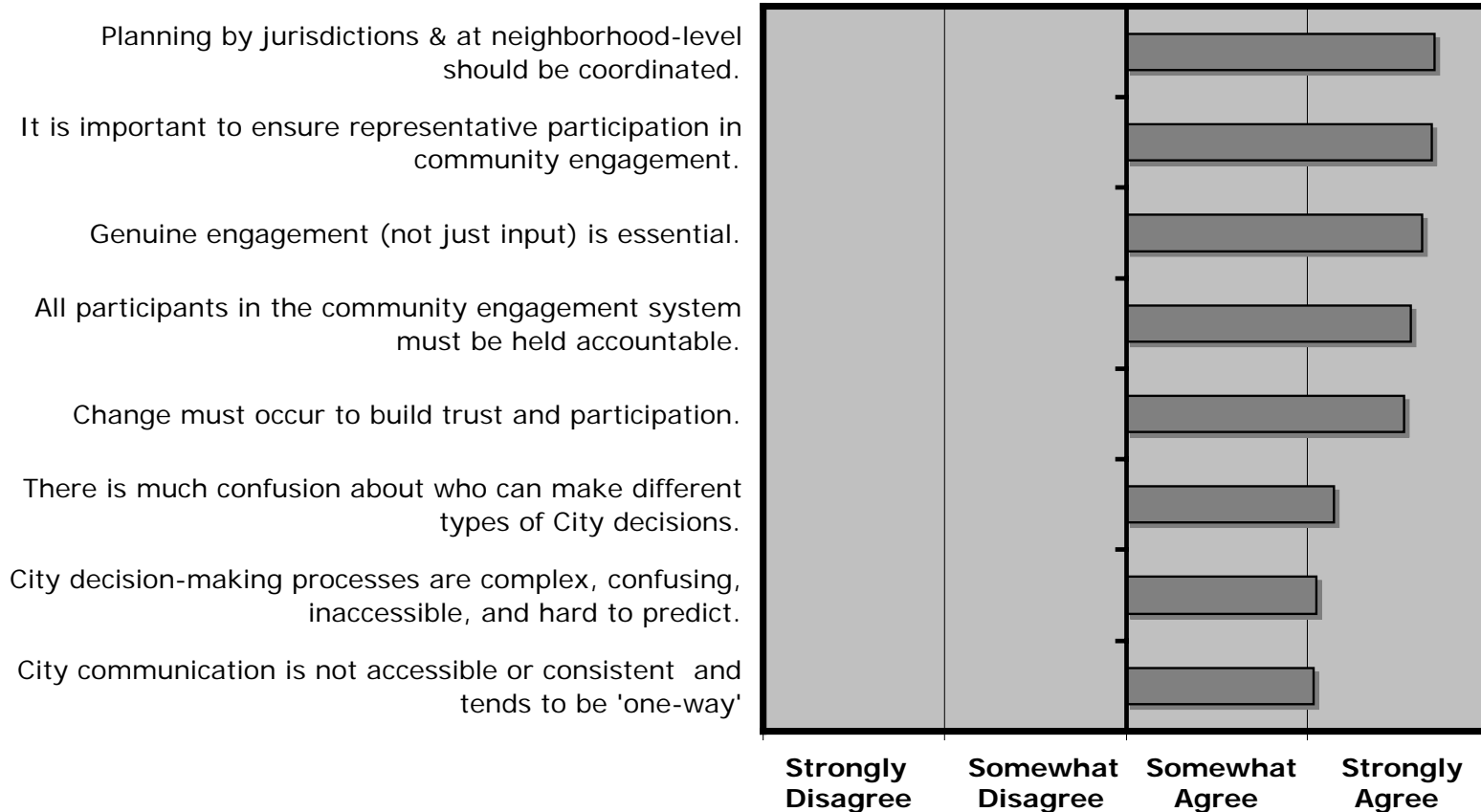
I feel I can best influence City decisions by being involved with:



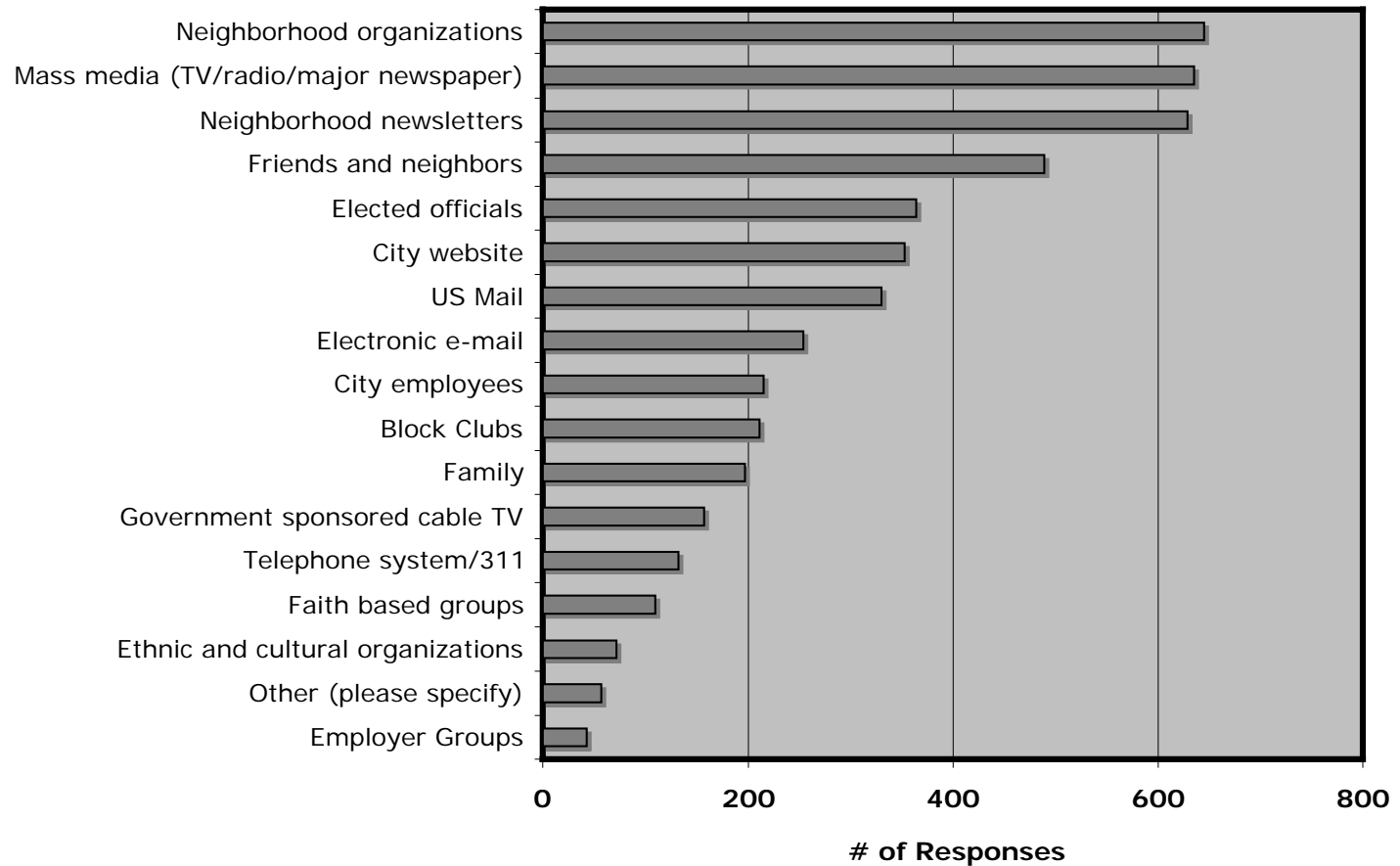
My input to the following groups is valued and influences their decisions:



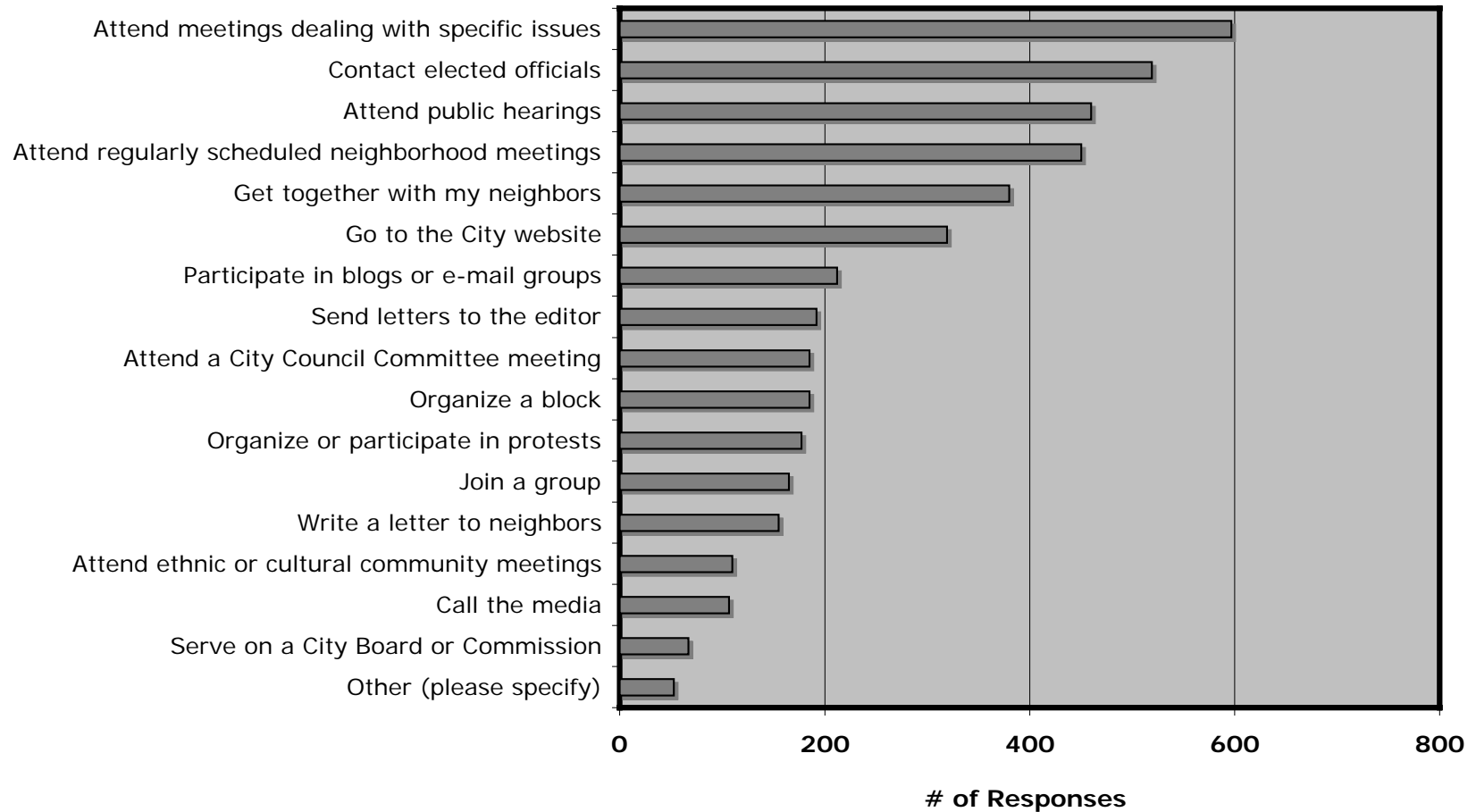
Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with these observations about the City's current community engagement system



What sources do you use to get information about City decisions?



What methods do you use to participate in or give your opinion to City decision-makers?



The following recommendations were proposed in the City Engagement report. How involved do you think the community should be in:

