To: NCR Staff, NCEC, City Council

From: Breanne Rothstein, Windom Community Council President

Re: Comments on draft guidelines for Community Participation Program

Date: November 14, 2011

Comments:

- 1) If there is no deadline for NPP (Neighborhood Priority Plans) submissions, the section on unused funds (Section VIII) needs to be revised to more closely reflect a policy that allows for adequate planning of NPPs (like Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) plans). As it is currently written, there is no deadline for NPPs, but if the neighborhood doesn't contract within a certain timeframe (this cycle or next), they potentially lose their allocation. I don't agree with the "contract it or lose it" approach, especially given the changes to make this program fit NRP statutes. It should follow the same, dedicated, promised funding of NRP if NPPs are envisioned, given the time it takes to prepare these plans.
 - o Proposed solution: Eliminate the "contract it or lose it" section under *unused funds* and make it match current/NRP process.
- 2) This program relies heavily on NCR staff to provide training to neighborhoods regarding the new program, templates for submissions, attend neighborhood meetings, and several staff-generated annual reporting requirements for each neighborhood. It is clear NCR does not have the staff to sufficiently provide this support. While in my experience, your current staff is top-notch and high performing, I do not believe it is realistic to promise this level of support to neighborhoods.
 - Proposed solution: Pare down the list in Section V and specify exactly what NCR staff is going to be capable of doing (ie what does it mean to "maintain regular communication with N.O.s" and "attend neighborhood meetings"?)
 - o Proposed solution: Reduce the amount of "reports" required for staff to prepare for each neighborhood on an annual basis.
 - O Proposed solution: Offer several trainings per year for staff and board members on the new program (including at the Community Connections conference)
 - Proposed solution: Assign NCR specific staff to neighborhood organizations so that neighborhoods know who to contact with questions and to request they attend our meetings, provide templates, etc.
- 3) I'm disappointed at the amount and complexity of the reporting and contracting requirements. Contracting is a confusing and cumbersome process for neighborhoods with little staff capacity. As I understand it, in addition to

submitting CPP and possibly NPP plans and conducting all the work around those, neighborhoods will also have to submit annual reports on CPP and Implementation Agreements (which appear to be the same as "contracts" under NRP) in order to access funds.

- o Proposed solution: Clarify language to allow neighborhoods to enter into one implementation agreement for all activities of NPP and CPP, rather than individual agreements for each activity.
- 4) The CPP is written if NPPs are discretionary (may, from time to time, submit, and may submit one or more Neighborhood Priority Plans). This is not the case, and the language should be revised to reflect the mandatory nature of these plans.