

To: Council Member Dan Niziolek

RE: Citizen Participation - Focus Group Report

Date: November 18, 2004

From: Robert D. Miller, Director

On October 13, 2004 the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) office facilitated six focus groups on the current citizen participation activities of the City of Minneapolis. Ninety-three (93) residents attended from 53 of the 70 neighborhoods with neighborhood organizations. The comments of the participants are attached.

Background: The NRP office agreed to organize the session after you requested NRP assistance with a planned examination of the City's citizen participation activities. The objective of this City Council initiative is to review current efforts and to develop a more comprehensive and effective citizen participation system for the future.

The NRP is designed around effective neighborhood-based citizen participation organizations serving as vehicles for residents who want to participate in the daily life and care of their local community. The NRP office has developed strong relationships with neighborhood organizations and we felt we could best contribute to your effort by gathering and providing the perspectives of resident volunteers from neighborhood organizations.

Preparation: Three weeks after we agreed to assist, NRP facilitated the resident input session. The President/Chair of each neighborhood organization in the city was contacted and invited to appoint two people to attend the event. The request asked that consideration be given to selecting one person who has been around for a number of years and a second person who is a fairly new neighborhood organization volunteer.

NRP provided the attendees with a one-page narrative giving background on the citizen participation system review effort and discussion questions prior to the date of the focus group session. The questions asked of participants are included in the report. The questions focused on assessing performance by City departments on achieving the following City community engagement goal:

Strengthen City government management and enhance community engagement.

Community Engagement: The voices of individuals and the community are valued and will be heard and involved at appropriate points in the City's decision-making processes. The City will be more effective and efficient in how we communicate with and engage communities, and will work to include those who are typically under-represented in public dialogue. We will focus our engagement efforts in a manner that supports the long-term strength of a community.

Session: The session was held on Wednesday, October 13 at the National Guard Training and Community Center. Ninety-three (93) representatives from 53 neighborhood organizations attended. We welcomed the representatives and spoke about the purpose of the session.

Six breakout areas were set up around the assembly hall and the attendee's numbered off to determine the small group in which they would participate. Neighborhood Specialists from the NRP office served as the facilitators and recorders. A little over one hour was allocated to cover the actual small group discussion of the attached questions.

Each breakout group concluded their work at 8:30 pm. Attendees were also asked to complete the "CP Survey" before they left and to hand it in at the front door table.

Report: The report does not attempt to provide a "Set of Findings", summarize the comments, assess their veracity, or make conclusions or recommendations. It provides a "point in time" assessment and perspective from 93 City residents of the City's citizen participation performance.

The responses of the participants are reported in Attachment A. On questions 1 and 2 the responses, by group number, are provided verbatim from the comments of the participants. On question 3, we grouped the comments accordingly to primary themes.

The "CP Survey" was returned by 67 (72.8%) of the 93 attendees. The results are presented in Attachment B.

c.c. Focus Group Participants
Policy Board Members and Alternates
Minneapolis Neighborhood Organizations
Mayor R.T. Rybak
Minneapolis City Council Members
Minneapolis Community Engagement Project

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION FOCUS GROUP

Subject: Citizen Participation

Sponsored by: Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program

October 13, 2004

Attachment A

Q1a. Describe a time when a City office, department or agency did a good job of providing the opportunity to participate in a decision-making process that affected your neighborhood

Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
Mayor/Council Members	1	Council Member (CM) pulled people together to make Peavey Park improvements happen
	1	CM Ostrow reminded Quarry "no liquor" in keeping with neighborhood wishes
	3	Nonconforming stop sign installed through CM Ostrow's office
	3	CM keeps neighborhood informed about undesirable businesses
	4	Contacts with CM secretaries
	5	A collaboration that occurred on Harrison housing initiatives a number of years ago – Council President Cherryhomes worked with the neighborhood, MCDA and others to put a moratorium on demolitions until the neighborhood could develop its housing strategy
	6	Council Members – when they attend neighborhood meetings
Planning	1	Neighborhoods had good input on light rail
	3	Must be proactive/persistent and you will get good results
	4	Working with Planning Department on zoning (but more time needed)
	4	Getting documents from CPED, from Planning and from committee clerks
	5	Planning for a new fire station on Lowry - Planning Department had the right people there for a good discussion
	5	The process to develop a Glenwood Ave. streetscape plan – Planning Department staff was especially helpful
	6	Planning Dept – at least they provide written notices of pending decisions
	6	Planning Dept – pre-CPED (and in the old days when there were real community planners)
Public Works	6	In city-adopted Master Plan for neighborhood
	1	Reconstruction of Central made changes visible to neighborhoods
	1	35 W Crosstown: Public works worked with neighborhoods
	1	Worked with Public works on traffic safety (both plus and minus):first manager deliberately stalled project in order to stop it; second manager worked to meet neighborhood needs; system is dependent on whims of individual project managers.
	1	Public Works Solid Waste division worked closely with neighborhood on 50 th Street clean up, providing gloves, bags, other support
	1	Public Works gave communities time to bring people into process on bikeway master plan
	3	Planning bike paths in CARAG, good involvement
	3	Access on Midtown Greenway –City receptive to West Calhoun's request

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Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
Public Works	3	Extending the 40 th St. Greenway
	4	Working with Public works on the Edison retention basin (series of meeting/changed plans)
	4	Getting maps, info at the GIS office
	4	Working with the Solid Waste department
	6	Public Works – not generally, but as part of the recent lighting survey
	6	Traffic Dept – in dealing with Lake St. reconstruction and LRT
Police Department	1	Folwell Webber 4 th Ward CARE task force worked to fight crime
	1	Armatage worked with City Council, Park, School, Police and neighborhood to solve crime problems in park;
	1	Good cooperation from Police on solving prostitution and drug problems (improved over last few years)
	4	Working with 3rd Precinct - Commander, Sector Lieutenants, beat cops, Police Athletic League (take care of problems now!)
	4	working with CCP/SAFE
	6	Police use to -- via CCP/SAFE -- come to neighborhood meetings as a part of their job. Now, it seems to be on their own time and as volunteers. Is staff interaction with residents at neighborhood meetings still valued by the City?
Regulatory Services	6	National Night Out
	2	Licensing and zoning do a good job of notifying the neighborhood so that others can participate
	6	Licensing – when applying for a business license or variance
CPED / MCDA	6	Inspections – via Clean Cut / Citizen Inspections
	1	Edie Oates worked with neighborhood on vacant lots project
	2	City worked with neighborhood to select developer
	3	Helpful in property acquisition after protest. Community process on HI-Lake
	3	Sears Tower
	3	MCDA's work on the Quarry
	4	Getting documents from CPED, Planning and committee clerks

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Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
NRP	1	NRP
	1	NRP has given neighborhoods leverage
	1	NRP resulted in Standish neighborhood association
	4	NRP is working!
	4	NRP trainings/workshops which directly support citizen participation
	5	NRP process in general
	5	The process to convert "old" Phillips into Ventura Village and the current 3 sub-regions that are considering requests for independent neighborhood status – NRP assistance has made a big difference in allowing this to occur
	5	NRP planning – it has created a whole new level of citizen participation because now neighborhoods have a direct stake in funding decisions
Other	6	NRP
	4	Applications at the Assessor's office
	4	Positive experiences when the neighborhood group acts as a liaison
	5	The work of a variety of individual City staff – people who get to know community groups, are tuned into their particular issues and culture, and are able to better devise successful ways of moving projects forward (a number of names were provided as examples including: Ken Brunsvold, Daryl Stokesbary, Laura Lambert, Tom Leighton, Bob Miller, Gayle Prest, Mike Larson)
	6	Taxpayer Services – prevented a boarded house from being torn down
	6	Coordinated efforts between City departments is the most effective method

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Q1b. Describe a time when a City office, department or agency did a bad job of providing the opportunity to participate in a decision-making process that affected your neighborhood

Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
Mayor / Council Members	1	City forcing high density housing on neighborhood, e.g. Chicago & 24 th -no amenities for children, other problems
	1	City (CMs and staff) won't return phone calls on development projects, not clear when neighborhood can comment on projects
	1	City didn't notify neighborhoods of legislative proposal to eliminate need for citizen participation funding
	1	City didn't notify neighborhoods that they succeeded in passing above legislation
	1	There is no North Minneapolis Council Member on Z & P committee
	1	Neighborhood met with Z & P committee, but Z & P disregarded neighborhood recommendation on variance, with negative impact on neighborhood
	2	Great job of notifying <u>but</u> mtgs not scheduled at times residents can attend
	2	Lots of opportunity to participate but residents feel like they're just a nuisance. Input from the neighborhood has limited effect – not partners with the City.
	2	Not enough lead-time for n'hood input. City doesn't understand how n'hood mtgs are timed/scheduled to get the input by deadline. 30 day notice doesn't always work with n'hood scheduled meetings-sometimes not enough time for n'hood to deal with the issue.
	2	An "us" (the experts) vs "them" (the n'hood). This culture set up tension. Some kind of "bridge" is needed to resolve the City vs n'hood issue- a (in dept.) maverick or someone (City) who knows how to get things done
	2	N'hood must know what exact question to ask to get an answer. Information is guarded
	3	Z&P (2400 Chicago) was not aware that the area was residential
	3	CM does not inform of issues in a timely manner-issues go flying by
	3	Co-opting of \$ mill COPS fund w/o neighborhood notification
	4	Throughout the City system there is a lack of positive service attitude
	4	Citizen participation process expectations are developer and business focused
	4	Neighborhood group is too often pushed into a yes/no approval process (even when they are positive about a development) and then lose out on affecting changes leaving negative attitudes and resentments
	5	Whittier development issue – the recent battle over the proposed Sabri development got ugly when the Mayor tried to overturn the Council's decision - but due in part to a 40-acre study that had been previously completed for the area, the neighborhood was able to get the Council's decision to stand (good & bad)

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Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
Mayor / Council Members	6	When City policy contradicts the neighborhood's plan – and one City action overrides years of hard work. (Example – St. Anthony West has fought against having too much rental housing in neighborhood)
	6	Lack of integration of City departments
	6	City doesn't seem to appreciate volunteers
	6	No policy – a common theme
	6	Hard for neighborhoods to plan in such an environment
	6	Lack of information from the City
	6	City Council members not always well informed
	6	Neighborhoods go through long process, but input is ultimately disregarded. Neighborhood groups are played off of other groups in providing input
	6	Recognition of designated citizen participation group is important – it sets clear expectations
	6	Problems when there <u>isn't</u> a clear process – and when an anticipated process isn't run through the neighborhood association (a la Whittier and Sabri...)
	6	City / everyone came to neighborhood when neighborhoods could provide NRP funds – but they see no need to talk to neighborhoods now
	6	General skepticism- Is the City really going to do what they say they will? Huge volunteer efforts have been made – and then volunteers are betrayed. City is losing the (vast) skills of citizens – which should be valued
Planning	1	Meetings on development led to anger. Neighborhood felt input had no impact. Neighborhood board is guilty as well as City
	1	City approved Lofts on Arts project despite neighborhood recommendations, has negative impact on pedestrian feel
	1	Multi unit housing development created unnecessary rancor in neighborhood
	2	Planning commission appears to be working on such a large volume of "paper" citizens wonder how prepared they are- whether they can actually read all the materials.
	3	1980's rezoning was unscrupulous (siting industrial in residential)
	3	Lack of notification of variances
	4	Planning Commission not letting people speak (27th/Cedar)
	4	Planning Commission not listening

