

WHITTIER

THE INTERNATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE 2022-2023 BOARD CHAIR



This has been a busy and exciting year for the Whittier Alliance, and I am so excited for you to see the full scope of our work and impact in this Report. As we have all adapted to the ongoing COVID-19 reality, the Board of Directors has embraced hybrid meetings, with many folks – board members and community members alike – choosing to join meetings in person, while others prefer the safety and accessibility of joining on Zoom. I must say, it has brought me so much joy to be physically present with folks, and I invite you to join us, as you are able. There are so many great stories in this report, representing just a portion of the incredible work the Whittier Alliance staff and my fellow Board Directors did, so I hope you will give this a read, and learn more about what we've been up to.

While you will read more about the 2116 Nicollet Project later on, one piece of it that has really excited me is how we have been activating the space. Rather than letting the lot go unused as we plan its future, we have held several events at the lot, with the support of a grant from the City of Minneapolis' Great Streets Program. It has been such a joy to go to the lot, and see crowds gathered, enjoying great music, watching a riveting futsal match, or enjoying some tasty food truck eats. I love that the Whittier Alliance has embraced concurrent short- and long-term planning, ensuring that we are relevant, engaged, and responsive today, while also being focused on the years to come, and considering how best to position the organization for a vibrant future.

This year's Annual Meeting marks one year from when we will vote on our next strategic plan. The Board of Directors has convened a project team to work on drafting our new plan, which will be the Whittier Alliance's guide post for the years ahead. We recognize the importance of getting it right, and will be sharing opportunities for community members to voice their priorities. With so much going on at the Whittier Alliance, I hope you will join us – for a meeting, for an event, as a volunteer, or however you would like to show up!

In solidarity,

KAMI BRODIE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Hello neighbors! I'm grateful to be here, reflecting with you all on yet another year of impactful projects and meaningful relationships built in the Whittier neighborhood.

In 2022 our team has continued the hard work of evaluating on a deep level our organization's operations, communications structure, tools, and strategy, and methods in which we work towards engaging neighbors in the ways that resonate most with them. It is slow, challenging work that isn't always visible; it is work though that we believe will have an invaluable long-term payoff in service of our mission within this community.

2023 will bring a sharper focus on our volunteer engagement and management structure, ensuring that we can create fulfilling and effective volunteer opportunities; facilitate avenues for supported leadership development within our organization and in the broader community; and better connect Whittier neighbors and organizations with one another. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of our 2022 chapter!

With gratitude,

KALEY BROWN

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SERVING IN 2022

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Kameron Brodie, Chair
Danny Villars, Vice Chair
Megan Mathew, Secretary
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Nick Hutchinson, Community Engagement Chair
George Rishmawi, Housing and Land Use Chair

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MEMBERS OF STAFF

Kaley Brown, Executive Director
Fartun Ismail, Community Outreach Specialist
Krystin Eldridge, CURA Krussell Fellow
Meggie Garcia, AmeriCorps VISTA Tenant Organizer
Willow Kreibich, Communications & Admin Associate

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! Over the next year, we will also be launching a process to develop the next strategic plan for adoption at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

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.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Eat Street Cup 3v3 Futsal Tournament: We hosted the inaugural Eat Street Cup in partnership with our friends at Futsal Society, a nonprofit youth soccer organization that has grown steadily out of their home base at Whittier Recreation Center the past 6 years. In 2022, they grew to include 285 diverse high school students, 58% of them 1st generation immigrants from 25 different countries, in their expanded programming through free, competitive soccer programs. Many teens live in Whittier and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Funded in part by the City of Minneapolis' Great Streets Business District Support Program grant, the tournament featured 16 teams competing, while other community partners like KRSM Community Radio, Minneapolis College of Art & Design, Minnesota United FC, Minnesota Aurora FC, Wrecktangle Pizza, Somali American Women's Action Coalition, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, and Fawkes Alley Coffee hosted activities and engaged with the Whittier neighbors who came out to spectate. We were glad for this opportunity to further deepen our partnership with Futsal Society.

Spring Fling Artist and Makers Market: WA worked in partnership with two recent MCAD alums to produce a community arts exhibition composed of local artists and makers and some neighborhood partners. A celebration of the changing of the seasons, WA's lot at 2116 Nicollet Ave provided an excellent venue for an outdoor gallery area, live music, art making, and opportunities to connect attendees with volunteer opportunities in the neighborhood. In addition to activating the lot, we aimed to bring exposure to the 22 participating artists, further reinforcing Whittier as a destination for art in the Cities. The event also created a fun atmosphere for neighbors to meet one another and enjoy the start of another Minneapolis summer together.

Spotlight on the Community Engagement Committee: In the past year, the Community Engagement Committee has connected Whittier residents with many aspects of neighborhood life and local government. The committee has been the main platform for gathering community feedback and providing updates on the Former Kmart site redevelopment. We hosted a variety of talks that addressed the needs of Whittier residents, including two updates from Ward 10 City Councilmember Aisha Chughtai, information on community safety initiatives by Erin Sikkink of the City's Office of Violence Prevention, and a voter information session by Teena Keiser of the League of Women Voters Minneapolis in anticipation of last fall's election. The committee also served as an information hub for many local infrastructure projects, including the 1st Avenue and Pillsbury Ave bridge reconstruction projects and upcoming CenterPoint work in the neighborhood. We closed out our year with a presentation on gardening in small spaces by Elizabeth Gorman and Flo Golod, two Master Gardeners with the University of Minnesota Extension.

