

Corcoran Neighborhood Organization 2010-2011 Goals

Outreach

Goal: Build and diversify the volunteer pool for CNO board, committees, and other efforts to protect and improve the neighborhood.

Strategies

1. Reach out to new and existing neighborhood residents and business owners to recruit their involvement in neighborhood improvement and to foster awareness of issues that may have a positive or negative impact on the neighborhood.
2. Each year, carry out an outreach campaign to Corcoran's 5 most underrepresented blocks.
3. Recruit new volunteers at every opportunity through the efforts of staff, board members, committee chairs, and established volunteers.
4. Form a nominations committee each year and work to recruit a robust field of candidates for the annual board elections.
5. Recognize volunteer contributions through an annual awards event.
6. Host at least four general membership meetings per year.

There are additional strategies throughout this document that further our outreach goal. These strategies are marked with an "O".

Sustainability

CNO's sustainability statement: *As we aspire to move toward a truly sustainable urban community, the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization will mindfully put the principles of seventh generation thinking into practice in order to create a more socially, economically and culturally vibrant urban neighborhood. Our aim is to create within the city of Minneapolis an urban village that is connected to nature and the cycles of the seasons, restorative by design, thoughtful and compassionate in use of natural and social capital, and conscious of its stewardship for future generations.*

There are strategies throughout this document that help build a more sustainable neighborhood. They are marked with an "S".

Safety and Livability

Goal: Engage at least 500 residents each year in direct efforts to make the Corcoran neighborhood stronger against crime.

Strategies:

1. Promote active block leadership and block clubs by promoting SAFE leadership trainings, recruiting leaders at inactive blocks, and offering incentives and rewards for block club meetings. (O)
2. Foster a National Night Out event on every block in the neighborhood by recruiting new event organizers, convening an annual pre-planning event for organizers, and promoting NNO through media. (O)
3. Seek new resident-led projects that could mobilize large numbers of residents in crime prevention and community building activities.
4. Help organize a community gardening group and foster a new community garden in the neighborhood. (O, S)
5. Help organize an annual community garage sale and a greener Clean Sweep event. (O, S)

Goal: Provide a venue for community members to raise concerns and questions, and interact with CNO board and staff members.

Strategies:

1. Convene a regular gathering in the neighborhood, inviting all community members. (O)
2. Seek out new methods and venues for engaging community members. (O)
3. Depending on participation and topics raised, invite appropriate partners, e.g. Minneapolis Police / SAFE, City Council, elected officials, etc.

Land Use & Transportation / Housing

Goal: Help to resolve nuisance issues that threaten neighborhood housing.

Strategies:

1. Continue to lead Corcoran's monthly Problem Properties Caucus, a focused partnership with our City Council Member, the Minneapolis Police Department's Third Precinct, and Housing Inspections. CNO staff will work with partners and concerned residents to resolve at least 20 problem properties each year. (O)
2. Pursue swift resolution at distressed vacant properties. Advocate for rehabilitation over demolition of properties except as follows: (a) when rehabilitation is not feasible; or (b) where land use priorities per the Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan would indicate redevelopment is preferable. (S)
3. Promote swift abatement of gang graffiti by victimized property owners and provide resources such as free paint and artist services. At least biannually, promote preventative measures such as graffiti-proof fence designs. (O)
4. Help Corcoran residents—including homeowners and tenants—who are facing foreclosure via targeted outreach, and seek supportive partnership with an expert agency (e.g. Powderhorn Residents Group/PRG). (O)

Goal: Attract prospective new home buyers to the Corcoran neighborhood and help shorten the vacancy period for foreclosed housing.

Strategies:

1. Organize events (e.g. home tours) and publicize resources (e.g. homebuyer programs) to build relationships with prospective home buyers. (O)
2. Build relationships with area realtors and community groups. Publicize the affordability and amenities of the neighborhood, and participate in the annual South Minneapolis Housing Fair.

Goal: Help to maintain, improve, and make more energy efficient the Corcoran neighborhood's housing stock.