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Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
Planning	4	Planning Commission doesn't follow adopted plans
	4	Planning Commission doesn't listen to staff
	4	Lack of information before Planning Commission meetings
	4	Planning staff not reading available plans or doing the proper research
	5	Concentration of supportive housing – the Planning Department's interpretation of laws on the location of such housing continues to allow inappropriate concentration in some neighborhoods
	5	Community planning – the City (not NRP) has failed to live up to its promise and rhetoric about community planning for years – by doing so it has missed many opportunities to utilize the wealth of skills and ideas available among neighborhood residents
Public Works	1	Worked with Public works on traffic safety (both plus and minus):first manager deliberately stalled project in order to stop it; second manager worked to meet neighborhood needs; system is dependent on whims of individual project managers.
	1	Public Works Traffic is slow to respond to requests, won't come to neighborhood meetings
	1	Public Works disregarded neighborhood request to delay 38 th Street project in order to get good community input. Forced to rush project
	1	Bikeway planning, no results in neighborhood
	3	Pedestrian Lighting – 4 year project & gave up
	3	Pedestrian Lighting
	4	Public Works not willing to adjust/ go beyond/waive stated requirements/policies (i.e.. 2 way to 4 way stop signs, street improvements)
	4	Public Works slow response to keeping lights lit
	4	When neighborhood had \$\$ partnership with Public Works was good, now no \$\$ the partnership is bad
	5	Storm sewer separation – the process has moved along way too slowly in the Camden area
	5	Neighborhood flooding problems – Public Works came out with the right assortment of staff to develop a plan of attack, but they didn't follow through on the feedback they were given (good/bad)
	5	Lake St reconstruction and Greenway construction – these processes have been difficult at times but the effective involvement of neighborhood committees has kept things moving in the right direction
	6	West Broadway redevelopment – City disregarded citizen input. It was a lost opportunity to add amenities and to make the project better

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Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
Police Department	1	Police didn't have capacity to fulfill commitments of COPS grant, didn't provide information to neighborhood
	1	Police department decision to eliminate CCP/SAFE
	4	CCP/SAFE not taking complaints seriously
	4	CCP/SAFE not available
	4	Police Athletic League personnel's indifference to traffic rules others must keep
	5	COPSIRF process – after the neighborhood and the precinct worked well together to develop their strategy for this NRP reserve fund, higher-ups in the Police Dept. ignored what they had mutually agreed upon
Regulatory Services	1	Z & P committee approved Restaurant license upgrade without community input
	2	Zoning and licensing – staff works personally w/applicant so by the time the public hearing is held it's a done deal
	3	Zoning not sending out public notices "TONIC" (nightclub) –late notice
	3	Problem Property- deal with police was effective – New PP (Problem Property) initiative de-railed it
	3	Inspections not happening – focus is on rental- homeowners are "safe" - telephone nightmare - inspections seem arbitrary -short staffed
	3	Abandoned house for 13 yrs
	4	Inspection enforcement is not even-handed
	4	Inspectors are not available
	4	Liquor license hearings are being held in the neighborhoods by the city but not with the neighborhood group
	5	Small business assistance – 2 small businesses in the Camden are trying to establish restaurants in the community and run into nothing but road blocks at city hall – the message: don't try to do business in the City of Minneapolis
CPED / MCDA	6	Housing Inspections – citizens involved, but rules and processes seem to protect bad landlords
	1	City disregarded neighborhood input on Sears development
	1	CPED fees
	1	Shoving CPED fees on neighborhoods

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Office/Department/Agency	Group #	Comment
CPED / MCDA	2	N'hood comes too late in the development process n'hoods should be approached <u>before</u> final plans CPED Housing & MPRB
	2	Seems like new CPED does not fully understand their new roles- MCDA had a clearer sense –Still transitioning. One hand does not know what the other hand is doing
	2	Fee guidelines CPED developed with <u>no</u> citizen participation
	3	“River Run” (development) 90% public funding-nobody’s happy- undermined upper Mississippi River management
	3	Quarry n’hood most impacted is Windom Park but not notified because not in neighborhood
	3	MCDA 4 acre undeveloped land –did RFP but nothing done
	3	CPED Admin fees- n’hoods shouldn’t be charged
	4	CPED slow response
	4	CPED attitude is find reasons to stop or block a project or make it more expensive
	4	CPED views its clients as developers and businesses not citizens
	4	CPED doing NRP contracts
	4	CPED fees for doing NRP contracts
	5	Penn/Lowry redevelopment planning – after gathering neighborhood input to devise a neighborhood and pedestrian-friendly plan, MCDA abandoned the plan for more of a suburban-style approach when a developer backed out
	5	CPED policy to charge project fees to NRP neighborhoods
	6	Commercial development – CPED tied up efforts / put them on hold
Other	4	The City's website is difficult to navigate
	4	The City doesn't ably use web technology to enable communications/participation
	5	Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee – this process has wasted peoples' time in 3-hour meetings that don't go anywhere
	5	Community Environmental Advisory Committee – “opportunity” to participate is provided to people but the process seems designed to burnout people
	6	HPC – citizens were told “we have no policy on that”
	6	Concerned about the “emerging power of the Center for Neighborhoods” – so called “big thinkers” (Center tried to redefine a neighborhood issue despite tons of input, people don't like being told what to think)
	6	Is the City recognizing the input from the Center for Neighborhood or from <u>actual</u> neighborhoods?
	6	Lack of clarity regarding role of Center for Neighborhoods
	6	Concerned about Center for Neighborhoods trying to set / change the agenda