In addition to this committee's work over the past year, our Community Engagement Committee Chair worked with neighbors to organize the monthly Whittier Really Really Free Market and the Whittier Solidarity Network, both of which have created many opportunities for Whittier neighbors to meet, interact, and get involved.



HOUSING & LAND USE

Preserving Whittier's Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (N.O.A.H.):

A number of recent reports have detailed the rapid pace at which the Whittier neighborhood is losing its share of N.O.A.H., an important part of the housing stock that has provided stable housing for neighbors over many decades. As out-of-state investors' interest in Whittier grows, WA has been working to build relationships with current NOAH owners to generate opportunities for local nonprofit developers, housing providers, and other community-minded buyers with mission to preserve the affordability and local ownership of housing in the Whittier neighborhood. We know that many long-time owners care about the continued care of their tenants and buildings, and we aim to help them identify all their selling options if/when they become ready to take that step.



Eviction Prevention: Building upon the work we started in 2021, our team has expanded the process by which we monitor evictions filed in the neighborhood, support tenants through that process, and identify trends in the data that signal potentially predatory landlord or management behavior. Our team has provided numerous types of assistance ranging from language interpretation support for tenants to communicate with landlords, direct assistance with finding apartments and understanding the leasing process, and application to other key assistance programs that support bill pay for low-income tenants.



Spotlight on the Housing & Land Use Committee: The Housing & Land Use Committee (HLU) is a venue for a holistic discussion of community planning and development projects that include the following areas of focus:



Development



Parks Planning



Transportation



Anti-Displacement Strategy



Policy



This past year, the committee discussed a number of projects that move us closer to our goal of supporting accessible, equitable, and sustainable environments for community members to access in Whittier. In addition to the many transportation & parks planning projects we held discussions on in 2021, the committee engaged on 6 newly proposed developments of varying scales.

This committee has been an excellent venue for involving new community members in WA activities and the broader neighborhood, and there will be many impactful and exciting opportunities to plug into our ongoing project work in a way that interests everyone. To stay in the know on project updates and opportunities to participate, we encourage everyone to opt-in to the Housing & Land Use email list and to keep an eye on upcoming meetings and events at whittieralliance.org



INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE



The Whittier Alliance (WA) and Alliance Housing Inc have established a new partnership to bring low-barrier affordable housing, community meeting space, and new offices for both organizations to the vacant site at 2116 Nicollet Ave. The acquisition by Whittier Alliance in the spring of 2021 was inspired by a long-time intention of the organization to purchase and activate property for community benefit, while striving to meet other goals along the way related to housing, community engagement, support for Whittier's important commercial corridors, and organizational sustainability.



After a competitive application process, the WA Board convened a volunteer steering committee of residents both with deep knowledge of the community and subject matter expertise in development-related fields to define the vision/values/goals for the site, develop a process for community engagement, draft and release a Request for Proposals (RFP), and ultimately, to make a recommendation to the WA Board of Directors for the preferred development partner from the proposals received.



Community engagement work throughout the summer of 2022 further clarified the priorities that residents and other nearby stakeholders wanted to see most in the project, including sustainability features that reduce environmental impact and facilitate sustainable living; creative place-keeping features that create a sense of community identity within the building and reflect the Whittier community; and urban design features that enhance the characteristics of Nicollet Avenue and the Eat Street Commercial Corridor through human-centered design.

Through the RFP process, Whittier Alliance was thrilled to select Alliance Housing Inc as their partner in this important project after clear demonstration of an alignment in values, objectives, and organization mission. Alliance Housing Inc's work makes it possible for individuals and families to create homes for themselves, regardless of income and background by developing and managing housing that inclusive, affordable, relational, and flexible. In addition, Alliance Housing challenges the environment that limits our residents' opportunities. They have operated in the Whittier neighborhood for decades, just one block from WA's office.



Alliance Housing creates affordable, low-barrier housing that is accessible to all members of the community. The new project at 2116 Nicollet will be a mixed use building housing 54 units of affordable housing and approximately 4,200 square feet of leasable commercial space and a community meeting space, that will be shared by Whittier Alliance and Alliance Housing. Single adults will occupy the mix of single room occupancy (SRO), efficiency, and one bedroom units. The first floor space will welcome neighborhood residents in for a variety of neighborhood focused events and meetings.

Whittier Alliance and Alliance Housing Inc acknowledge that the Whittier neighborhood and this site are on the stolen ancestral lands of the Dakota people and recognize the resiliency of our Indigenous, Black and other marginalized community members amid centuries of ongoing, state-sanctioned violence and oppression. As we move ahead to the design phase of the project, we remain committed to facilitating avenues for robust community participation, as well as to operating within an anti-racist, anti-oppression and equity framework, prioritizing the voices of historically underrepresented people, populations, and communities.



