

**MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM**

**DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
ACTION PLAN**

**Date Adopted by the Policy Board: December 17, 2001**

**Date Adopted by the City Council: February 15, 2002**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association (DMNA) wishes to thank the volunteer members of the Downtown Community for the many hours they have given to Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) task forces, sub-committees, and projects as they worked toward improving the environment, livability and character of Downtown Minneapolis.

We thank and appreciate Minneapolis NRP staff, Alicia Cox-Jenkins, Joe Horan, Barb Lickness, and director Bob Miller. We also thank Bob Cooper, MCDA Citizen Participation and Councilmember Lisa Goodman and Council President Jackie Cherryhomes. We appreciate the efforts of the Minneapolis Planning Department, Police and Fire Department, and Public Works.

A large debt of gratitude goes to current DMNA Board of Directors: Jerrie Hayes, Chair; Larry Calhoun, Vice Chair; Mark Moller, Treasurer; Carletta Sweet, Secretary; Monroe Bell (former Chair and Treasurer); Andrew Hauer; and Daniel Hunt. Heartfelt thanks go to recent board departee Minneapolis Fire Chief Rocco Forte for his unstinting efforts in helping to prepare the Master Plan. Much appreciation and continued camaraderie is extended to other recent board departees Glenn Johannesen, Eric Mitchell, and Joan Willshire.

To Scott Engel, former DMNA NRP Coordinator, we extend special thanks for his patience and diligence during his tenure and to Bill Stark who organized over 100 citizens to work on NRP task forces. DMNA thanks Patty Connolly, Art Centor, Saul Carliner of the Downtown Development Task Force; George Rosenquist and Barbara Andrews, Crime and Safety; and Bob Saginaw and Barbara Bell Smith of the Arts, Culture and Education Task Forces.

Many of the task force members wore two hats and worked doubly hard as DMNA Board members, and special thanks go to its chair, Monroe Bell, former Chairs George Rosenquist and Saul Carliner, Vice-Chair Jonathan Specktor, Secretary Dolores Cotton and members of its Board of Directors: Frank Brust, Elayne Caldwell, Arthur Centor, Sue Jahn, Michael Murphy, Robert Saginaw, Al Smith, Carletta Sweet, Ashu Kataria and Laura Lazar.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD VISION**

Our vision of downtown Minneapolis is a vibrant, diverse, user-friendly environment for residents, businesses, workers and visitors. We believe that this can be accomplished not only by the expenditure of money, but also through the creativity and resourcefulness of the downtown community, to create and promote programs which will encourage participation by as many members of the community as possible. Ensuring the on-going and future viability of the Downtown Community requires nothing less than this. A safe, livable and diverse environment is a major factor in creating a sense of community, identity and well-being in those Downtown residents, as well as those workers and visitors whose lives are touched by our downtown environment.

## **THE DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD**

Located in the heart of Minneapolis, the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood is a complex and active business and residential community. Downtown is vibrant and exciting with much to offer to citizens of Minnesota and visitors from across the country. The City's retail shops, banks, sporting events, restaurants, theaters, and nightlife draw people to its core, creating an extremely livable atmosphere. Its' summer events, including the Aquatennial, Sommerfest, the Farmers Market and music festivals, are well attended by residents, workers and visitors to Minneapolis. Winter in Minneapolis with its HoliDazzle parade and Christmas window displays truly make Downtown a wonderland.

Through the majority of this planning process the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association represented three neighborhoods including Downtown East, Downtown West, and Northloop. Recently, the Northloop Neighborhood voted to form an independent neighborhood association and become its own planning group. DMNA voted to support the new Warehouse District North Loop Neighborhood Association in its efforts. The borders of Downtown East and West are bordered by the historic Mississippi on the North, 12<sup>th</sup> Street on the South, Portland and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues on the East, and Hennepin across Washington to 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave North on the West. Downtown West includes the majority of the central business district, while Downtown East is mostly commercial/industrial and borders the Metrodome Stadium.

The 2000 U.S. Census reports a total of 4,709 residents in the two downtown neighborhoods. Downtown is "home" to about 140,000 workers.