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Attachment A

Q2. At what points in the different decision making processes (i.e. zoning variance requests, planned public works projects, proposed city ordinances and policies etc.) should individual and organization input be solicited?

Group #		Comment
Before - During - After	1	General consensus that neighborhoods should be informed up front on all projects, and should be given opportunity to define what input they would like to have and when
	1	Council members need to notify neighborhoods immediately
	1	Neighborhoods should be solicited up front about community input process
	1	Before and as needed
	1	Need after process evaluation to identify and fix problems
	2	Any major project/development Policy should start with n'hood review and flow up to the City. Looking for balance in information going back and forth in City's goal VS neighborhood goals.
	2	N'hoods always reacting -want to be in a more proactive position with City planners
	2	N'hoods want to be involved: <u>before</u> plan is drafted, <u>during</u> -when the plan gets changed n'hood saw first plan but not subsequent plans. When n'hood finally notified-too late for citizen input. <u>After</u> to evaluate the process & final product
	2	Early involvement between City /agency department informs them of the n'hoods vision or plan
	2	Saw first plan but not subsequent plans. When neighborhood finally notified too late for citizen input. <u>After</u> to evaluate the process & final product.
	2	N'hoods want to be involved: <u>before</u> plan is drafted, <u>during</u> -when the plan gets changed n'hood saw first plan but not subsequent plans. When n'hood finally notified-too late for citizen input. <u>After</u> to evaluate the process & final product.
	3	Supposition of question is city-driven ,should be driven by n'hood - before, during & after
	3	Before during and after are all important
	3	Need info from City first, need relevant info
	3	Need ongoing information/communication
	4	Everybody at all levels should be involving citizens before and during and after
	5	Very early, and anytime anything changes (BOTH are very important)
	5	Before, during AND after (to learn from the process)
	5	It is imperative that the developer submit their plan to the impacted neighborhood as well as the City, and the City should treat neighborhood input as more than just "advisory"
	5	The neighborhood's history and character should be taken into consideration in the decision-making process

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	Group #	Comment
Before - During - After	5	The City must empower citizens to plan well
	5	Before, during AND after (to learn from the process
	6	Neighborhoods should be involved in every step – at the beginning, midway through to check in on progress, and at the end to evaluate the project / process.
	6	City needs to be better at educating residents and setting parameters for process – what's up for discussion vs. what's not
	6	City departments should be prepared in dealing with neighborhoods – they should learn about the neighborhood, and read the NRP plan
	6	Neighborhoods should be involved in every step – at the beginning, midway through to check in on progress, and at the end to evaluate the project / process.
General / Structure	1	Neighborhoods don't have capacity/expertise to keep up on technical issues
	1	Neighborhood don't understand process, and neighborhood input is often rejected by City
	1	Neighborhoods should have input on design
	1	Neighborhoods should have opportunity to feel like a partner
	1	Neighborhood "eccentrics" become waste of time
	1	Disconnect with developers on how to get to common ground
	1	
		City disregards input, as resident I chose to live in neighborhood without high-rises, that is now out window
	1	Don't want CP to bog process down
	1	City's idea of "before" is after they have already made decision
	1	Get input, and then don't listen to it
	2	Experience level of n'hood and organization/participation may not be there yet.
	2	
		City resources need to be directed toward developing relationship plans, sharing goals- working with staff.
	2	The level of involvement should be in accordance with the size/scope/duration of project.
	2	Working w/developers who may not want to work with n'hood. City help to make developers accountable to the n'hood.