We invite community members to follow along at whittieralliance.org/2116nicollet and to participate in the many opportunities ahead in 2023 for neighbors to help shape the building design and public art.

ELEVATING COMMUNITY VOICES IN THE FORMER KMART SITE REDEVELOPMENT



The City of Minneapolis' full acquisition of the Former Kmart site in early 2020 further raised the level of urgency for mobilizing our neighbors, small business, and surrounding community and neighborhood organization partners. Whittier Alliance and many community members have been in conversation about the future of this site for many years, and it was important to do everything in our power to ensure our community not only has a seat at the table, but is helping to drive the process itself from the beginning.

Neighborhood organizations of all sizes and capacity levels are asked every day by City/County/State staff, consultants, and other organizations to help them engage with neighborhood stakeholders typically without offering any additional resources to do so. Place and community-based organizations hold critically important, trusted relationships built over time -- something necessary to conduct successful and authentic engagement work. In late 2021 Whittier Alliance organized a coalition of partner organizations to respond to the City of Minneapolis' Request for Proposals (RFP) as a consultant team, aiming to be entrusted and compensated to co-design and co-lead the first phase of the formal public engagement process, and we were happy to have been selected by City staff to do so.

Late summer of 2022 through early 2023 marked the first phase of the City's formal public engagement process, with the second phase set to begin this spring. Along with our team members at NEOO Partners Inc, FRAYEO, Lake Street Council, Lyndale Neighborhood Organization, Phillips West Neighborhood Organization, and Central Area Neighborhood Development Organization (CANDO), we were proud to create and pursue engagement opportunities that brought this project and City staff to community members in a way that has not been done in past municipal planning processes. We held conversations in Spanish with folks as they moved through food and supplies distribution sites; ate lunch at Simpson Housing Services' emergency shelter; attended their winter celebration at Whittier International Elementary; shopped at Karmel Mall and Colonial Market; carried out their day to day operations in their small business, and much more. We were thrilled to receive over 10,500 survey responses with just over 2,500 of them coming from within the City's identified project area, a half-mile radius around the Former Kmart site.

The full report and impact of the first phase of engagement will be outlined in a report to the City Council in May; it will be shared on Whittier Alliance communication channels shortly after. We hope you will join us in the many opportunities that the second phase will bring, the objectives shifting from Phase 1's focus on lived experiences, needs, ideas, and concerns about the site to the development of the preferred concept plans for public space, public art, transportation connections and design of the newly constructed Nicollet Avenue between 29th and Lake Street. City staff aims to have Council and Mayor approvals by the end of 2023.

Stay tuned to [minneapolismn.gov/new-nicollet](https://www.minneapolismn.gov/new-nicollet) for more in the months ahead.



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, 2022

Assets

Checking/Savings - \$396,253.02
Accounts Receivable - \$64,361.72
Real Estate Holdings - \$212,190.75

Total Assets - \$672,805.49

Liabilities

Deferred Revenue--NRP - \$10,000.00
Simple IRA Payable - \$427.04

Total Liabilities - \$10,427.04

Equity

Net Assets - \$645,853.74
Temporarily Restricted - \$2,075.00
Net Income - \$14,449.71

Total Equity - \$662,378.45

Total Liabilities & Equity - \$672,805.49

Income

Grants - \$206,694.87
Fundraising - \$3,920.10
Non-Cash Donations - \$1,716.00
Foundation Grants - -\$0.40
Program Service Revenue -
\$28,179.45
Interest - \$1,978.06
Other Donations - \$3,919.66

Total Income - \$246,407.74

Expenses

Grants - \$14,229.68
Salaries/Wages - \$110,182.44
Simple IRA Match - \$3,305.20
Payroll Taxes - \$12,990.63
Employee Disability Insurance - \$954.23
Staff/Volunteer Recognition - \$343.22
Payroll Services - \$2,406.5
Background Checks - \$0.00
Professional/Contract Services - \$38,540.79
Office Supplies/Equipment - \$6,133.43
Food/Beverage - \$4,599.95
Phone/Internet - \$1,849.86
Postage & Mailing Services - \$6,213.35
Bank Fees - \$2.31
Printing & Copying - \$7,972.22
Rent & Parking - \$11,292.20
Utilities - \$289.94
Real Estate Taxes - \$5,628.94
Property Maintenance - \$1,435.00
Travel/Meeting Expenses - \$157.52
Insurance - \$1,775.31
Staff Development - \$45.00
Membership Dues - \$175.00
Advertising - \$375.00
Misc. Expense - \$958.44
Business Expenses - \$101.87

Total Expense - \$231,958.03

Gross Profit - \$246,407.74

NET INCOME - \$14,449.71

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 2022. 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. Thank you to everyone who attended our 2022 events and supported Whittier Alliance through food and beverage purchases!

2022 Financial Contributors

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2022 In- Kind Contributors

Art Buddies
Prodigal Pub
A Slice of New York
Christos Greek Restaurant





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

WHITTIERALLIANCE.ORG

INFO@WHITTIERALLIANCE.ORG

612-871-7756