

# CORCORAN NEIGHBORHOOD



NRP Phase I Evaluation  
Corcoran Neighborhood Organization  
3451 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407  
January 2004

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### **Attachments**

- Attachment A: Results from the Neighborhood Survey
- Attachment B: Map of CNO Housing Programs
- Attachment C: Map of CNO's Roof Replacement Campaign
- Attachment D: Map of Home Security Grant Program and Block Clubs
- Attachment E: Map of Business Fix and Paint Program
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## **Introduction and Process**

The Corcoran Neighborhood Organization (CNO) NRP First Step Plan was approved in January 1996 and the Full Action Plan was approved in May 1997. After 7 years of community planning and implementation, NRP Phase I is nearing completion for CNO. CNO has worked very hard to leverage NRP dollars, connect neighbors, protect our unique character, empower residents and business owners, support youth, build collaborations, and strengthen existing resources.

Thousands of volunteer hours, \$2.5 million of NRP funds, and over \$28.4 million in leveraged funds, both public and private, have been invested in completing NRP Phase I in Corcoran. NRP has had a direct impact on the livability of the Corcoran Neighborhood. It has given us the framework to succeed and taught us to navigate through government bureaucracies, foster leadership among volunteers, collaborate with other neighborhoods and organizations, be efficient with funds, and seek what we want for our neighborhood.

After 7 years of work, it is time to evaluate our performance and begin planning for Phase II. Work on Phase I Evaluation began in June 2002 when volunteers conducted a neighborhood survey. CNO staff, committee members, Center for Energy and Environment, volunteers and E-Board members all contributed to this evaluation. They utilized a variety of methods to gather information, including surveying residents, interviewing volunteers, reviewing files and analyzing committee evaluations.

The review is structured in a way that directly correlates with our original NRP Action Plan. The sections are in the same order as they appear in the plan and each section lists the strategies that CNO used to address every objective. CNO is very proud of the work that has been done in the neighborhood and looks forward to continuing its efforts in Phase II.

## **Housing**

### **Goal 1: Improve condition and appearance of housing.**

#### **Objective 1: Reduce the number of empty houses and replace them with new or substantially rehabbed houses.**

- The CNO Housing Committee established precedence with MCDA-owned properties in the neighborhood. CNO recommends that the MCDA either sell the home for rehab or demolish the home if rehab is not financially viable. If demolished, CNO prefers that a new home be built on the site that fits with the surrounding architecture.
- CNO spent \$3,441.00 towards the demolition of a dilapidated building.
- Given the housing market and lack of affordable housing, the private market and demand alleviated the majority of Corcoran's empty houses and vacant properties. Private developers (i.e. Timbercraft) built a number of new homes on the west side of Hiawatha Avenue. MCDA purchased several properties that were then either rehabbed or torn down and then built new by private individuals and/or developers.

**Objective 2: Assist homeowners in maintaining/improving their homes (includes owner-occupied and four-plexes).**

- See Attachment B
- Matching Grant program for owner-occupied properties. There were 92 grants closed in Corcoran totaling \$262,089.21 worth of improvements. Additionally, homeowner dollars leveraged no less than \$524,178.42.
- 3%, 4%, 5% and 6% Low-interest Loan program for homeowners. 33 loans were closed in Corcoran equaling \$202,804.50 worth of financed improvements. An additional 14 low-interest loans were also closed through this program equaling \$144,989.00 that served as the homeowner match through the MCDA Rehab Support program.
- The MCDA introduced the Rehab Support Program. Corcoran was one of the first neighborhoods, and the most aggressive, who were given access to this funding. By the end of the program, homeowners in Corcoran had received over half a million dollars worth of MCDA-funded home improvements. These leveraged funds do not include the homeowner match that was required (some of which is alluded to in the bullet point above).
- 3% and 4% MHFA Discount Loan program for homeowners that subsidized the interest rates on loans being offered by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA). The subsidy used (CNO NRP funds) through this program equaled \$3,010.00 and it leveraged \$44,256.50 worth of financed home improvements.
- Deferred Loans for low-income (under \$20,000/year) homeowners. CEE closed on 8 loans totaling \$41,298.00 worth of home improvements.
- Emergency Deferred Loan program for owner-occupied homes. CEE closed on 9 loans totaling \$14,935.00 worth of emergency projects.
- Emergency Grant program for owner-occupied properties. CEE closed on 3 grants totaling \$4,209.25 worth of emergency home improvements.
- Child Care Deferred Loan program. CEE closed on 2 deferred loans for the fix up of neighborhood childcare locations totaling \$9,720.00 worth of improvements.
- Exterior Matching Deferred loans for properties in the neighborhood that have either code violations against them or have a City of Minneapolis condition rating of 6, 7, or 8 demonstrating that they are in need of exterior improvements. The CNO Housing Committee approved to allocate \$150,000.00 worth of housing program income towards this program. As of 11/14/03, CEE has not closed on any NRP funded loans through this program, but CEE did write and receive a grant from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency in the amount of \$112,500 (to also be considered as leveraged funds). These funds will be added to those NRP funds available for loans through this program, and to date, CEE has closed on 5 loans through this funding source totaling \$24,206.50 worth of improvements. Being a matching program, program recipients are required to provide a financial match depending upon their income, and to date, these loans have leveraged no less than \$13,332.50 worth of improvements.
- In addition to the efforts and funds of CNO and the NRP, the Center for Energy and Environment has originated and closed an additional 39 non-NRP loans to homeowners in Corcoran, totaling a leveraged amount of nearly \$220,000.