## **NRP PROCESS**

The planning process has spanned over a five-year period beginning in the Spring of 1996. The Downtown Minneapolis Residents Association (DMRA), now DMNA elected its first NRP Steering Committee on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1996. The NRP Participation Agreement was approved in September 1996.

Four task forces were formed to develop Goals and Objectives for the First Step Plan. The task forces were: Arts, Culture & Education; Community Development; Crime & Safety and Downtown Development. In May of 1997, The downtown community voted on the goals and objectives developed by each task force.

In December, 1997, The Downtown Minneapolis Residents Association (DMRA) approved a name change to the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association (DMNA). This change allowed Downtown business owners, residents, and workers to participate in the community organization.

The DMNA volunteers worked toward refining their strategy proposals during 1998. The First Step plan was approved by the neighborhood on November 10, 1998 at the DMNA Annual meeting. The First Step Plan was approved by the NRP Policy Board on December 21, 1998 and by the City Council on January 22, 1999.

The DMNA worked on implementing the projects funded in the First Step Plan during 1999 and 2000. Early in 2001, the task forces worked on identifying strategies for the full Neighborhood Action Plan. The task forces completed their work in October 2001 and held an all community meeting on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2001 to allow the neighborhood to prioritize the strategies. Based on the outcomes gathered at this meeting, the DMNA Board voted to approve the strategies presented in the Neighborhood Action Plan. The Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association voted to approve the Neighborhood Action Plan at a full community meeting on November 13, 2001.

# DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

## *Section 1: Arts, Culture, and Education*

**Goal 1:** To create a more united downtown neighborhood by utilizing arts, Culture and education resources.

**Objective 1:** Provide theater experiences for school age children in downtown Minneapolis.

**Strategy 1:** **Organize workshops and theater experiences for (First Step) downtown school children in coordination with small downtown theaters**

- Workshops may include acting classes and improvisational skills training.
- Assist MPS with organization of the workshops and theatrical training.
- Theaters may include for example Theater De la Jun Lune or Margolis Brown.
- Coordinate activities with other downtown theaters and programs for children to avoid duplication of effort or activity.

**Participants:** DMNA, DMNA Implementation Coordinator, MPS, downtown schools, downtown theaters.

**NRP Resources:** 1999 - \$50,000

**Purpose:** Workshops

**Contract Manager:** Minneapolis Public Schools

**Outcome:** \$50,000 of NRP funds were contracted with the Minneapolis Public Schools under contract #14684 in November 1999. The Minneapolis Public Schools sub-contracted with Margolis Brown Dance Theater to provide theater experiences to schoolchildren at the Downtown Open School, Martin Luther King School, and the Mill City Montessori. The program will continue through 2001.

**Objective 2:** Create a strong cultural identity for downtown by promoting the Warehouse District’s artistic, commercial and historic resources.

**Strategy 1:** **Develop the “Explore the Warehouse District Program”.**  
**(First Step)**

- Organize tours of visual performing arts locations and historic Buildings.
- Develop a promotional campaign to attract residents, workers and visitors to the artistic and historic resources of the Warehouse District.

**Participants:** DMNA, DMNA Implementation Coordinator, MCDA-Public Information, Office of Public Affairs, Warehouse District artists and performance groups, Warehouse District businesses.

**NRP**  
**Resources:** 1999 - \$20,000

**Purpose:** Promotion

**Contract**  
**Manager:** Minneapolis Public Affairs Office

**Outcome:** \$20,000 of NRP funds were contracted with the Minneapolis Office of Public Affairs in contract #15907 to provide a one-day event on October 21, 2000 named “Explore the Warehouse District”. Promotional marketing was done to bring locals and visitors to different areas of the warehouse district. There were live performing artists at different areas in the warehouse district. Restaurants were encouraged to present special “explore the warehouse” menus celebrating this event. The River Trolley gave visitors free rides through out the warehouse district.

