

# Engagement Plan

## Neighborhood

Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association – Downtown East and Downtown West

## Time frame

2026 to 2028

## Work summary

The Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association (DMNA) is committed to building an inclusive, safe, and thriving community for all residents, workers, and visitors in the Downtown East and Downtown West neighborhoods. DMNA’s programs and events are designed to reach historically underrepresented groups, including renters, BIPOC communities, families, and unsheltered neighbors. Through a mix of community events, educational forums, service projects, and targeted outreach, DMNA seeks to build stronger relationships, increase participation, and ensure diverse voices are heard in decision-making.

## Scope of work, outcomes and goals

Overall scope of work, outcomes and goals across all activities and demographic groups. Show how your organization will engage historically under-engaged groups

- **Scope:** Implement programs, events, and communications that intentionally include renters, BIPOC residents, families, and unsheltered residents.
- **Outcomes:** Increase participation of underrepresented groups in DMNA meetings, events, and activities, governance, and leadership roles. Increased trust in the DMNA as resources for support and community connection.
- **Goals:**
  - Foster trust through consistent, transparent communication.

- Reduce barriers to participation by offering free, family-friendly, and accessible events.
- Strengthen partnerships with local HOAs, businesses, nonprofits, and downtown neighborhood organizations.
- Create opportunities for residents to engage in decision-making through committees, forums, and annual meetings.
- Promote leadership pathways to ensure diverse voices are represented on the Board of Directors and committees.

### **Joint Engagement Activities with adjacent neighborhood organizations**

- **Candidate Forums** (co-hosted with DMNA/NLNA and DMNA/CLPC): Increases civic participation for renters, BIPOC residents, and families.
- **Personal Safety Workshops** (co-hosted with DMNA/NLNA): Hands-on learning experience that fosters a culture of safety and community well-being. Helps spread awareness and shared understanding of safety practices. Increases civic participation for renters and BIPOC residents.
- **Safety Walks** (ongoing in North Loop and the Mill District): Promotes safety and inclusivity in both neighborhoods. Encourages neighbors to look out for one another, which helps create a more secure environment for everyone. Increases civic participation for renters and BIPOC residents. Also increases the visibility of neighborhood associations.

<i>Demographic group</i>	<i>Demographic group 1</i> <i>Renters</i>	<i>Demographic group 2</i> <i>BIPOC</i>	<i>Demographic group 3</i> <i>Unsheltered</i>	<i>Demographic group 4</i> <i>Families</i>
<i>Numbers or percentage</i>	Downtown East - 59% Downtown West - 67%	Downtown East - 46% Downtown West – 44%	Hennepin County reported 3,078 people experiencing homelessness, with 2,651 in shelters and 427 unsheltered. These numbers include families and unaccompanied children.	Downtown East – 21% Downtown West – 14.8%

\* Sources: MN Compass and Hennepin County

## Demographic Groups

### 1. Renters

- **Initiatives/Programs:** Candidate Forums, Earth Day, Neighborhood Day, Take a Kid Fishing Day, National Night Out, DMNA Day at Mill City Farmers Market, Pianos on Parade, Annual Meeting, Speakers Bureau, Rental Building Ambassadors, Mill District Safety Walks, neighborhood cleanups, personnel safety workshop, postcard mailers.
- **Barriers:** High mobility, limited awareness of the neighborhood association, perception the neighborhood association only represents only homeowners, limited time/availability due to work schedules, language and cultural barriers.
- **Strategies:** Joint forums and events, targeted outreach in rental buildings (Speakers Bureau and Rental Building Ambassadors), outreach via Neighborhood Day, Pianos on Parade, DMNA Day at the Mill City Farmers Market, and the Annual Meeting. Host meetings and events at different locations throughout the Downtown East, Downtown West and North Loop neighborhoods.
- **Resources Needed:** Funding for outreach materials, staff/volunteers for outreach, translation services if needed. Funding for childcare or kid-focused activities. Funding for food at events.

- **Partners:** HOAs, Mill District Business Group, Minneapolis DID, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Minneapolis League of Women Voters, City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Neighborhood Safety Walks / Mill District Safety Walks.
  - **Responsible:** DMNA Board and Committees.
  - **Timeline:** Ongoing through 2028.
  - **Quantitative Goals:** Host at least two renter specific events. Target outreach at 3 rental buildings. Engage 150+ renters annually. Recruit at least 2 renters to participate in DMNA committees or in leadership roles.
  - **Qualitative Goals:** Renters report stronger awareness of DMNA. Renters feel their concerns and needs are heard and are incorporated into DMNA planning. Residents view DMNA as a trusted resource for support and neighborhood information.
  - **Outcome of Engagement:** Renters are more actively engaged and represented in the DMNA's programs, leadership, and decision-making processes. Increased participation at events and on committees leads to a more balanced and inclusive understanding of downtown residents' priorities. Through intentional outreach and relationship-building, renters develop a stronger sense of belonging and investment in their neighborhood, and DMNA is recognized as a welcoming, accessible, and responsive organization that reflects the diversity of downtown's housing community.
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## 2. BIPOC Residents

- **Initiatives/Programs:** Candidate Forums, Earth Day, Neighborhood Day, Take a Kid Fishing Day, National Night Out, DMNA Day at Mill City Farmers Market, Pianos on Parade, Annual Meeting, Speakers Bureau, Rental Building Ambassadors, Mill District Safety Walks, neighborhood cleanups, personnel safety workshop, postcard mailers.
- **Barriers:** Historic distrust of neighborhood organizations, lack of culturally relevant outreach, language barriers.
- **Strategies:** Partner with BIPOC-led organizations, highlight diverse local businesses at festivals/markets, ensure representation at Candidate Forums. Host meetings and events at different locations throughout the Downtown East and Downtown West neighborhoods.