- Funded the position of Housing Coordinator for several years. In the fall of 2002, given the uncertainty of NRP Phase II dollars, CNO made the decision that they could not afford to re-hire a full time Housing Coordinator. Instead, they negotiated with the Center for Energy and Environment (who already served as the neighborhood's housing program administrator) to also serve as Corcoran's Housing Coordinator. In this capacity, at least 2 CEE staff persons spend time to staff the CNO Housing Committee, door knock the neighborhood, staff the Problem Properties Caucus, perform home inspections, offer remodeling advice upon request, and assist homeowners in identifying outside (non-NRP, non-CEE) funding and housing resources.

**Objective 3: Improve the condition of absentee-owned rental properties and 5 units and higher owner-occupied buildings.**

- Matching Grant program for rental properties. CEE closed on 14 grants totaling \$56,830.70 worth of improvements. Property owner dollars were leveraged equaling no less than an additional \$56,830.70.
- The development of the CNO Problem Properties Caucus. This group has worked to combat and minimize all types of housing issues including but not limited to issues related to the maintenance of rental properties and behavior of its tenants, especially those properties absentee-owned. This group meets monthly and is made up of representatives from CCP SAFE/ Minneapolis Police Department, Minneapolis Inspections Division, Council member's office, CEE and CNO.
- Door knocking. CNO hired CEE to perform a number of housing-related services. One of those services is to door knock residential properties in the neighborhood, offering remodeling advice, maintenance information and connecting property owners to available housing resources. These types of services have benefited owner-occupied and absentee-owned properties alike.
- In addition to the efforts and funds of CNO and the NRP, CEE has originated and closed an additional 7 non-NRP loans for rental property in Corcoran neighborhood, totaling a leveraged amount of just over \$33,000.

**Objective 4: Encourage residents to fix up their block.**

- 1996-1997 Block Club grant program. CEE closed on 29 grants totaling \$30,256.51 worth of exterior home improvement projects on the 3400 block of 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. S., 3400 block of 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. S., the alley block of 3200 Longfellow/Cedar Avenues, the 3500 block of Longfellow Ave., and the 3200 block of 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.
- Participated in the planning and execution of the South Minneapolis Housing Fair. This is a neighborhood-driven effort to encourage residents in South Minneapolis to continue investing in their homes. The fair promotes supporting smaller, local contractors and allows homeowners an opportunity to connect with their neighborhood organization and all of the services it has to offer.

## **Goal 2: Increase the value of houses.**

### **Objective 1: Increase the number of people who are looking at Corcoran as a place to buy a home.**

- CNO created a Home Buyer's Assistance program offering \$2,000 grants to new homeowners in the Corcoran Neighborhood. These funds could be used towards closing costs or rehab of the house within 4 months of the purchase closing date. The program expended a total of \$35,000.
- Organized a campaign to educate homeowners regarding their benefits of homeowners insurance after the hailstorms of 1997. The CNO Housing Coordinator made great strides to encourage homeowners to call upon their insurance policies to replace their hail-damaged roofs. Without this campaign, many homeowners would have gone without replacing their roofs and others would have paid out of their own pocket for an expense that should be paid for by their insurance companies. Over 70% of the roofs in Corcoran were replaced from 1997-2001. Not only is this a significant amount of money that CNO leverage by utilizing staff resources in this way but it also preserves the housing stock in our neighborhood. See Attachment C for details on the initiative.

**Partnerships:** Minneapolis Community Development Agency, the Center for Energy and Environment, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, Minneapolis Police Department/CCP SAFE, Minneapolis Housing Inspections, Minneapolis City Council, homeowners, rental property owners, private developers and other Minneapolis neighborhood organizations.