**Strategy 2:** **Develop the “Word Mural” Signage project.**  
**(First Step)**

- Research the history and architecture of buildings in the Warehouse District.
- Work with artists, a sign-company and installation of professionals to develop “Word Mural” signs that animate each participating building’s history and architecture through an artistic written description.
- Consult and coordinate signage locations with building owners and appropriate city agencies (The estimated size of each sign: 4’ X 10”)

Participants: DMNA, DMNA Implementation Coordinator, Public Works, Heritage Preservation Commission, building owners.

NRP

Resources: 1999 - \$50,000

Purpose: Signs

Contract Manager: Minneapolis Planning Department

Outcome: \$50,000 of NRP funds were contracted with the Minneapolis Planning Department under contract # 14069 in May 1999 for use with this project. This project has experienced some difficulty in implementation. The volunteers are continuing to work with the Minneapolis Planning Department and the Heritage Preservation Commission to resolve the issues that are preventing implementation of this project.

**Objective 3:** Enhance the appearance of the Hennepin Avenue Theater District.

**Strategy 1:** **Provide NRP funds as a loan to Minneapolis Public Works for use in the Hennepin Avenue Theater District Streetscape Improvement project.**

Once loan is repaid, DMNA will re-allocate this funding to other projects identified by the neighborhood during the prioritization meeting of October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2001 and DMNA Board meeting of October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001. (See Appendix #1) New projects may also be considered for funding at this time. The re-direction of these funds will be performed in accordance with the NRP Policy on changing action plans or early access requests.

Participants: DMNA, Orpheum-State Theaters, Hennepin Avenue businesses, Minneapolis Public Works.

NRP

Resources: 2002 - \$300,000

Purpose: Assessment Bond Guarantee loan to public works

Contract Manager: Minneapolis Public Works Department

## ***Section 2: Crime and Safety***

**Goal 1:** Enhance the current level of safety and improve the perception of safety in the downtown neighborhood.

**Objective 1:** Increase the visibility of positive influences in downtown.

**Strategy 1:** **Develop a Downtown Ambassador Program.**  
**(First Step)**

- Utilize volunteer and/or paid “Ambassadors” to provide directions, hospitality services and additional crime watch for downtown residents, visitors, and workers.
- The Downtown Ambassador Program would be a 2-year pilot project to occur initially during summer months (June – August) in coordination with the Downtown Marketing Committee.

**Participants:** DMNA, Downtown Council-Downtown Marketing Committee, GMCVA.

**NRP**

**Resources:** 1999 - \$40,000

**Purpose:** Ambassador Staff & Administration

**Contract**

**Manager:** NRP

**Outcome:** \$40,000 was contracted with the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association under contract 14007 in April 1999.

**Strategy 2:** **Expand the downtown “beat patrol”.**  
**(First Step)**

- Utilize the “police buy-back” program to allow additional beat patrols at times when a high level of crime occurs in the downtown neighborhood.

**Participants:** DMNA, Minneapolis Police Department, Downtown Command, CCP/SAFE

NRP

Resources: 1999 - \$40,000  
1999 - \$15,000 (re-directed from Downtown Development strategy 3.2.1.1, consolidate/expand existing plans in Plan Modification #1)

Purpose: Police Buy-Back Funds

Contract

Manager: Minneapolis Police Department

Outcome: \$40,000 of NRP funds were contracted to the Minneapolis Police Department under contract #14007 beginning in May 1999 to provide buy-back police patrol services in the Downtown and Warehouse District area. These services will be continued until December 2001. \$15,000 of NRP funds were added to this contract as a result of Plan Modification #1 dated September 2001.

**Strategy 3:** **Expand the downtown “mounted patrol”.**  
**(First Step)**

- Utilize the “police buy-back” program to increase mounted horse patrols during special events in the downtown neighborhood.

Participants: DMNA, Minneapolis Police Department, Downtown Command, CCP/SAFE.

NRP

Resources: 1999 - \$20,000  
1999 - \$10,000 (re-directed from Downtown Development strategy 3.2.1.1, consolidate/expand existing plans in Plan Modification #1)

Purpose: Police “Buy-back” funds

Contract

Manager: Minneapolis Police Department

Outcome: \$20,000 of NRP funds were contracted to the Minneapolis Police Department under contract # 14007 beginning in May 1999 to provide buy-back police patrol services in the Downtown and Warehouse District area. These services will be continued until December 2001. \$10,000 of NRP funds were added to this contract as a result of Plan Modification # 1 dated September 2001.

