

Sixth Annual State of the Neighborhoods Address

The Neighborhood Movement

Where Do We Go from Here?

5:00 p.m.

Social gathering / refreshments

5:30 p.m.

Welcome: Andriana Abariotes, Board President, Center for Neighborhoods

Opening remarks: George Latimer, Macalester College

State of the Neighborhood Address:

Gretchen Nicholls, Executive Director, Center for Neighborhoods

Comments: Neighborhood leaders

Jeff Hayden, Board President, Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association

Sheri Smith, Board President, Merriam Park Community Council

6:30 p.m.

Discussion: Facilitated by George Latimer

Respondents:

Don Fraser, Past Mayor of Minneapolis

Ron McKinley, Wilder Foundation

Steve Cramer, Minneapolis Community Development Agency



The Center for Neighborhoods is an organization that connects citizens, neighborhood and community groups, allied organizations and government officials to forge partnerships for change.

State of the Neighborhoods Address

The Neighborhood Movement – Where Do We Go from Here?

Neighborhood organizations today find themselves at a crossroads. Amidst a growing sense of accomplishment and success, a heightened rate of civic involvement and participation, neighborhood-based community development faces an uncertain future. To create our future we must learn from our past. By establishing common values that will drive the future of the neighborhood movement, leaders can identify and articulate what they will need to succeed, as well as ignite the imagination of what can be achieved together. The need for a permanent funding source to support and sustain this work is essential. And while there is much to celebrate, it is critical that we take time to seriously assess the challenges before us. The opportunity to create a long-term vision for the neighborhood movement in the Twin Cities is at hand.

Defining the Future of the Neighborhood Movement

I. BROADER PARTICIPATION

Central purpose or role of neighborhood organizations is to provide an on-going, easily accessible forum for effective, informed, citizen participation on public policy issues. The level of citizen participation is one of our primary measures of success.

More culturally inclusive

The demographics of our cities are changing – providing more diverse interests and needs within a geographic community. Neighborhoods need more effective methods for engaging diverse cultures. Neighborhood organizations must provide opportunities for bridging diverse community interests into collective action. Organizational structure is often a barrier to enhanced involvement.

Facilitate institutional partnerships to focus on community goals

By bringing institutional, organizational, and business partners to the table, neighborhoods can facilitate broader buy-in and support for community goals, and possible access additional resources to strengthen their efforts.

Organizational structure and leadership development

The future calls for leaders that are invested in building organizations and activities that invite broad participation and develop new leaders, rather than restrict power and decision-making to a limited few.

Reinvigorate the importance of community building and social capital

A focus on the core values of community building and civic engagement will provide a strong foundation and purpose for neighborhood work. All activities and efforts should be gauged by how well these goals are accomplished.

II. PROMOTE FUNDING AND SUPPORT TO VARIOUS SCALES OF COLLABORATION

Issues are relevant at different scales or economies. Block clubs provide the most effective means for getting to know your neighbor. Affordable housing can't be solved at the neighborhood level. Commercial corridor revitalization requires a broader coalition of organizations and interests to have an impact. How can we provide resources to support the various scales of collaboration that are necessary for neighborhood work to be successful?

We must be able to bridge more fluently to broader geographic areas of focus. Neighborhoods have demonstrated greater fundraising

success if they cluster with other neighborhoods to form larger geographic areas. To have impact on issues that extend beyond neighborhood boundaries we must find ways to support collaboration at various scales. Neighborhoods must also work to bring our values to citywide and regional policy discussions.

III. DEFINE OUR MEASURES OF SUCCESS AND DISTILL WAYS TO TRACK IT

To create professional organizations that are respected and appreciated by the broader public, neighborhoods have the opportunity to develop standards that demonstrate accountability and increase public trust in their processes and procedures. We must demonstrate and document how our efforts are trying to meet our goals.

What do we need to succeed? We must begin the process of defining our future capacity needs to accomplish the goals we set out to achieve.