**Funds Leveraged:** at least \$1,424,097 (not including private development or roof replacements paid for by insurance companies).

### **Recommendations for Phase II:**

- The committee believes that they have allocated their CNO NRP housing funds in a successful and thoughtful manner while achieving many of the goals set out in the original CNO Action Plan. The most important was and is to "Assist homeowners in maintaining and improving their homes".
- Continue to research and implement leveraging options such as requiring a financial match from program recipients, outside granting sources, or offering discount and deferred loan programs.
- Continue to seek outside partnerships with organizations that can help CNO achieve their on-going objectives and not rely solely on the power of the CNO organization.
- Continue to identify resources and connect them to residents, making Corcoran a better place to live.

## **Youth & Families**

### **Goal: Provide positive opportunities for youth.**

#### **Objective 1: Develop employment and mentoring opportunities.**

- Lebanon Summer Youth Employment Program  
CNO partnered with Lebanon Lutheran Church to offer an employment program to neighborhood youth ages 12 to 16. This program ran from 2001-2003, with 2 two-week sessions each summer. Youth learned about work ethic, earning and saving money, and community involvement. The work they did served the neighborhood, parks, seniors and community businesses. Each child was given a stipend, and a part-time staff person was hired to run the program. CNO contributed \$10,335.
- Bilingual part-time teen staff for CNO office  
Two neighborhood teens were hired to work at the CNO office after school. They assisted with CNO activities, interpreted for Spanish-speaking residents, translated some material for the newspaper and offered tutoring for Latino kids on a drop-in basis.
- Teen Job & Opportunity Fair  
This multi-neighborhood collaboration was begun in Corcoran by a member of the Youth & Families Committee prior to NRP funding and was incorporated into our full plan with a yearly allocation. Each of the partners which include neighborhood organizations, schools, Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis, contribute to the process with staff time and resources. 2004 will be the 10<sup>th</sup> annual event. The events has grown yearly, with over 1000 teens and parents at the last event. Up to 40 different employers and organizations offer 100's of jobs and volunteer opportunities every year. The committee no longer relies on NRP funding and is able to raise enough funds each year through grant writing and donations to cover expenses.

#### **Objective 2: Create Volunteer Opportunities**

- Peace Night/Family Night events  
Community-building activities have been a part of Corcoran's Peace Month events each year. The Y&F committee made an effort to use these events as opportunities to partner with other organizations in the neighborhood and to bring people together. We have co-hosted 5 family peace night events, twice with Vine Evangelical Church and 3 times with Corcoran Park. Activities included creation of a collaborative neighborhood Peace Quilt, story telling, a bonfire, caramel apple dipping, and a peace parade. All food, prizes, talent and space to host events have been given as in-kind donations from partners, numerous neighborhood businesses and organizations.
- Tutoring program  
CNO purchased materials and funded a part-time staff person to run an after school tutoring program at the park.

#### **Objective 3: To provide opportunities for youth in the Corcoran Neighborhood to develop the competencies needed to become business owners, entrepreneurs and leaders in the community.**

- **Survival Arts Coordinator**  
CNO contributed \$12,000 in 1998 and \$6,000 in 2000 to fund a part-time staff position for the Folwell Middle School Survival Arts team. This person acted as a liaison to the committee and community, organized service projects and field trips, and worked with the Community Organizer on projects throughout the school year.
- **South High Honors Society Art Fairs**  
CNO partnered with Corcoran Park and South High Honors Society to host Art Fairs at Corcoran Park where students ran “clinics” teaching dance, music, computer generated art, stilt-walking and other activities.
- **Community Organizing and Events Planning Class**  
CNO’s Community Organizer worked with the Folwell Survival Arts team coordinator to offer a class for youth on community organizing. Each year students learned how to organize, promote, seek donations, and host several events. Examples include a community festival, teacher appreciation party and a fund-raiser. They also participated in outreach and service learning activities throughout the year including clean-ups, making and delivering Mayday baskets and valentine cards to seniors, and attending community meetings and events.
- **South High MADD mock crash**  
CNO contributed \$600 for bleacher rental for a mock car crash at South High. Students Against Drunk Driving organized the event and presented it the day before prom in 1999 as a tool to prevent students from drinking and driving during prom weekend.

