

WHITTIER

THE INTERNATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

2019 Annual Report



MESSAGE FROM THE 2019-2020 BOARD CHAIR



How we live and support each other in community matters. For the Whittier Alliance and neighborhood, 2019 was a testament to the importance of being intentional and committed to live into the values and mission we espouse.

We adopted and began work towards a new Strategic Plan that focuses our mission around housing, community building, business support, and organizational sustainability, all through the lenses of advancing equity and environmental sustainability. Our programs and projects over the year looked different in some ways, while still building on the strengths of the work done in previous years. We also began what will be an ongoing project to update our bylaws so that our policies and practices come into alignment with our new Strategic Plan. As we move forward, our work and the structures that support that work will continue to evolve, and, as always, we look to you--the people that make this community everything it is--to help shape the future of the organization and neighborhood.

On behalf of the Board, I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to our incredible staff who continue to go above and beyond in their roles, as well as our volunteers for their dedication, enthusiasm, and support. I can't wait to see where we go together from here.

JEN KADER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SERVING IN 2019

Officers

Jen Kader, Chair
Cyndi Hovey, Vice-Chair
Abbie Speller, Secretary
Michael Perez, Treasurer

Committee Chairs / Reps

Kim Fishman, Business Association Chair
Mariana Arriaza, Business Association/Non Profit
Ukasha Dakane, Business Association/Non Profit
Katie Heimer, Business Association/For Profit
Justin Kader, Community Issues Chair
Stephanie Brown, Housing Issues Chair

At-Large Members

Nate Broadbridge
Brigid Higgins
Christine Popowski
Nate Rastetter
Erin Sjoquist
Aldona Martinka
David Bagley
Jesse Oyervides
Crystal Audi



MEMBERS OF STAFF

Kaley Brown, Executive Director

Marcus VanderSanden, Business Outreach Coordinator

Fartun Ismail, Community Outreach Coordinator



STRATEGIC PLAN CONNECTION

The Whittier Alliance began developing a new strategic plan in early 2017, organizing over 15 engagement opportunities for direct engagement and feedback. Through focus groups in multiple languages, issue-specific workshops, and online surveying, four priority areas for 2019–2024 rose to the surface: community engagement; housing; small businesses, institutions, and other organizations; and organizational sustainability.

Goals and objectives for each priority area were developed by the community through issue-specific workshops in 2018. The strategic decisions in the plan will drive work plans, budget, board agendas, existing committees and new committees and their charges, and accountability to the community. **The entire plan and specific objectives for each priority area can be viewed at whittieralliance.org/guiding-documents or provided upon request to WA staff.**

Keep an eye out for the corresponding icons below throughout this report to track our progress!

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2019-2024



Community Engagement: *Inspire and equip the Whittier community to be good stewards of the neighborhood and to make the change they'd like to see.*

- Be a warm and welcoming organization to the full Whittier community.
- Actively build awareness of how to participate in WA activities and connect with fellow community members.
- Help community members develop the civic, political, and grassroots experience/skills they need to make real change and have real influence.
- Recruit participants and leaders that reflect and represent the broad diversity of the neighborhood, from one-time volunteers to the Board of Directors.



Housing: *Protect and expand the variety of housing options in Whittier for people at every life stage and economic condition.*

- Increase the diversity, accessibility and affordability of Whittier housing
- Serve as a resource hub for all residents and property owners/managers.
- Establish and promote a clear, strategic vision for Whittier's built environment.



Businesses, Institutions, and other Organizations: *Support the vibrant and distinctive mix of Whittier businesses, institutions, and other organizations.*

- Promote Whittier and its destinations.
- Support small, independent, locally- and family-owned businesses at all price points.
- Connect Whittier-area businesses and organizations with one another and the broader community.
- Serve as an effective resource for Whittier-area businesses and organizations navigating City or County processes and regulations.



Organizational Sustainability: *Develop the institutional power necessary to achieve our priorities and reliably serve the neighborhood for another 40 years.*

- Align plan strategies with greater financial stability, diversification, and organizational independence.
- Develop culture and procedures among Board, Staff, and volunteers that encourage institutional health and sustainable growth.
- Increase awareness of Whittier Alliance and what the organization does.

HOUSING ISSUES COMMITTEE

Anti-Displacement Work

The Whittier Neighborhood is rapidly changing, and often the most pressing housing issues we hear from our neighbors are concerns around displacement. This is a complex problem facing more areas of the city than just ours, but members of our Housing Issues Committee have been hard at work, developing a variety of strategies we hope will make a difference in helping current residents to stay in their homes.

We partnered with two student groups at the University of Minnesota Master in Urban Planning Program to identify potentially vulnerable, naturally-occurring affordable housing (N.O.A.H.) in Whittier & also to develop better tools to engage effectively with developers around new construction proposals. Working with the team at the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) we crafted and deployed a neighborhood livability survey with the goal of identifying anecdotal trends in multi-family buildings and potential new leaders interested in organizing with their neighbors to resolve issues impacting their quality of life.