Why Minneapolis and St. Paul need to work together

- ▶ By framing common messages and goals, and by building broader awareness about the work of neighborhoods we can build a broader base of support for the neighborhood movement.
- ▶ A joint promotional campaign can encourage citizens to participate in neighborhood organizations.
- ▶ The opportunity to learn lessons from each other's work.
- ▶ Identify ways to engage in citywide, subregional and regional efforts.
- ▶ Inform policy discussions on transportation, smart growth, and other issues that impact livability and land use.

Center for Neighborhoods

Listing of Current Projects

Sign up to receive email updates on future events and activities for each of these projects.

Visit the Center's web site for detailed descriptions of each project and for listings of our project partners.

Affordable Housing Technical Assistance

The Center is currently working to bridge relationships between neighborhoods seeking to explore affordable housing needs and strategies, and technical organizations offering affordable housing expertise. Resources soon to be available include a Handbook for neighborhoods on how to be an effective partner with developers, and our annual workshop in October 2001 on Strengthening Neighborhood Partnerships with Community Development Corporations for St. Paul and Minneapolis neighborhoods.

Commercial Corridors Institute

Through the creation of a Learning Team of ten major commercial corridor revitalization initiatives in Minneapolis and St. Paul the Institute sets out to provide a series of trainings, working sessions, and informal discussions about strategies to strengthen their efforts. The focus is to create an environment more supportive of the increasing number of community-based efforts that seek to reposition and revitalize their commercial corridors, particularly those major commercial thoroughfares facing significant changes in investment, transportation, and demographic patterns. Future activities will include advocacy for policy changes on the city, county and state level, (i.e. new state road design standards for urban corridors). A report will be soon available on our lessons from past workshops.

Exploring Methods and Models of Inclusive Organizations

Neighborhood associations seeking to broaden their resident involvement will learn from existing efforts that involve youth, renters, new immigrants and communities of color in neighborhood-based activities. The initiative will look at organizing strategies, organizational structures, and collaboration models that work to enhance participation of diverse cultural and economic interests within the communities.

Neighborhood Futures Project

This project is promoting efforts secure sustainable funding for high quality citizen participation services offered through Minneapolis neighborhood associations and St. Paul District

Councils. Over the next two years the Center will be working with neighborhood organizations, city staff and elected officials and private foundations to develop shared success measures for citizen participation activities and to identify sustainable funding sources for neighborhood citizen participation activities.

Public Art Policy Initiative

The Center for Neighborhoods, in partnership with the Minneapolis Office of Cultural Affairs, Intermedia Arts, and Forecast Public Artworks, will be coordinating a year-long public dialogue to develop recommendations for public art policies for the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County. To do so, a Public Art Policy Task Force has been established consisting of representatives from community groups, arts organizations, artists, elected officials, and city and county staff to establish a long term approach to define government's role in support of public art. Community-wide discussions on public art will occur in August and October of 2001.

Restorative Justice Evaluation

To strengthen the field of Restorative Justice, the Center has been working with seven restorative justice initiatives in Minneapolis and St. Paul to develop an evaluation tool that aggregates information about the impacts of their work. The initiative is designed to build greater recognition of the impacts and outcomes of community-based restorative justice, increase financial resources and support, and share information on restorative justice models with community groups seeking to start their own.

Neighborhood Technical Assistance Program

The Center's T.A. Program connects St. Paul and Minneapolis neighborhood groups with the technical assistance they are seeking to improve their management, outreach and program capacities to revitalize community livability for all residents. Resources available to neighborhoods include an on-line Neighborhood Resource Guide available at www.center4neighborhoods.org, organizational self-assessment tool, technical assistance grants, topic workshops (on historic preservation, environment, etc.) and support for neighborhoods to develop and fund multi-neighborhood collaborations.

Center for Neighborhoods

2600 East Franklin, Minneapolis, MN 55406
612-339-3480 • www.center4neighborhoods.org