



Kenny Neighborhood Phase I Project Highlights

Kenny School and Park Improvements

Through a neighborhood-wide survey, focus groups, and voting initiative at the 1995 Summer Festival, improving Kenny Park received the highest number of votes from residents from a variety of proposed projects. The K-5 students at Kenny School and the Minneapolis Kids extended day care program use the playground daily. In addition, the playground is used as part of the Kenny Park programs, as well as providing enjoyment for residents and visitors to the area. The Kenny Neighborhood Association formed a Park/School committee to work in coordination with the Park Board, School Board, and Kenny Park Activities Council to come up with a Master Plan for the area. After countless volunteer hours and neighborhood dedication, a new playground was completed in 1998. NRP funds in the amount of \$ 185,296.95 of the original \$ 195,000.00 were spent to accomplish this goal.

In addition to the playground construction, a new sign at Kenny Park was needed to keep neighbors up to date with announcements and happenings in the neighborhood. The Kenny Park Director approached the Kenny Neighborhood Association about paying for the new sign. The KNA agreed to fund a lighted sign in exchange for access to posting announcements about monthly meetings and special events. The KNA and Park Board worked in cooperation to fund the sign and agree to the terms of it's use. The new sign was installed in the spring of 2005 for \$ 6,000.00



Neighborhood Bikeways

During the Phase I planning phase, the development of a safe bikeway system that linked Kenny with surrounding neighborhoods and bike paths became the fourth highest priority of residents. The Kenny Park and Recreation Task Force applied for and received a grant to research bike path options from the Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization. The neighborhood received 260 hours of research and 50 hours of architectural assistance from university students to compliment the work of the Kenny bike enthusiasts, interested residents from the four surrounding neighborhoods, and the Minneapolis Public Works Department. Although a plan was developed, the neighborhood ran into a road block because of an inability to link up a bikeway system to the surrounding communities who did not have funding in place for similar initiatives. However, a Master Plan for redevelopment has now been established for the Lyndale Avenue area, and this plan includes a bikeways component. The KNA is hoping to use it's \$ 18,000.00 dedicated to bikeways as part of the new Master Plan.





Lyndale Walkers Program

The Lyndale Walkers were a group of residents from the Kenny, Lynnhurst, Tangletown, and Windom neighborhoods. They would walk along Lyndale Avenue and the surrounding areas to provide a visible presence and help deter crime in the area. The walkers worked with local businesses to sponsor promotions for the registered walkers. In addition, the KNA hoped to use NRP funds of \$1500.00 to purchase 1/4 of the poles and banners along Lyndale Avenue that would promote the walkers. In addition, the adjoining neighborhoods would contribute equal funds to purchasing promotional poles and banners. However, over time the Lyndale Avenue walkers faded out and eventually disbanded. As a result, the NRP funds dedicated to this strategy were transferred to administrative areas of the plan.

Nicollet Avenue Cop Shop

The Windom Neighborhood established a "Cop Shop" on Nicollet Avenue to have additional police staffing time in their neighborhood. However, their funding was set to end in 1996, and the KNA thought that the Cop Shop could also benefit our neighborhood by having police officers in the general vicinity. They agreed to contribute \$5,000 in NRP funds along with an equal amount from the Lynnhurst neighborhood. These funds were set to be distributed in 1/3 increments during 1997, 1998, and 1999. However, as funding became available, and other safety strategies were employed, the need for the Cop Shop had decreased. The funds were then diverted within the NRP plan to help fund neighborhood communications instead.



Motion Detector and Dusk-to-Dawn Lights

This program was designed to provide a small rebate to residents who chose to buy motion detector or "dusk-to-dawn" lights for their homes to deter break-ins and burglaries. In addition, funds would be set aside to pay for a contractor to install the lights for senior citizens or those without the means to install them themselves. This program was unsuccessful due to lack of participation; likely residents felt it was not worth the cost to themselves in order to receive a \$10 rebate. The \$5,000 in funds set aside for this program were transferred to the administrative budget.



Stop Sign Installations

At the time the Phase I NRP plan was developed, approximately twenty 3-way or 4-way intersections in the Kenny neighborhood were without stop signs. In order to increase safety and to establish proper right-of-way at those intersections, the KNA planned to purchase stop signs and have them installed by Public Works. However, after the \$4,000.00 was set aside for this purpose, the KNA discovered that the City Council budget allows for stop signs to be installed in each Ward. As a result, the KNA decided to use these funds in the administrative budget instead.





Lyndale Avenue Market Study

Lyndale Avenue is the main commercial corridor that serves the Kenny Neighborhood. Through focus groups, neighborhood survey, and a community vote at the 1995 summer festival, neighbors continually made Lyndale Avenue a top priority. Of high interest was ensuring its' continued economic vitality. AT the time, the SW Business Association had been working with the Minneapolis Community Development Agency to conduct a Market Study for the businesses in the area. The KNA was to contribute \$5,000.00 to the Business Association to help hire a consultant to supplement funds being provided by the city. However, the SW Business Association disbanded and these funds were never used. As a result, the NRP funds will remain in our current plan to help implement the results of the Lyndale Avenue Master Plan that was recently developed by the four neighborhoods of Kenny, Lynnhurst, Windom, and Tangletown.