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Q2. At what points in the different decision making processes (i.e. zoning variance requests, planned public works projects, proposed city ordinances and policies etc.) should individual and organization input be solicited?

	Group #	Comment
General / Structure	2	N'hood has contract w/City to participate in the Citizen Engagement with the City
	2	If City is in a "change" mode then it needs to be working with/engage the n'hoods now.
	3	Sometimes issues/questions, etc. should be City driven- i.e. in bringing issue to the neighborhood – notify n'hood org in close proximity- issue that is technically in another n'hood
	3	Development- n'hood has system & steps for notification.
	3	Told wrong neighborhood organization - problems along neighborhood borders
	3	Directed developers to wrong n'hood
	3	Neighborhood should have someone who is an expert in zoning
	3	If your good at zoning you can manipulate it
	3	Not enough information at n'hood meeting
	3	Need <u>clearer</u> process
	5	Development should be done only if the neighborhood has identified it as a need and is fully involved in the process
	5	Not all development decisions can ultimately be made by the each neighborhood – however, neighborhood input is still very important
	5	Before projects and decisions are considered at the neighborhood level, there should be better neighborhood and citizen involvement in shaping the City's overall goals and policies for such projects – once that occurs, neighborhoods should be willing to share equitably in the implementation of such goals
	5	The City needs to do a better job of articulating its goals – so, early on, neighborhoods can creatively address such goals in their planning
	5	Do we really need a new ordinance that establishes a citizen-engagement process? NRP is a pretty effective organizational structure already in place
	5	If the City does establish a new citizen engagement system, it needs to CLEARLY ARTICULATE what input neighborhoods will have (e.g. for some decisions, neighborhood input can only be ignored or overturned by a super majority of the Council)
	5	Why would this ordinance process be any different from other ones?
	6	Processes get confusing – many, many points in the process

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	Group #	Comment
General / Structure	6	Input needs to be recorded in formal staff reports – reports that see the light of day
	6	Lots of information is often presented – there needs to be better vehicle for the specifics
	6	City often looks at the big issues – meanwhile, neighborhoods are getting run over by small things
	6	City should pay attention to smaller issues too – they can become big issues
	6	In a big, efficient system, important little things get lost
	6	All departments should have a part of / “do” citizen participation
	6	Move of responsibility of citizen participation from Planning to Communications seems like a move from Substance to PR
	6	Citizens would rather have a <u>real</u> voice than a token (but larger) voice
	6	How citizens are involved is important <u>regardless</u> of NRP

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- Q3. What actions should the City of Minneapolis take to demonstrate that the voices of individuals and the community are valued and will be heard in the City's decision-making processes? Why is the action important?

Theme	Group #	Comment
Accountability	2	N'hoods can demonstrate results by outcomes & City needs to value it. Human capital & \$ leverage.
	2	City needs to add n'hood concerns to developer contracts.
	2	Citizen Participation contracts – they've worked well for 30 years
	3	City ignore own policy and neighborhood position
	3	Give the n'hood an explanation when input isn't used
	3	Bad investment if City doesn't respect input
	4	City needs a way to self-evaluate attitude/behavior towards citizens
	4	annual town hall meeting with neighborhood board presidents and top elected/department heads
	5	
	5	If the City doesn't follow things already in place, why should we think the City leadership will value our input?
Attitude	5	Do we believe <u>each</u> neighborhood organization has the real capacity to deliver effective citizen input that is representative of the neighborhood – if not, what should the City do to assure better representation?
	1	Be civil, respond promptly,
	1	Only criteria is financial investment of developers, neighborhood input takes back seat to development
	2	N'hood input should be taken "seriously" by the City
	2	City does not see the value--- n'hoods are a nuisance
	3	If they don't value the input the people will stop volunteering- stop being engaged
	3	Views of neighborhoods as partners has diminished. Mayor needs to stop diverting funds from decisions of neighborhoods -- stop attempts to take funding away
	3	Respect- elected officials <u>need</u> to respect NRP
	4	Change attitude
	4	Change expectations
	5	The City should declare a city-wide NRP celebration in 2005 to recognize the wealth of volunteer commitments and successes
	6	City doesn't get built on theories... (it gets built by real people working hard)

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Q3. What actions should the City of Minneapolis take to demonstrate that the voices of individuals and the community are valued and will be heard in the City's decision-making processes? Why is the action important?