We also hosted a workshop alongside City staff for Minneapolis landlords to learn the ins and outs of the City's new 4d Affordable Housing Incentive Program, in hopes of helping them save money on their property taxes by enrolling. The program aims to help stabilize N.O.A.H. rental housing city-wide, though Whittier in particular has many property owners who are already eligible to take advantage.



BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Sharing Culture through Food

WA received City of Minneapolis Great Streets Grant funding for a collaborative project with the team at the Whittier Farmers Market. The result was a short series of cooking classes aimed at connecting participants and business owners of differing backgrounds through multicultural recipes, ingredients, and grocery stores in the Whittier neighborhood.

Pictured, right: Amina and Sadiyah of Dini Kitchen teaching participants to make a traditional Somali dish.



Business Waste Diversion

Throughout 2019, Whittier Alliance worked in partnership with Hennepin County's Business Recycling team to provide on-on-one assistance to businesses and organizations to access County grants and resources aimed at converting waste to organics and recycling. Marcus VanderSanden, Business Outreach Coordinator, conducted multiple site evaluations to help business owners identify opportunities for streamlining procedures, communicate with their commercial waste haulers, and clarify options available to them for converting trash into recycling or organics, which ultimately will save them money on their monthly costs.

COMMUNITY ISSUES COMMITTEE

Whittier Alliance's Community Issues meetings provided community members with a forum for learning about and discussing current topics, opportunities, planning projects, and events. Stakeholders are able to voice concerns and ideas to elected officials, to one another, and volunteer for project-based work.

Informational Presentations & Community Discussions featuring:

Becky Lewis – Whittier Park Director

Inspector Amelia Huffman, Jessica Kawas – MPD 5th Precinct

Ukasha Dakane, Executive Director at Frayeo

Marion Greene, Hennepin County Commissioner for District 3

Mari Mansfield, MIRAC (Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee)

Iris Ramos Nieves, The Law Office of Iris Ramos LLC

Mustafa Jumale, Black Immigrant Collective

Larry Matsumoto, City of Minneapolis Public Works

Abdullahi Abdulle, City of Minneapolis Public Works

Mike Samuelson, City of Minneapolis Public Works

Jordan Kocak, Hennepin County Transportation Planning

Jen Kader & Whittier Alliance Board Members, Staff



2019 EVENTS, PROGRAMS, & PROJECTS

Whittier Farmers Market: Provided funding for the 3rd year of the WFM, which took place in the Calvary Church parking lot at 26th and Blaisdell over the summer

Housing Navigation Program: Started a new program to assist community members with language/cultural barriers moving to or within Whittier to navigate & understand the leasing process

Neighborhood Clean-up: Hosted a neighborhood trash clean-up day in partnership with Whittier Park, gathering community volunteers for the effort

Somali Independence Day Festival: Partnered with Mia to provide youth arts activities at the annual celebration on Lake Street organized by Ka Joog

Façade Improvement Grants: Administered a City of Minneapolis matching grant program aiming to revitalize and maintain neighborhood business districts through storefront improvements

Whittier Youth-Serving Organizations Meetings: Regular gathering to facilitate network-building and shared resources and ideas in support of Whittier youth

Great Whittier Get-Together: Free outdoor celebration with art activities, dancing, and food and beverages in Whittier Park

Community Organics Program: Continued subsidizing a community organics drop site at the Wedge Table for residents living in multi-family buildings who do not have access to the municipal organics recycling service

Eat Street Food, Music, & Arts Festival: Large-scale community festival showcasing Whittier's small business and nonprofit community, local artists, and all things "Whittier"

Anti-Racism Conversations: Hosted a free community workshop on the basics of identifying internal bias and dismantling white supremacy

Community Appreciation Party: End-of-year party to celebrate volunteer and partner efforts



2019 HIGHLIGHTS



The 2nd Annual Eat Street Food, Music, & Arts Festival

We are proud to have produced the 2nd Annual Eat Street Festival for an estimated 5,000 attendees for a full day of local music, multi-cultural dance performances, youth arts, amazing global food offerings, and community connections. It was a chance to showcase and celebrate who and what Whittier is at its heart, with 70 participating businesses and organizations -- 52 of whom are based here in Whittier.

The 2019 Festival saw an overall growth of participation in almost every area. With the experience and benefit of last year's event to draw upon as a selling point the message and mission of the Eat Street Festival was well-received with neighborhood businesses. This year we provided in-depth, 1:1 support to a number of small businesses, guiding them through the process of participating in an outdoor event for the first time and addressing barriers such as access to event equipment and City regulations.



Whittier Community Iftar

Whittier is fortunate to have so many wonderful immigrant and refugee neighbors who call this neighborhood "home." Many were born originally into cultures and regions in East Africa and hold fast to their Islamic faith as central to their personal identities and how they view their place in community.