Lyndale Avenue Redesign Proposal

The original Lyndale Gateway group and the current LASR-CC group have been working almost 10 years to develop concepts for redevelopment of Lyndale Avenue from the Minnehaha Creek to the Crosstown Highway. Included in this redesign area is the Highway 121 spur from Lyndale to Highway 62, redevelopment along Lyndale Avenue, and a reorientation of the businesses along Lyndale. Because of the magnitude of this project, the Kenny Neighborhood Association has been working in cooperation with the three surrounding neighborhoods, Hennepin County, MnDOT, Ward 11 and 13 City Council offices, Public Works, the city's Planning Department, and two private consulting groups. Only \$7,500.00 of the original \$45k set aside for this redesign have been used due to contributions from other neighborhoods and funds from the City budget. The remaining \$37,500.00 will be held for future use in implementing the Master Plan that was recently developed for the area.

Landscape/Streetscape Improvements

Lyndale Avenue South is slated to be improved in the near future. The KNA has been working with LASR-CC and a multitude of city, county, and state offices to ensure that future development is thoughtful and in line with the values of our residents. A Master Plan for the area has been in the works for a few years, and includes suggestions regarding transportation usage, road design, housing options, business redevelopment, increased green space, lighting updates, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes such as decorative pavers, benches, and landscaping. The Kenny neighborhood has led the way in landscaping improvements by implementing two different programs to Kenny area businesses. The first was a pilot project in 2000, in which the Amoco station was given \$3,000 for landscaping improvements, in exchange for a \$1,000 contribution from the business owner. In 2004-05, the KNA offered a second program in which Kenny businesses could request up to \$5,000 to make façade improvements to their commercial property. The property owner was required to contribute a 1-to-1 financial match for whatever funds were received from the KNA. In total, the KNA provided grants of \$10,801.98 to area businesses and \$89,198.02 remains available for future development plans along Lyndale Avenue.

Lyndale Avenue's Future



Parking Needs Analysis

With future Master Plan proposals potentially involving increased business and transportation use along Lyndale Avenue, parking needs are a critical issue. Parking needs, including an inventory of actual and potential parking spaces in the area, were involved in the analysis and recommendations of the Master Plan consultants hired by LASR-CC and the City of Minneapolis. As a result, the \$5,000 set aside for this strategy of the plan will be able to be utilized for implementation of future changes rather than a study of the needs.

SW Business Association Staff

The SW Business Association represented businesses in all four neighborhoods that adjoin Lyndale Avenue. For the Business Association to conduct its duties, the KNA and surrounding neighborhoods felt it was important to assist in paying a staff person whose responsibilities would be to assist the Association in implementing future Lyndale Avenue projects. However, the Association disbanded and the funds were never used for this purpose. Instead, the \$10,000 was transferred to the KNA's administrative budget. Currently, a business association has been revived by the LASR-CC group and has been actively involved in the Master Planning process for Lyndale Avenue.

Neighborhood Communications

Residents in the Kenny neighborhood generally have a favorable impression of their community. To nurture the feeling of security, belonging, and community investment, the KNA wanted to be a strong and positive force working for the residents in the neighborhood. To do this, the KNA needed to be visible as an organization, sponsoring events and programs that bring residents together, and to be accessible for neighbors that needed or wanted assistance. The KNA used \$7500 in NRP funds for items such as postcards and flyers for community events, letterhead and envelopes for mailings, posters for garage sales, and so on. As a result, the KNA has good participation by residents and businesses in annual events like the summer festival and important community project like Lyndale Avenue Master Planning.

Kenny Web Page

Seeking additional methods to attract participation from previously uninvolved residents and increase the opportunities for communication, the KNA established its web page in 1995. Since that time, the web page has grown by leaps and bounds. Residents can read issues of neighborhood newsletters, see pictures of community events, and participate in online forums. The web page is still maintained by dedicated volunteers, and without the use of NRP funds.



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Implementation Staff

To assist in carrying out the strategies of its Action Plan, the KNA decided to hire an Implementation Coordinator in 1997. The coordinator position is vital in making sure that action plan projects are carried out. In addition, the coordinator provides administrative support for this volunteer organization in carrying out some of its day-to-day needs. The Implementation Coordinator began as a half-time position, but was scaled back to a quarter-time position in 2000. Staffing has also been accomplished without the use of an office space, by hiring independent contractors able to work from a remote office. This position has been funded over the past eight years with \$84,690.00, and the KNA is now in a position where it is ready to move forward with Phase II.