- **Resources Needed:** Funding for outreach materials, staff/volunteers for outreach, translation services if needed. Funding for childcare or kid-focused activities. Funding for food at events.
  - **Partners:** Minneapolis DID, Mad Dads, Somali Youth Link, BAZTECMN, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, BIPOC-led nonprofits, BIPOC-owned businesses, Minneapolis League of Women Voters, City of Minneapolis.
  - **Responsible:** DMNA Board and Committees.
  - **Timeline:** Ongoing through 2028.
  - **Quantitative Goals:** At least 25% of event attendees across DMNA events identify as BIPOC. Recruit at least two BIPOC residents to participate in DMNA committees or in leadership roles.
  - **Qualitative Goals:** BIPOC residents feel welcomed and represented at DMNA meetings and events.
  - **Outcome of Engagement:** BIPOC residents are meaningfully represented and actively engaged in DMNA programs, events, and leadership. Through intentional partnerships with BIPOC-led organizations and businesses, DMNA builds trust and strengthens relationships across cultures. These efforts result in more inclusive participation, ensuring that community priorities, programs, and advocacy reflect the diverse voices of Downtown Minneapolis. Over time, DMNA is recognized as a welcoming and equitable organization that values and uplifts all residents, fostering a stronger and more connected downtown community.
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### 3. Unsheltered Residents

- **Initiatives/Programs: DMNA:** Hygiene kit distribution, Safety Walks, Service Saturdays (with NLNA), outreach at People Serving People, National Night Out, possible collaborative event with Mile in My Shoes.
- **Barriers:** Lack of stable housing, limited access to communication tools, stigma/discrimination.
- **Strategies:** Partner with service providers, distribute hygiene kits, include outreach at neighborhood festivals and meetings.

- **Resources Needed:** Funding for hygiene kits. Funding for outreach materials, staff/volunteers for outreach, translation services if needed.
  - **Partners:** Minneapolis DID, Mad Dads, Mill District Business Group, Catholic Charities, People Serving People, Salvation Army, Somali Youth Link, Mile in My Shoes, City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Police Department, and Hennepin County.
  - **Responsible:** DMNA Board and Committees.
  - **Timeline:** Ongoing through 2028.
  - **Quantitative Goals:** Create and distribute 100+ hygiene kits.
  - **Qualitative Goals:** Build trust and connect unsheltered residents with services.
  - **Outcome of Engagement:** Unsheltered residents feel seen, respected, and included in the downtown community. Through consistent outreach and partnership with local service providers, DMNA builds trust and improves communication with unsheltered individuals. Engagement efforts help connect residents to essential services and resources that support safety, stability, and dignity. The initiative fosters stronger collaboration between neighborhood stakeholders and service organizations, contributing to a more compassionate and coordinated approach to addressing homelessness in Downtown Minneapolis.
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#### 4. Families

- **Initiatives/Programs:** S'mores event at a Downtown Park, Take a Kid Fishing Day, Earth Day, Neighborhood Day, Pianos on Parade, National Night Out, DMNA Day at Mill City Farmers Market.
- **Barriers:** Childcare needs, limited family-friendly programming, cost of activities.
- **Strategies:** Offer free, family-oriented events, provide food at gatherings, hold events at family-friendly times, target outreach in rental buildings. Host meetings and events at different locations throughout the Downtown East and Downtown.

- **Resources Needed:** Funding for family-friendly activities. Funding for outreach materials. Funding for childcare or kid-focused activities. Funding for food at events. Staff/volunteer support.
- **Partners:** Minneapolis DID, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Mill District Business Group, City of Minneapolis, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, BAZTECMN.
- **Responsible:** DMNA Board and Committees.
- **Timeline:** Seasonal family-focused events across both associations. Ongoing through 2028.
- **Quantitative Goals:** Engage 25+ families through events and activities.
- **Qualitative Goals:** Families view DMNA as welcoming, supportive, and fun organizations.
- **Outcome of Engagement:** Downtown families feel welcomed, connected, and supported through DMNA’s inclusive programming and events. Consistent family-friendly engagement builds stronger relationships among neighbors, creating a sense of belonging and shared community pride. Through these efforts, DMNA helps ensure that families see themselves reflected in the life of the neighborhood and recognize the organization as a trusted resource and advocate for a family-friendly downtown.

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Through intentional, inclusive, and sustained engagement with renters, BIPOC community members, families, and unsheltered neighbors, the DMNA will strengthen relationships across all sectors of the downtown community. DMNA’s programs and partnerships foster trust, representation, and a shared investment in the neighborhood’s future. Residents increasingly view DMNA as a welcoming, equitable, and responsive organization that listens to community voices and acts on their priorities. These collective efforts build a stronger sense of belonging, enhance livability, and ensure that downtown Minneapolis continues to grow as a connected and compassionate community for all who live, work, and visit.

## Communication Methods

- **Websites:** Central location for information and resources.
- **E-newsletters:** Weekly updates reaching residents and stakeholders.
- **Facebook:** Event promotion, real-time updates, community connection.
- **Instagram:** Event promotion, real-time updates, community connection.
- **Postcard Mailers:** Targeted outreach to renters and households without digital access.
- **Speakers Bureau:** Targeted outreach to residential buildings by board members. Simple 10–15-minute presentation that tells residents about the work of the neighborhood organizations and how they can get involved. It is also an opportunity to promote meetings, events and activities.
- **Rental Building Ambassadors:** Leverage residents to help share information about DMNA meetings, events, and activities. Help foster a stronger, more connected relationship with the downtown community.