**Strategy 4: Support and expand the downtown ‘bicycle patrol’.**  
**(First Step)**

- Utilize the “police buy-back” program to provide additional bicycle patrols at times when a high level of crime occurs in the downtown neighborhood.

Participants: DMNA, Minneapolis Police Department, Downtown Command, CCP/SAFE.

NRP Resources: 1999 - \$10,000

Purpose: Police “Buy-back” funds

Contract Manager: Minneapolis Police Department

Outcome: \$10,000 of NRP funds were contracted to the Minneapolis Police Department under contract # 14007 beginning in May 1999 to provide buy-back police patrol services in the Downtown and Warehouse District area. These services will be continued until December 2001.

**Strategy 5: Support the development of a Senior Citizen Center in the downtown area.**

Participants: City of Minneapolis Senior Ombudsperson, MCDA

NRP Resources: 2002 - \$60,000

Purpose: The new Senior Center in the Target Tower will use \$40,000 of NRP funds to install an information management system to track senior activity in downtown and to conduct data collection activities on a regular basis. The center will use \$20,000 of NRP funds to pay for programming costs associated with senior activities in the center.

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Senior Ombudsperson

Objective 2: Utilize technology to increase the safety of downtown residents, visitors, and workers.

**Strategy 1: Install Safety Alert Phone Systems and 911 phones on (First Step) downtown streets and in skyways.**

- Coordinate phone system with downtown kiosk project.

Participants: DMNA, Downtown Marketing Committee, Skyways Advisory Committee, Public Works, Minneapolis Police Department.

NRP Resources: 1999 - \$34,000

Purpose: Safety Alert Phones

Contract Manager: Public Works

Outcome: \$34,000 of NRP funds were contracted to the Minneapolis Public Works department under contract # 14421 beginning August 1999 for purposes of developing a system of skyway signs, information kiosks, and safety alert phones to increase the safety of people traveling through the skyways and throughout the downtown business district.

**Strategy 2: Provide downtown block/apartment clubs with cell phones (First Step) improving their ability to report crime.**

Participants: DMNA, existing downtown block/apartment clubs, Minneapolis Police Department, CCP/SAFE

NRP

Resources: 1999 - \$2,000

Purpose: Cell Phones

Contract

Manager: MPD

Outcome: \$2,000 was contracted to the Minneapolis Police Department under contract #14012 beginning May 1999 for purposes of encouraging more participation in block/apartment clubs throughout the downtown area in coordination with CCP/SAFE.

**Strategy 3: Provide Thermal Imaging Equipment to the Minneapolis Fire Department to enable the firefighters to have better detection of the source of the fire within a burning building and to locate possible victims of a fire with quicker response time.**

Participants: DMNA, Minneapolis Fire Department

NRP

Resources: 2002 - \$36,000

Purpose: Thermal Imaging Equipment

Contract

Manager: Minneapolis Fire Department

**Objective 3:** Attack the perception that a high level of crime exists in downtown.

**Strategy 1: Develop and implement a marketing program to promote positive images of the downtown neighborhood.**  
**(First Step)**

- Work with the Downtown Council Marketing Committee to implement the marketing program directed towards residents and visitors in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area.
- Work with CCP/SAFE to utilize free media to promote crime and safety initiatives such as block/apartment clubs and the police buy-back program.

Participants: DMNA, Downtown Council-Downtown Marketing Committee, GMCVA, CCP/SAFE

NRP

Resources: 1999 - \$10,000  
1999- (\$5,000) (re-direct to Downtown Development  
Strategy 3.2.2.1. Develop Affordable  
Housing Fund)

Purpose: Marketing Program

Contract

Manager: NRP

Outcome: \$5,000 was contracted through NRP under contract # 14007 for use in paying for the marketing program developed by the DMNA and the Downtown Council-Downtown Marketing Committee.