Grass Lake Management

Grass Lake was a prominent feature of the neighborhood, but used to be considered more as a mud hold and mosquito breeding area than a community attribute. Through much effort on behalf of the KNA's Grass Lake Committee along with funding from the NRP, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the DNR, and the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance, Grass Lake is now referred to as a "hidden jewel" by residents who enjoy the lake for its variety of birds, waterfowl, and natural beauty. Wetland management plans and policies were developed through a previous project in which migratory bird counts and a wetland bird foraging study were conducted by students in the CURA program. Other projects included developing a Joint Powers Agreement with the MCWD on "Best Management Practices" which included water quality monitoring, regular inspections of storm sewer outlets and inlets, regular grit chamber maintenance, foliage protection around the lake, earth day clean-ups, storm drain stenciling, a Grass Lake video project, and a public education program to residents. Numerous flyers and newsletters developed by the Grass Lake Committee were distributed, and information tables at neighborhood events were used to inform residents about best practices for lawn care, watershed run-off, and general information on wetlands and wildlife. In total, \$14,240.00 in NRP funds were used to supplement over \$25,000 in grant funds from various organizations.



Wetland Management

Currently, a restoration project is planned in which a comprehensive plan will be developed that focuses on removing undesirable woody vegetation and enhancing views of the lake, while promoting attractive foliage, colorful blooms, wildlife value, and fall color. This first phase is the removal of invasive species, followed by the engagement of our residents and students to assist in planting and maintenance of plant materials designed to stabilize the shoreline and act as a buffer to storm water runoff. To date, \$10,000.00 has been used for tree and invasive species removal, with an additional \$15,000.00 scheduled to be spent for the restoration plantings.



Tree Replacement

An important aspect of the Kenny Neighborhood is the appearance of the streets and boulevards which are generally well-maintained and designed. However, city boulevard trees are often damaged or destroyed by storms, power lines, street lights, and/or lack of maintenance. The KNA entered into an agreement with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board that allowed diseased, disfigured, or destroyed trees throughout the neighborhood to be identified and replaced with new trees. Approximately \$29,000 in NRP funds were spent to beautify the neighborhood by replacing 325 trees in the neighborhood between 2000 and 2004.



Sunrise Drive Traffic Plan

Traffic problems along the 60th Street/Sunrise Drive/58th Street corridor were among the more serious concerns identified by Kenny residents. This area was of particular concern because of its proximity to two neighborhood school buildings. The KNA initiated the formation of a volunteer task force to work with the Public Works department to develop and subsequently implement a comprehensive traffic plan designed to slow traffic along the corridor. While a study was conducted, and a plan proposed, residents living along the corridor did not approve of the recommendations. They had hoped to have speed humps installed, but because the road is a Minnesota State Aid route, there were limits on the measures that could be taken. The only significant measure that could have been taken was to paint stripes to limit the lane width in hope of slowing traffic. Because residents were not convinced this measure would make enough of an impact, the issue was dropped. Of the original \$60,000 in NRP funding for this strategy, \$25,000 was transferred to the current Grass Lake project, and the remaining amount to administrative costs to assist in the running of the organization.



Housing Rebate Program

In order to maintain a stable housing stock in the Kenny neighborhood, the KNA wanted to promote home improvement projects as a desirable alternative to moving to a larger home. To accomplish this goal, the KNA set aside funds for residential property owners to qualify for one-time rebates for home improvement projects. The rebates would allow 50-100 home owners to receive a rebate in the amount of \$500 or \$1000, depending on the financial cost of their project. All but \$1,500 of the original \$53,000 set aside for this program was provided in rebates to fifty-four homeowners. The KNA is proposing the remaining amount be transferred to the TRUST Senior Housing Program that is currently providing financial assistance to elderly or disabled residents so that they can remain living independently in their homes.





Housing Fair

The Kenny Neighborhood Association also felt it could assist homeowners in need of additional resources by participating in the South Minneapolis Housing and Home Improvement Fair held at South High School each spring. The fair focuses on educating home owners about home improvement resources from financing to energy conservation. After previously participating in the fair, the KNA realized that many of its residents attend the Richfield Housing Fair because of its closer proximity to the neighborhood. As a result, the KNA has chosen to discontinue its collaboration with the South Minneapolis fair that involve a high level of planning, with little participation from our area. The \$1000 in this strategy was transferred to the administrative budget.



Senior Housing Survey

The KNA believes that the high number of senior citizens in the neighborhood face unique challenges as homeowners in maintaining and retaining their homes. In order to assess the needs of older or disabled residents in the area, the KNA distributed a survey in 2002 as a special insert to our quarterly newsletter. Residents that fit within a certain income category were asked if they were planning to move, what the reasons for moving were, and what types of services might assist them to remain in their homes. Although a limited number of surveys returned, the responses we received were consistent enough that they were of value in determining how to implement a housing assistance program for seniors. Because the survey was done as part of our regular newsletter distribution, we were able to apply the \$1000 to the program funds instead.



Senior Housing Program

Those seniors that returned a survey on types of housing assistance they would find useful consistently reported that the main types of services they needed were for outdoor chores and home repair. As a result of the senior survey that was conducted, the KNA entered into a collaboration with TRUST, Inc., a coalition of South Minneapolis congregations that have served our community since 1970. The KNA provides funding to TRUST, Inc. each month to link seniors and disabled Kenny residents with reputable workers that can take care of small household projects or seasonal chores. The KNA provides partial or full funding for the service costs so these neighbors can afford to remain independent in their homes. The program started in 2004 with \$11,000 in NRP funds, and is currently serving between 5 and 10 Kenny residents each month.