Theme	Group #	Comment
Availability	1	Council Member outreach is hit or miss
	1	Public hearing in middle of week, middle of day downtown discourages participation
	2	City make staff available at times when citizens are available – evenings-weekends—especially for public mtgs. hearings.
	2	City should come to n'hood for meaningful input before pen meets paper.
	2	People want more “face-to-face” time w/staff & elected officials.
	3	Expectation that City or CM staff/office will come to meetings to help through process
	4	Council Members have their offices in the ward
	5	City Council should be more involved with their neighborhoods as they plan
	5	The City should more actively encourage people to get involved in their neighborhoods
Communication	6	Take the meetings to the people – convenient times and places
	1	City Council should contact neighborhood upfront on all issues
	1	Need for better communication
	1	Should be done in efficient way
	1	Effective filter (don't overwhelm communication process with junk)
	1	NO should be communication tool
	1	Robust web site, enter address, get feedback on what's happening within certain distance (e.g. 4 miles)
	2	This (tonight's meeting) is a good step toward citizen participation in the City's <i>Citizen Engagement</i> policies.
	2	Communications & facilitation skills for both City and n'hood to understand how each works
	3	Regular contact with CM dept
	3	Arrangement for neighborhoods to have access to the Mayor
	3	The community engagement study is screwy: no one knows about it
	4	Use web technology to increase communication/participation
	6	Read the NRP plan
	6	Need for better communication
	6	Something similar to First Call for Help would be useful – but keep it simple
	6	Important because it keeps citizens engaged and helps the city function better
	6	“One call does it all” is important – but range of info by many employees is important too
	6	Who are the council members reps for this process?

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION FOCUS GROUP

Subject: Citizen Participation

Sponsored by: Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program

October 13, 2004

Attachment A

- Q3. What actions should the City of Minneapolis take to demonstrate that the voices of individuals and the community are valued and will be heard in the City's decision-making processes? Why is the action important?

Theme	Group #	Comment
Flexibility	1	Let neighborhood decide if it has capacity to be involved and if it wishes to be involved
	2	Individual citizens should still have access to the city
	4	City needs a policy that allows flexibility for PW projects
	4	City recognize the individuality of each neighborhood
	6	1-2 page Master Plan (without all the details for the NRP plan) would be useful – should be written by neighborhood and allow the neighborhood to clearly articulate what it wants
Principles	1	Why? “We <u>are</u> the city, we should be valued.”
	1	If neighborhoods have ownership, they add value, leverage investments
	2	N’hood organizations are the primary forum for getting Citizen Engagement in the city
	2	Basic concepts not “touchy feely” - basic culture is “The way we do things here”
	3	Treat n’hood as a partner
	4	
		Clear statement by city that neighborhood organizations are the city's main conduit for citizen participation
	4	Have a city charter action on neighborhood organizations as the city's main conduit for citizen participation and funding
Powers	6	Neighborhood level input (not regional input) should be considered official
	2	“Policies” need a broader level of input.
	2	For development issues, n’hood is bad org. for input.
	3	N’hoods have access through NRP Policy Board (PB) not doing its job in that respect
	4	City departments direct applicants to present request to neighborhood prior to application & applicants should show proof of neighborhood presentation before application
	4	Put more formal neighborhood approvals into the decision processes
	4	Neighborhood representatives selected by neighborhoods on the Planning Commission
	4	Formalize a way to have meaningful city business at monthly neighborhood meetings
	5	Neighborhood organizations should be significantly involved in zoning decisions that affect them
	5	Give neighborhoods more advisory power to make them real participants
	5	Give neighborhoods a role in the hiring of City planners assigned to them

