

# LYNDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2009 - 2011

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The strategic plan for the Lyndale Neighborhood Association is designed to guide the organization's direction from 2009 through 2011. The impetus for developing this strategic plan is an outgrowth of the merger between the old Lyndale Neighborhood Association and Lyndale Neighborhood Development Corporation into the new Lyndale Neighborhood Association in the spring of 2007.

### **Environmental Scan**

To help understand LNA's position in the environment that it is working in, the Strategic Development Group (SDG) conducted a survey of Lyndale community members, held focus groups with Latino and Somali community members and had several discussions at LNA's monthly General Membership meetings.

The results of the scan show that LNA is well known in the community and that people think LNA is effectively representing them on the issues that are important to them. The survey also showed that respondents think LNA is doing a good job with its programs and services.

Overall the scan also identified five key issues for the neighborhood to address over the next three years. The issues are: dealing with the economy and combating poverty; creating a sustainable neighborhood; making the neighborhood safe; guiding future development; and building a working multi-cultural community.

Moving forward community members would like LNA to continue to focus on expanding its outreach activities and increase the number of volunteers involved in the organization. Respondents also place a very high value on the community building work that LNA does.

There was some concern identified throughout this process that a small number of people are carrying a large portion of the burden for keeping LNA running at such a high level; which people fear could lead to volunteer and staff burnout.

The survey also made it clear that one of the main reasons people are not getting more involved is because of scheduling conflicts, rather than a lack of interest. The challenge this lays out is to find ways to increase the perceived value of getting involved, since the responses show that once people are involved in LNA, their involvement becomes a highly valued activity. This challenge also establishes the need for a concentrated effort to institutionalize leadership development within the organization.

### **Strategic Direction**

LNA's strategic direction for the next three years builds off of the neighborhood's strong history of community driven action.

#### **Vision**

Create a safe, vibrant, sustainable community.

#### **Mission**

The Lyndale Neighborhood Association is a diverse community driven organization that brings people together to work on common issues and opportunities to ensure all community members have the opportunity to live, work, and play in a safe, vibrant, and sustainable community.

## Goals

LNA's goals for the next three years embody what the organization is trying to accomplish in order to create a safe, vibrant, and sustainable neighborhood:

### **LNA's goals for 2009 to 2011**

- Be the 'go-to' resource for the neighborhood.
- Have an active diverse cross-section of community members working to improve their neighborhood.
- Engage community members to actively work to improve the neighborhood.
- Have the human, financial, and organizational resources necessary to accomplish its goals.

## Accomplishing LNA's Vision

To understand LNA's vision to create a safe, vibrant, and sustainable community, it is important to understand what a safe, vibrant, and sustainable community could look like.

In a safe neighborhood people feel comfortable walking down the street by themselves, they don't have to worry about whether their property is safe from harm and violence is a thing of the past.

A vibrant neighborhood teems with life throughout the day, it's a place where people know each other, and they have interesting places to go and things to do.

A sustainable neighborhood is a neighborhood that has achieved balance between the resources the neighborhood uses and the resources the neighborhood produces.

## Values

LNA's values are the underlying motivation for why the organization operates the way it does.

### *Community Building*

LNA believes that building strong relationships between community members makes the neighborhood healthier by providing people with the connections they need in order to pool their resources to take advantage of opportunities to improve their quality of life and to address issues in the community.

### *Asset Based Organizing*

LNA believes the most effective way to improve the neighborhood is to start with the assets that already exist in the community. LNA further believes that community members, through their ideas, time, and energy, are the neighborhood's most important asset.

### *Commitment to Diversity*

LNA believes that the neighborhood's diverse population is an asset to the community that is best utilized when people understand each other and when connections are made across the neighborhood's diverse communities.

### *Engagement*

LNA believes that all community members have the right and responsibility to be involved in determining the neighborhood's direction. LNA further believes that neighborhood organizations play a vital role in Minneapolis' ecosystem by providing a positive vehicle for people to channel their energy and ideas.

## **Implementation**

To achieve these goals LNA will utilize the following strategies.

### **Be the go-to resource for the neighborhood**

To be the go-to resource in the neighborhood LNA will:

- Work to increase its volunteer and staff capacity to meet community members' needs.
- Develop a marketing and communication plan to help tell LNA's story to community members and the larger public.
- Improve its information management systems and practices.

### **Have an active diverse cross-section of community members working to improve their neighborhood**

To attract and retain a cross-section of community members who are actively working to improve their neighborhood LNA will:

- Provide and facilitate a diverse set of programs and activities.
- Engage families.
- Promote cultural understanding.

### **Engage community members to actively improve the neighborhood**

To engage community members who are actively working to improve the neighborhood LNA will:

- Support the work of LNA's committees.
- Build strategic partnerships with other neighborhoods, nonprofits, businesses, and local units of government.
- Work to make sure that community members have access to the broad range of programs and services that they need to maintain a high quality of life.
- Support the work of community members through Community Action Plans (CAP).

### **Have the human, financial, and organizational resources necessary to accomplish its goals**

To ensure that LNA has the resources necessary to accomplish its goals LNA will:

- Start a system to intentionally develop neighborhood leaders.
- Continue to support a professional staff.
- Increase the amount and sources of financial resources supporting the neighborhood.

## **Measuring Success**

An important part of any community based organization is that the organization is accountable to the community it serves. To this end LNA will involve the community in making sure that the organization is making progress on the goals it is establishing as part of this strategic plan.

A full description of the outcome measures for LNA can be found in the measuring success portion of the plan.