

# Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program

## Cedar Riverside NRP Phase II Neighborhood Action Plan

Adopted by CRNRP on September 6, 2012

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **NRP Phase II Planning Process**

In early 2012, the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood Revitalization Program (CRNRP) began a partnership with the University of Minnesota's CHANCE program and the West Bank Community Coalition (WBCC) to undertake an extensive community engagement effort. The goal of the project was to determine community priorities for the use of the neighborhood's NRP Phase II allocation and to inform the work of the WBCC as the designated citizen participation group.

Over the course of six months, the partnership hosted 14 focus groups and administered 300+ surveys in multiple languages. Overall, 500+ residents and community stakeholders participated. The CHANCE students compiled a report of their findings and presented to each organization's Board of Directors.

For the CRNRP, the report was used to inform the strategies and allocations for the Cedar Riverside NRP Phase II Action Plan. In July 2012, a draft plan was released for public comment. Five additional focus groups and two large community meetings were held with over 100 residents participating. Feedback from this final step was incorporated into the Plan.

On September 6, 2012, the CRNRP Board of Directors approved the final Cedar Riverside NRP Phase II Plan.

### **Neighborhood Description**

#### **Boundaries**

The Cedar-Riverside neighborhood is named after the intersection of the two main avenues of the neighborhood, Cedar and Riverside. The neighborhood is triangular-shaped with three definitive boundaries: the Mississippi River on the east side, Interstate 94 on the south side, and Interstate 35W on the west side.

#### **Demographics and total population**

According to 2010 Census data, the Cedar Riverside neighborhood (census tract 1048) has a population of 8,094 persons, a 7.19% increase since 2000. Of the total population 38.5% are White, 45.2% are Black (includes African Americans and Africans), .06% are American Indian, 10.9% are Asian, 3% are multiracial and the remaining 1.7% fall into the "other" category. 96.6% are non-Hispanic. American Community Survey (ACS) data for 2005-2009 reports that of those who call Cedar Riverside home, 58.5% are Native born and 41.4% are Foreign born.

ACS data also reports that of the population over age 25, 38.3% do not have a high school diploma, 23.2% have a high school diploma, 18.2% have some college, 9.1% have

a bachelor's degree, 2.7 a master's degree, 4.9% a doctorate degree and the remaining 3.6% have a professional school degree.

The median household income in Cedar Riverside (in 2009 inflation adjusted dollars) is \$14,107. Over half of the families in the neighborhood live below poverty level.

#### Physical environment and key institutions

The Cedar Riverside neighborhood is home to three major institutions, including the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College and Fairview University Hospital. It has four distinct residential areas, including the Riverside Park area (primarily single family), Riverside Plaza and Cedars area (dense multi-unit), Seven Corners (multi-unit) and the Cedars East area (a mix of single family and townhome developments). Cedar Riverside has two parks, include Riverside Park and Currie Park. The neighborhood has two primary commercial corridors, including Riverside and Cedar Avenues.

**Cedar Riverside  
NRP Phase II**

**Funding Allocation**

Total Plan Amount \$704,577<sup>1</sup>

Funding Allocations Based on Plan Components

<b><u>Plan Component</u></b>	<b><u>Plan Amount</u></b>
Housing <sup>2</sup>	\$418,703
Safety and Neighborhood Image	\$29,570
Community Building and Culture	\$23,500
Public Infrastructure and Community Spaces	\$51,000
Economic Development, Education and Training Implementation	\$47,500
	\$134,304 <sup>3</sup>
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>\$704,577.00</u></b>

Community Oriented Public Safety Reserve<sup>4</sup> \$15,000.00

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<sup>1</sup> In 2010, the Minneapolis City Council passes a resolution limiting each neighborhood's ability to contract the full allocation. As it stands, Cedar Riverside can contract up to \$465,142

<sup>2</sup> Each neighborhood is required to allocate 70% of its funds to housing related activities.

<sup>3</sup> Of the total implementation, \$46,075 was early access funds to Phase II Plan development

<sup>4</sup> A program implemented by the City of Minneapolis in 2004 awarded \$15,000 to the neighborhood for special safety initiatives that were conducted by the Police Department. This is not part of the total allocation.