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Theme	Group #	Comment
Public Service	1	Education process on how process works-help neighborhoods be proactive on planning issues, etc
	1	Ombudsman for neighborhood to listen, pay attention, explain things, contact person, don't always get return calls
	3	Need tools to establish relationships – need to know staff / department liaisons to neighborhoods
	6	Coordinate City and neighborhood planning efforts
	6	Staff should know what they do, know more about what their department does (and who within the department does it – not “it’s not my job”) and have a broader range of knowledge about how what the department does fits into city-wide efforts
	6	Need for staff who will search out answers and get back to you
	6	Important because it keeps citizens engaged and helps the city function better
	6	“One call does it all” is important – but range of info by many employees is important too
Structure / Funding	1	Continued financial support of citizen participation and NRP
	3	Assign NRP neighborhood specialists to be City agent-neighborhood liaison
	3	Look at strong Mayor form of government --who is the City? – It’s the CM
	3	Help with 501-(c)3 applications
	3	Neighborhood staff run interference – cultivate relationships –but staff may change –be stretched learn to fight like tigers
	4	Permanent funding of NRP
	4	Keep money at the neighborhood level
	5	Suspend the CPED project fees – it’s nothing but a money grab by the City
	5	Fully fund NRP
	5	Stop using NRP as the City’s slush fund
	5	Having a meeting about the CPED fee policy is a necessity
	2	N’hoods need to be able to tell the City that they are doing “value added” work and should be involved, listened to and funded.
	6	Make funding for neighborhoods a priority
	6	De-funding neighborhoods hurts participation – outreach / mailings / staff aren’t free
	6	Funding allows neighborhoods a voice against developers

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Theme	Group #	Comment
Structure / Funding	6	Need for \$\$ / discussion to figure out the best processes. (If the City doesn't think neighborhoods are doing a good job now, do they really think that taking away \$\$ used for outreach will help them do a better job???)
	6	Get rid of foundation reps - work proactively – all jurisdictions
	6	In Planning Districts, individual voices get lost (St. Paul spends more on 13 districts than Mpls. does on 66 neighborhoods)

Citizen Participation Survey Results

- #1 Please rate the effectiveness of the following offices, departments and agency in providing citizens the opportunity to participate in their decisions.**

	<i>Very Effective</i>	%	<i>Somewhat Effective</i>	%	<i>Not Effective</i>	%	<i>No Opinion</i>	%	Total Response
Mayors office	3	4	16	24	34	51	14	21	67
City Council	8	12	40	60	13	19	6	9	67
Coordinators Office	1	1	8	13	22	33	36	53	67
CPED Housing	2	3	21	32	25	37	19	28	67
CPED Economic Development	2	3	17	25	35	52	13	20	67
CPED Planning	5	7	15	22	34	51	13	20	67
Fire Department	17	25	20	30	4	6	26	39	67
Police Department	13	19	34	51	10	15	10	15	67
Public Works	5	8	29	43	23	34	10	15	67
Inspections	2	3	28	42	20	30	17	25	67
NRP	55	82	8	12	1	2	3	4	67

- #2 Please rate the effectiveness of your neighborhood organization in providing citizens the opportunity to participate in their decisions.**

	<i>Very Effective</i>	%	<i>Somewhat Effective</i>	%	<i>Not Effective</i>	%	<i>No Opinion</i>	%	Total Response
	47	71	14	21	3	4	3	4	67

- #3 Please rate each office, department and agency listed below on your perception of how it values citizen participation.**

	<i>High</i>	%	<i>Medium</i>	%	<i>Low</i>	%	<i>No Opinion</i>	%	Total Response
Mayors office	8	12	10	15	38	57	11	16	67
City Council	12	18	25	37	21	32	9	13	67
Coordinators Office	3	4	9	23	25	28	30	45	67
CPED Housing	0	0	12	18	41	61	14	21	67
CPED Economic Development	1	1	9	13	44	67	13	19	67
CPED Planning	4	6	12	18	35	52	16	24	67
Fire Department	14	22	19	28	11	16	23	34	67
Police Department	20	30	25	38	13	19	9	13	67
Public Works	3	4	23	35	30	45	11	16	67
Inspections	4	6	22	33	25	37	16	24	67
NRP	53	79	10	16	1	1	3	4	67

Source: Responses of participants in the October 13, 2004 NRP/City discussion on Citizen Participation