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
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.
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.

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.

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.

Housing Issues Committee
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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
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.
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 - $81,951.20
**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**
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
- Cyni Hovey
- Dana Fox
- Donna Moreno & Paul Smith
- Eat Street Dental
- Electric Fetus
- Erica Christ
- Erin Barwes
- 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 Kakelmacher
- 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
MISSION
The Whittier Alliance is dedicated to building a flourishing and distinctive neighborhood

VISION
A world class neighborhood

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