



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Date: November 9, 2006
To: Mayor Rybak and City Council Members
Neighborhood Revitalization Program Policy Board Members
From: Steven Bosacker, City Coordinator
Subject: Community Engagement Report

I am pleased to provide you with the enclosed Community Engagement Report, submitted today in response to the City Council's direction of May 12, 2006, to review and summarize previously documented feedback, reports and recommendations on the City of Minneapolis's current community engagement system and activities.

This report arrives at a moment when we see dramatic new evidence of how quickly our city is changing. The Minneapolis Public Schools report that almost a third of Minneapolis students now speak a language other than English in the home! Clearly this is an important time to assess the effectiveness of the City's current community engagement system, and to listen to the voices of the diverse community stakeholders that are summarized in this report.

This report also provides useful background for two upcoming financial and policy decisions. One is the allocation of future City funding (post-2007) for citizen participation contracts and other ongoing community engagement activities, given the expected reduction of Community Development Block Grant funds and increasing pressure on the General Fund. The other is the purpose and operation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program following its final year of authorized annual funding in 2009.

While specific recommendations on these topics are beyond the scope of this report, in recent years the City has received a wealth of relevant input from a variety of community stakeholders, which the staff work group has summarized here for your review and consideration.

At a time of dramatic demographic changes and constrained public resources, this report lays the groundwork for a comprehensive discussion of the scope and structure of the City's community engagement system, and suggests a number of important and achievable improvements in how the City of Minneapolis currently engages the wider community when making decisions.

I look forward to the discussion of this report before the full City Council in January 2007. In the meantime, I encourage you to review and consider this timely report.

Enclosure.



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