## **ACTION PLAN COMPONENTS**

### **Housing**

Phase II allocation \$418,703

Unlike many neighborhoods in the City, the majority of housing in Cedar Riverside is rental (91.6%) and is in structures with 2 or more units (88.8%). The finding of the community engagement work conducted by CHANCE students at the University of MN revealed that improving the housing stock, providing landlord/tenant education and increasing homeownership opportunities were the top three priorities in the housing category.

#### **Goal 1: Maintain and improve the existing housing stock in the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood.**

*Objective 1: Provide education and financing tools to promote energy efficiency, address deferred maintenance and encourage property upkeep.*

Strategy 1: Develop a grant/revolving loan fund to provide resources for energy improvements, including (but not limited to) solar energy. **\$ 80,000**

Strategy 2: Capitalize a grant/loan fund with flexible terms to provide funds for home improvements to owner occupied properties, including condominiums and townhomes. **\$96,203**

*Objective 2: Support resident and stakeholder involvement in identifying issues and developing solutions relating to housing issues in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.*

Strategy 1: Provide staff support for a housing committee to oversee the housing components of the Plan. **\$15,000**

#### **Goal 2: Provide and ensure safe, decent and affordable housing opportunities for all Cedar Riverside residents.**

*Objective 1: Ensure housing codes are enforced in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.*

Strategy 1: Develop a program to provide, organizing and leadership development opportunities to renters regarding tenant/landlord issues, rights and responsibilities. **\$50,000**

Strategy 2: Partner with City of Minneapolis to increase the level of housing code enforcement in the neighborhood. (Included in housing goal 1, objective 2, strategy 1)

*Objective 2: Ensure rental property owners have access to resources for property maintenance.*

Strategy 1: Capitalize a loan fund with flexible terms to provide funds for improvements to rental properties, including leasehold cooperatives. **\$140,000**

*Objective 3: Promote the development of new housing along transit corridors.*

Strategy 1: Work in partnership with developers to identify and leverage resources that will generate financial returns for the community.

Strategy 2: Promote the redevelopment of the Dania Hall site for mixed-use (housing/commercial) development.

**Goal 3: Increase home ownership opportunities in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.**

*Objective 1: Encourage and increase access to affordable homeownership opportunities.*

Strategy 1: Provide entry cost assistance of up to \$7,500 to families living at or below 80% of Metro Median Income. **\$37,500**

Strategy 2: Partner with organizations that provide homebuyer education and counseling to increase the number of buyer-ready households in the community.

Strategy 3: Partner with housing organizations to create long term affordable home ownership opportunities in the neighborhood.

## **Safety and Neighborhood Image**

Phase II allocation: \$29,570

Although crime rates have been decreasing in the community over the last several years, safety and neighborhood identify was the # 1 priority identified by the community.

Those completing surveys and attending focus groups felt that increasing personal safety, reducing livability crimes and making physical improvement to the community's infrastructure were top issues needing to be addressed by community groups and public agencies.

**Goal 1: Strengthen relationships among residents, businesses, stakeholders and the MPD to improve safety and livability in the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood.**

*Objective 1: Develop and support programs to increase opportunities for people to come together in order to address safety and livability issues.*

Strategy 1: Provide staff support and resources for a West Bank Safety Committee. **(See Implementation section)**

Strategy 2: Promote and organize resident-led safety groups to create a network of informed and active residents. **\$2,000**

Strategy 3: Develop partnerships with residents, businesses and institutional partners to conduct regular safety walks in the community. **\$1,000**

Strategy 4: Work in partnerships with the Safety Center to host crime prevention workshops and other safety activities. **\$10,000**

Strategy 5: Support the expansion of Youth Restorative Justice Programs in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. **\$2,000**

*Objective 2: Increase the amount of resources available to address crime and safety issues in the neighborhood.*

Strategy 1: Provide and leverage resources to increase the police presence in the neighborhood through police buy-back. \$15,000 COPSIRF 2004 Program (not part of total allocation)

Strategy 2: Work with residents, businesses, stakeholders and the MPD to develop a comprehensive crime and safety plan in order to leverage and coordinate community assets and resources. (Included in Safety goal 1, objective 1, strategy 1).