\$5,000 of these funds are being re-directed through this plan to Downtown Development Strategy 3.2.2.1. Affordable Housing Fund.

**Strategy 2: Work in partnership with Central Cities Neighborhood Partnership (CCNP) and other organizations to implement the Restorative Justice Program in Downtown Minneapolis.**

Participants: DMNA, CLPC, Minneapolis Police Department, Hennepin County, CCP/SAFE.

Resources: 2002 - \$10,000

Purpose: Implementation and Program Costs

Contract

Manager: NRP

### ***Section 3: Downtown Development***

**Goal 1:** Improve the accessibility and user-friendliness of the downtown area.

**Objective 1:** Expand and improve neighborhood transportation via vehicular, pedestrian (including skyways) and bicycles in the downtown.

**Strategy 1:** **Create a system of signs and “information kiosks” directing residents, workers, and visitors to downtown streets and skyways.**  
**(First Step)**

- Utilize computerized stations/kiosks to provide skyway and street maps and directions, a directory of goods and services, lists of events and emergency alert phones in several languages.
- Utilize services of an “information host” to provide additional information.
- Increase the # of printed “orientation” signs within skyways and coordinate their design and the information presented.
- Enhance street-skyway connections by installing small “Skyway Access” signs near street-level doorways.
- Coordinate installation of Safety Alert Phone Systems.
- Coordinate long-term maintenance costs of the information kiosks with the Downtown Marketing Committee.

**Participants:** DMNA, City of Minneapolis, Downtown Council, Downtown Marketing Committee, skyway Advisory Committee, Private business owners, GMCVA, Nicollet Mall Advisory Committee.

**Resources:** 1999 - \$132,000  
Other funds dedicated to this program are:

- \$ 87,300 – City of Minneapolis
- \$235,000 - Building Owner
- \$ 50,000 - Downtown Marketing Committee

**Purpose:** Signs and kiosks

**Contract Manager:** Public Works

**Outcome:** \$132,000 was to the Minneapolis Public Works department under contract #14421 beginning August 1999 for purposes of developing a system of skyway signs, information kiosks, and safety alert phones to increase the safety people traveling through the skyways and throughout the downtown business district.

**Strategy 2:** **Support efforts by the City of Minneapolis and business community to conduct a comprehensive Current Parking and Traffic Study.**  
**(First Step)**

- Conduct a “cordon count” of downtown Minneapolis (a comprehensive monitoring of all modes of traffic that enter and exit the city on a given day).
- Conduct an analysis of existing parking, proposed parking supply & demand, and parking management.
- Analyze downtown’s traffic flow to determine how Light Rail Transit (LRT) will affect residents, workers and visitors.
- Determine whether the city is obtaining optimum benefit from the current configuration of one-way and two-way streets, bus lanes and bike lanes.

**Participants:** DMNA, Downtown Council, Public Works, Planning Department, Private Property Owners, TMO

**Resources:** No NRP funding  
Other Funds:

- 125,000 City of Minneapolis
- 15,000 Businesses

**Outcome:** There has been no progress toward implementing this strategy at this time. There is currently no funding in the city budget to pay for implementating this strategy.

**Goal 2:** Create a distinct, cohesive downtown residential neighborhood.

**Objective 1:** Formulate and implement comprehensive strategies for Downtown Minneapolis development planning with an emphasis on the residential environment.

**Strategy 1:**  
**(First Step) Work with the Minneapolis Planning Department to consolidate existing planning documents and plans (including for example Downtown 2010) into a Master Plan creating a comprehensive vision and guide for downtown neighborhood development.**

- Develop and detail plan elements that are missing and/or unattended in previous plans including streetscape enhancements and neighborhood development objectives.
- Create a plan that defines, develops, preserves and enhances the downtown residential environment.
- Develop design guidelines, review and approval processes and a design review board (Patterned after the SEMI Master Plan review process)
- Develop implementation strategies such as capital improvement, marketing and financing plans for critical Master Plan elements.