Strategies:

1. At least quarterly, publicize available CNO and third-party resources such as financing programs. (O)
2. Explore and pursue new home improvement grants and loans for property owners.
3. Foster home energy improvements and seek supportive partnership with an expert agency (e.g. Center for Energy and Environment). (O, S)
4. Educate property owners to prioritize maintenance and improvements and to avoid incompetent renovations / maintenance. (O)
5. Attract reputable home contractors to rehabilitate foreclosed / vacant / for-sale housing.

Goal: Foster participation by Corcoran residents and business owners in land use and housing issues and decisions in the neighborhood.

Strategies:

1. Hold a monthly meeting of the committees. Recruit new membership to maintain at least eight active committee members. (O)
2. Educate committee members on topics of interest such as sustainable development practices. (O, S)
3. Hear variance requests for residential and commercial building projects. Invite the whole neighborhood, with intensified outreach to neighbors within a 1-block radius, to meet with the developer / property owner prior to any official decision by local government. (O)

Goal: Advocate for redevelopment per the Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan (CMRP) in the Plan area, and advocate for redevelopment of other blighted neighborhood properties. Where development occurs elsewhere in the neighborhood, promote CMRP principles.

Strategies:

1. Build and maintain relationships with multiple reputable developers.
2. Maintain working relationships with key government departments and Corcoran's elected officials and developers.
3. Put marketing efforts toward at least one parcel at any given time.

4. Advocate for a permanent, high quality farmers market site at 2225 East Lake Street per the CMRP. (S)
5. Build interest amongst reputable developers for vacant / available / blighted commercial properties.

Communications

Goal: Provide timely, useful information on all news, activities, and issues affecting the Corcoran neighborhood.

Strategies:

1. Continue to publish and hand-deliver a volunteer-assembled monthly newspaper to all residents. Seek new membership, contributions, and story ideas to maximize resident participation in the writing, photography, editing, and layout of the newspaper with limited staff support. (O)
2. Provide newspaper content that engages all prospective readers and reflects the diversity of the neighborhood in terms of age, ethnic and national background, and socioeconomic status. (O)
3. Continue to publish a biweekly e-mail newsletter with focus on upcoming issues and meetings that may have a positive or negative impact on the neighborhood. (O)

Mujeres en Accion y Poder

Goal: Conduct outreach to Latino residents and identify issues in the community, especially those impeding a higher quality of life.

1. Door-knock 4 blocks per month and talk to Latino families about issues in the community (O)
2. Where appropriate, partner with block club leaders to ensure that Latino neighbors are participating in block activities (O)
3. Increase the number of meetings and events that are interpreted so that Spanish speaking and English speaking residents can join together in the work of the neighborhood. (O)

Goal: Continue and expand Mujeres en Accion y Poder at Corcoran and Powderhorn Parks

1. A 50% increase in participation in 2010 (baseline=2009 participation), and a 25% increase in 2011. (O)
2. Develop enticing programming and activities that promote participation and that are developed by the group.
3. Offer high quality child care during group sessions
4. Host events throughout the year that celebrate culture, families, and community. (O)

Midtown Farmers Market

Goal: Improve the utilization of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/Electronic Benefits Transfer (SNAP-EBT) at the farmers market, at least doubling use compared to the 2009 season

Strategies:

1. Work with external organizations/partners to secure funding and expertise for a SNAP-EBT promotional campaign. (O)
2. Develop, fund, and implement a food assistance incentive program (e.g.: “double-SNAP”, “Green Bucks”, etc.). (O)

Goal: Strengthen the market’s brand identity

Strategies:

1. Revisit the market’s core identity statements—mission, vision, and values statement.
2. Strengthen the market’s brand by revising the website, sponsorship package, e-newsletter, t-shirts, and social media outlets.

Goal: Effectively manage all aspects of the market

Strategies:

1. Review all market related policies. Identify gaps and areas for improvement and create new policies as necessary. Convene an end of season workshop/debriefing session for staff and Advisory Committee members to review the actual impact of policy changes.
2. Strengthen the composition and structure of the MFM Advisory Committee to ensure it remains a valuable asset in stewarding the market’s interests.
3. Create multiple ways (surveys, focus groups, participation on AC, etc.) for vendors to have a voice in the decisions of the market.
4. Increase individual donations and sponsorship income.
5. Create and manage a work plan for 1.5 FTE market staff.