## **Goal 2: Make physical improvements to increase safety and improve the image of the neighborhood.**

*Objective 1: Implement efforts to improve the physical environment in order to deter crime, increase personal safety and promote a positive neighborhood image.*

Strategy 1: Provide resources to support beautification projects in the neighborhood, including (but not limited to) community clean ups, community gardens, boulevard planters and public art. **\$5,000**

Strategy 2: Provide training to local business and property owners on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in order to deter crime. **\$1,000**

Strategy 3: Work with City staff and property owners to implement projects that increase lighting, especially along transit routes. **\$3,000**

Strategy 4: Incorporate pedestrian safety into all City of Minneapolis initiated or supported infrastructure and development projects. **\$3,070**

Strategy 5: Partner with residents and local business to implement methods to deter, report and quickly remove graffiti, including creating murals at locations. **\$2,500**

## **Community Building and Culture**

Phase II allocation: \$23,500

The Cedar Riverside neighborhood has long been a destination for diverse groups and is currently home to the largest population of East Africa immigrants in the City. When adding to the mix a large student population, high concentration of young people (57.7% of the population is under the age of 24) and long-time residents, finding common ground can often be a challenge. Community engagement efforts identified cross-

cultural understanding and sharing, arts activities, community events and programs to support youth and elders as priorities.

**Goal 1: Build social and civic connections among and between various groups in the community in order to increase participation in the neighborhood association.**

*Objective 1: Develop a variety of systems and structures for people to interact in the community.*

Strategy 1: Provide support to maintain a community building committee that will be responsible for planning community building programs and activities. (See Implementation)

Strategy 2: Host community wide events and activities that increase opportunities for civic participation and interaction with the neighborhood organization. **\$3000**

Strategy 3: Create opportunities for social interaction among elders to reduce isolation, promote access to community resources and encourage civic participation. **\$3000**

Strategy 4: Support a variety of beautification projects in the community to build social connections among diverse groups and geographic locations. **(See Safety and Neighborhood Image Goal 2, objective 1, Strategy 1)**

**Goal 2: Increase the number of programs and services available in the neighborhood, with a focus on supporting youth and elders.**

*Objective 1: Expand and support programs that meet the unique needs of the diverse groups in the community.*

Strategy 1: Provide resources to support programs that promote leadership development and improve life skills for youth, families and elders. **\$10,000**

Strategy 2: Work with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to develop and operate programming in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.

*Objective 2: Develop support systems to encourage successful, active and engaged youth.*

Strategy 1: Explore, coordinate and improve access and accountability of youth serving programs in the neighborhood. (Included in community building goal 1, objective 1, strategy 1)

Strategy 2: Expand mentorship programs in the neighborhood so every youth has multiple, quality adult relationships that build self esteem, academic excellence and life skills. (see Economic Development goal 3, objective 1, strategy 1) **\$2,500**

**Goal 3: Establish arts and culture as a focal point for community building, individual enrichment and economic development.**

Objective 1: Encourage the presence of community artists by providing needed building space.

Strategy 1: Identify and cultivate use of existing neighborhood spaces and develop new space as needed to increase the number of artistic venues in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.

*Objective 2: Encourage cultural understanding and promote neighborhood multi-cultural and inclusive events.*

Strategy 1: Organize a variety of events and arts related performances at locations throughout the community to showcase the rich and diverse history and cultures of the people of the Cedar Riverside and encourage civic participation and involvement with the neighborhood association. **\$5000**

## **Public Infrastructure and Community Spaces**

Phase II allocation: \$51,000

Over 8,000 people call the Cedar Riverside neighborhood home, however, there is a shortage of green space, community gathering space and a historic disinvestment in the public infrastructure. The CHANCE report cites outdoor green space, community space and improved roads, sidewalks and parking as priority issues for the community.

### **Goal 1: Expand and improve outdoor green spaces in the neighborhood.**

*Objective 1: Explore options to increase and improve existing green spaces in the neighborhood.*

Strategy 1: Explore ways to incorporate green space in new developments.