With the goal of creating an opportunity for neighbors of differing backgrounds to come together, learn about one another and the pillars of Islam during the Holy Month of Ramadan, and to share a free community meal together, WA partnered with other Whittier organizations to bring this event to life. Fortune Relief and Youth Empowerment Organization (Frayeo), Whittier Recreation Center, and others worked together to design and share this opportunity widely, and we hope to continue hosting this event in future years as a true and authentic opportunity to break down cultural and racial silos within our neighborhood.



FINANCES



Each month, the Finance Committee reviews the income and expenses of the Whittier Alliance. The financial report is then forwarded to the Board for final review. All incoming funds and invoices are identified with an account number to track against the annual budget. Expenses are coded to the appropriate funding sources. Professional oversight of the Whittier Alliance financials is provided by Petersen Professionals, CPA.

Balance Sheet: January 1 – December 31, 2019

Assets

Checking/Savings - \$523,460.42

Accounts Receivable - \$81,931.20

Total Assets - \$609,429.97

Liabilities

Deferred Revenue--NRP - \$10,000.00

Deferred Revenue--CPP - \$10,000.00

Total Liabilities - \$20,000.00

Equity

Net Assets - \$555,009.36

Net Income - \$33,993.77

Total Equity - \$589,003.13

Total Liabilities & Equity - \$609,429.97

Income

CPP - \$137,691.72

NRP Consolidated 1016 - \$74,236.81

NRP 28268 - \$21,639.63

Grants - \$56,617.18

Fundraising - \$21,639.27

Non-Cash Donations - \$5,575.00

Program Service Revenue - \$637.50

Interest - \$5,620.45

Total Income - \$323,657.56

Expenses

Grants - \$31,889.63

Salaries/Wages - \$130,083.41

Simple IRA Match - \$6,569.32

Payroll Taxes - \$14,691.62

Staff/Volunteer Recognition - \$298.62

Payroll Services - \$2,263.06

Background Checks - \$29.95

Professional/Contract Services - \$58,914.78

Office Supplies/Equipment - \$2,421.61

Food/Beverage - \$3,911.74

Phone/Internet - \$2,464.93

Postage & Mailing Services - \$6,639.84

Bank Fees - \$5.00

Printing & Copying - \$10,002.15

Rent & Parking - \$10,186.00

Utilities - \$395.96

Travel/Meeting Expenses - \$1,010.47

Insurance - \$3,958.19

Staff Development - \$623.68

Membership Dues - \$300.00

Advertising - \$2,340.71

Misc. Expense - \$637.50

Tax Filing - \$25.62

Total Expense - \$289,663.79

Gross Profit - \$323,657.56

NET INCOME - \$33,993.77

FUNDRAISING

The Whittier Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; and all donations, including those in-kind, are tax-deductible. Many thanks to the residents, businesses, friends, and advocates who supported Whittier Alliance with a financial or in-kind contribution in 2019. Although our primary source of income comes from the City of Minneapolis, we rely on generous donations from our community to fund and grow our community-focused events and programming.

2019 Financial Contributors

Abbie Speller
Andrew McDermott III
Angela Ritchie
Andrew Ellis
Anonymous
b. Resale
The Bad Waitress
The Black Forest Inn
Brave New Media
Brigid Higgins
Carole Fisher
Christine Popowski
City of Lakes Waldorf School
Cyndi Hovey
Dana Fox
Donna Moreno & Paul Smith

Eat Street Dental
Electric Fetus
Erica Christ
Erin Barwis
Erin Sjoquist & Kurt Nelson
Good Dwelling
Hornig Companies
Icehouse MPLS
Irving Properties
Jen Kader
Jeremy Striffler
Jo Ann Musumeci
Joseph Rine
Justin Kader
FLOCK
Flowers by Miss Bertha

Katie Heimer
Lake Wine & Spirits
Larry Ludeman
Martha Nemesi
Michael Perez
Nate Broadbridge
Nate Rastetter
Nelson's Green Garage
North Haven Apartments
NUWAY
Rainbow Restaurant & Bar
Scott Melamed
Stephanie Brown
Tom Kachelmacher
TT Market
Ukasha Dakane
Willow Kreibich
Zeus Jones

2019 In-Kind Contributors

Brave New Media
b. Resale
Caano Kitchen
Calvary Baptist Church
Creation Audio Recording
Galactic Pizza
Glam Doll Donuts

Minneapolis College of Art and Design
Mortimer's Bar & Restaurant
Nightingale
Pimento Jamaican Kitchen
Rainbow Restaurant & Bar
SK Coffee
Tilt Pinball Bar
The Wedge Table



WHITTIER

THE INTERNATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

MISSION

The Whittier Alliance is dedicated to building a flourishing and distinctive neighborhood

VISION

A world class neighborhood



Whittier Alliance

10 E 25th St, Minneapolis, MN 55404

612-871-7756 | info@whittieralliance.org

whittieralliance.org

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