Participants: DMNA, Planning Department, Public Works, MCDA, Downtown Council, City Council Representatives, Additional Stakeholders

NRP

Resources: 1999- \$60,000  
1999-\$(25,000) re-directed in Plan Modification #1  
1999-\$(35,000) re-direct to Downtown Development  
Strategy 3.2.2.1, Affordable Housing Fund.

Purpose: Master Plan

Contract Manager: Planning Department

Outcome: DMNA voted to re-direct \$25,000 of these funds in Plan Modification #1 dated September 2001. These funds were re-directed to Police Buy-Back Beat and Mounted Patrols.

\$35,000 is being re-directed through this plan to Downtown Development Strategy 3.2.2.1. Affordable Housing Fund.

**Objective 2:** Increase opportunities for affordable housing in the downtown area.

**Strategy 1:** **Develop an affordable housing fund to provide gap funding to projects in the downtown area.**

Eligible projects can include:

- Housing projects that are mixed use with at least 20% affordable units. Funds must be applied to the affordable units.
- Housing projects that contain 100% affordable units.
- Rents in affordable units must be 50% of Metro Median Income or less.
- Single Room Occupancy Housing developments
- Shelter Care, Supportive Housing, and Transitional Care facilities.

DMNA will work with MCDA to develop a Request for Proposal to solicit proposals from developers of affordable housing projects in the downtown area.

**Participants:** DMNA, MCDA, Non-Profit and For-Profit developers, Minneapolis Planning Department, City Councilmembers

**Resources:** 1999 - \$ 40,000  
2002 - \$385,447  
2003 - \$450,000

**Purpose:** Pre-Development Costs or Construction Costs.

**Contract Manager:** MCDA

## ***Section 4: Implementation***

**Goal 1:** Increase capacity of the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood through the NRP process.

**Objective 1:** Provide staff and administrative support to implement all components of the DMNA NRP Neighborhood Action Plan.

**Strategy 1:** Hire a DMNA NRP Implementation Coordinator and provide administrative support to:  
**(First Step)**  
**(+Full Plan)**

- Assist in coordinating theater workshops for school age children
- Coordinate the “Explore the Warehouse District” program tours and promotional campaign.
- Coordinate the Word Mural signage project by researching buildings and facilitating the development of signs.
- Assist in developing and coordinating the Downtown Ambassador Program.
- Work with DMNA, MPD, CCP/SAFE to foster the greatest benefit from the downtown buy-back programs.
- Work with CCP/SAFE to promote positive images of downtown to the media.
- Carry out the administrative and organizational tasks necessary to implement the DMNA NRP Neighborhood Action Plan.

**Participants:** DMNA, NRP Implementation Coordinator

### **NRP**

**Resources:** 1999 - \$51,000  
1999 –\$25,500 (DMNA is redirecting \$25,500 from  
4.1.1.2 Housing Coordinator to this  
strategy)  
2002 - \$ 27,000  
2003 - \$ 27,000

**Purpose:** Staff and Operating Expenses

**Contract  
Manager:**

NRP

**Outcome:** DMNA employed an NRP Coordinator to implement the First Step Projects. DMNA has new office space and continues to work on First Step implementation projects and Phase I planning efforts. DMNA will continue its administrative efforts by redirecting the Remaining funds from this strategy to Implementation Strategy 4.1.1.3. Neighborhood Action Plan Administration.

- Strategy 2:** Hire a DMNA NRP Housing Coordinator and provide administrative support to:
- (First Step)**
- Research existing housing programs and promote them to downtown neighborhood residents.
  - Provide a downtown Minneapolis housing needs analysis.
  - Work with the downtown residents, local government and additional stakeholders to develop potential housing programs that meet the unique downtown housing needs.

**Participants:** DMNA, Housing Coordinator, MCDA, Planning Department

**NRP**

**Resources:** 1999 – 25,500  
1999 –(\$25,500) (DMNA will redirect \$25,500 to  
Implementation Strategy 4.1.1.1,  
Implementation Coordinator)

**Purpose:** Housing Issues

**Contract  
Manager:** NRP

**Outcome:** All funds in this strategy will be re-directed.