Strategy 2: Leverage funds to make improvements to Riverside Park. **\$10,000**

Strategy 3: Leverage funds to make improvements to Bluff Street Park, including the prairie restoration. **\$10,000**

Strategy 4: Leverage funds to make improvements to Currie Park. **\$10,000**

Strategy 5: Leverage funds to make green and open space improvements in the Cedars East section of the neighborhood. **\$10,000**

Strategy 6: Identify spaces and leverage resources to promote urban agriculture in the neighborhood as a means to address food security issues. **\$1,000**

### **Goal 2: Improve the public infrastructure to provide a safe and livable community.**

*Objective 1: Promote a safe and accessible multi-modal transportation network.*

Strategy 1: Work with the City of Minneapolis to implement plans to improve streets and sidewalks, including implementing traffic control measures where necessary.

Strategy 2: Promote the use of public transportation, biking and walking by installing bike lanes, bike racks, bus shelters, lighting and way finding signage in the neighborhood. **\$5,000**

Strategy 3: Work with residents, property owners and institutional partners to develop plans and leverage resources to address parking issues in the neighborhood.

**Goal 3: Provide accessible and adequate community spaces for all residents in the community.**

Objective 1: Implement recommendations resulting from the Community Space studies conducted during NRP Phase I.

Strategy 1: Work with residents, community partners and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to secure resources to carry out the Gym Renovation at the Brian Coyle Center. **\$5,000**

Strategy 2: Identify priorities and develop plans to increase the number of accessible community spaces available to neighborhood residents per the African Development Center Community Space Study.

## **Economic Development, Education and Training**

Phase II allocation: \$ 47,500

With the median income in Cedar Riverside just \$14,107 and over half of all households living below poverty level, priority must be given to developing mechanisms to increase wealth and assets for individuals and families. Further, by supporting the business community and connecting residents to local jobs, the income generated in the community can stay in the community.

**Goal 1: Achieve and maintain a vibrant business community that meets supply, service and retail needs of residents and businesses of the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.**

*Objective 1: Improve the physical condition and appearance of commercial areas.*

Strategy 1: Leverage public and private resources to allow commercial property owners to make façade improvements to their buildings. **\$2,500**

Strategy 2: Work in partnership with business associations, block clubs and youth groups to conduct regular cleanup activities along commercial corridors. **\$2,500**

*Objective 2: Support existing businesses and encourage new business through increased promotion, marketing and training opportunities.*

Strategy 1: In partnership with local businesses, develop and support events and activities that bring people to commercial corridors. **\$2,500**

Strategy 2: Work with organizations and educational institutions to increase the number of programs available that provide training and resources on microenterprise, small business development and strategies for maintaining a successful business. **\$10,000**

**Goal 2: Build the wealth and assets of low income residents by promoting employment and training opportunities.**

*Objective 1: Increase the number of adults and youth employed in living wage jobs.*

Strategy 1: Identify and support local job training programs that meet the unique needs of Cedar Riverside residents. **\$5,000**

Strategy 2: Develop public, non-profit and private partnerships to develop a system to connect trained workers with jobs at local institutions and businesses.

Strategy 3: Develop programs for immigrant women that provide training on financial literacy, life and employment skills, microenterprise and small business development. **\$20,000**

**Goal 3: Develop support mechanisms to ensure school success for youth and adults in the neighborhood.**

*Objective 1: Increase the number of young people completing school and going on to higher education.*

Strategy 1: Create a study area at Riverside Plaza that includes an internet hotspot, reference library and other educational materials.

Strategy 2: Strengthen youth mentorship programs, including connecting youth with students at area Universities. **\$5,000**

Strategy 3: Leverage resources to provide early childhood programming to youth and families in the community.

**Implementation**

Phase II allocation: \$134,304

**Goal 1: Assure positive outcomes for the neighborhood during implementation of remaining Phase I and the Phase II Action Plan.**

*Objective 1: Increase the effectiveness of the neighborhood organization during plan implementation.*

*Objective 2: Leverage non-NRP funds to increase project impact.*

Strategy 1: Provide planning, monitoring, evaluation, oversight and leveraging assistance to implement strategies in NRP Phase I and II plans. **\$88,229**

**NRP Phase II Plan Development:**  
\$46,075