**Objective 4: To provide year-round opportunities for young people and their families to participate in organized activities which are both fun and productive.**

- **Outdoor Art Gallery on CNO building**  
CNO provides materials to youth at Corcoran Park to make art that is displayed in 6 permanent frames on the outside of our office building on 35<sup>th</sup> & Cedar. The exhibit will change periodically when the kids produce more work.
- **South High Dance Team funding**  
CNO funded uniforms for the dance team at South for the 2001-'02 school year.
- **Corcoran Park art program funding**  
CNO granted funds to purchase materials for numerous art projects and classes offered at the park.
- **Corcoran Park outdoor supervision staff position**  
CNO matched funds provided by the Minneapolis Park Board to provide a summer staff position to supervise outdoor activities during the evening and on weekends.
- **Corcoran Park baseball uniforms, football uniforms and Score Board**  
CNO provided funding to purchase sports equipment and uniforms for Corcoran Park youth teams.
- **Community Organizer**  
CNO hired a Community Organizer to work with residents on programs and projects, and to serve as a community resource for the neighborhood to accomplish the NRP Youth & Families goals.



**Objective 5: To educate young people in Corcoran about certain vocations and to train them to enter into those vocations.**

- Computer Lab at Corcoran Park  
CNO helped fund and promote a state of the art computer lab at Corcoran Park. Kids learn how to use computers and the internet as well as computer programming and maintenance. ESL and senior citizen classes are taught at the park.
- Community Education partnership  
CNO & South High Community Education have an on-going partnership to promote programming in the neighborhood and to work together on different projects. This includes representation on the Community Ed Advisory Committee by CNO staff and residents and a Community Ed staff seat on the CNO Youth & Families Committee and Teen Job & Opportunity Fair planning group.
- Community Mural at South High  
CNO funded an artist and materials for a student art mural on the South High building. The mural builds a sense of community among students and helps to beautify the outside of the building for the residents.

**In Conclusion:** Corcoran Neighborhood achieved a lot for youth and their families throughout the NRP Phase 1 years. A key part of these achievements was the ability to partner with others for the benefit of kids. We were able to invest our money in some new programs, but also support efforts that were being done by existing groups and organizations with proven history for serving kids.

**Partners include:** Corcoran Park, Folwell Middle School, South High, South High Community Education, YWCA, YMCA, Lebanon Lutheran Church, Vine Evangelical Church, Salvation Army, Digital Access, Standish Ericsson Neighborhood Association, Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association, and a multi-neighborhood/youth service agency collaborative Teen Job & Opportunity Fair Planning Committee.

**Recommendations for NRP Phase II**

- Continue to partner with youth-serving organizations and schools in Corcoran Neighborhood including Corcoran Park, YWCA, YMCA, Folwell, South, and Anishinabe Academy.
- Support opportunities for youth employment and mentoring including Lebanon Summer Youth Employment program and the Teen Job & Opportunity Fair.
- Support opportunities for youth to participate in art.
- Continue to support youth access to technology through the Corcoran Computer Lab.
- Create more opportunities for youth to volunteer in the community and gain leadership skills.

## **Safety & Livability**

### **Goal 1: To improve residents Safety & Livability in Corcoran Neighborhood**

#### **Objective 1: Connect people so that they know & respect each other.**

- **Yearly Volunteer Recognition Dinner**  
Each year, the CNO Safety & Livability Committee hosts a dinner to honor the contributions of our neighborhood volunteers. The event recognizes and motivates volunteers to build community and increase connections of residents throughout the neighborhood.
- **Family Night/Peace Night events**  
Family Night & Peace Night events strengthened partnerships between the schools, churches, park and CNO by bringing groups and individuals from these entities together for a fun event during November's Peace Month. Each event had a community building art element, entertainment, prizes and food.
- **Funded Community Organizer position**  
The Community Organizer acts as staff to the CNO Safety & Livability Committee, does outreach and community building throughout the neighborhood on a daily basis, keeps residents informed about S&L issues and opportunities, and helps connect residents, businesses and other groups in the neighborhood with resources for S&L issues.
- **Corcoran Action Team**  
The Corcoran Action Team brought residents, business people, students and their parents together to work on specific one-time projects in the neighborhood including litter clean-ups and a flower planting at South High.
- **Clean Sweep**  
Clean Sweep is a yearly event in which volunteers from the neighborhood help dispose of trash and recycling for their neighbors. This is one of our biggest events, drawing 30 to 50 volunteers, food donations, and participants from all over the Corcoran Neighborhood. The event helps bring people together with a common cause and a sense of accomplishment.
- **Neighborhood Night**  
Neighborhood Night is a Peace Month event to which all residents of the neighborhood are invited. The event features information tables on programs and services in the neighborhood, free food, door prizes and helps build connections between neighbors, the resources available to them, and other neighbors.
- **Advertise for events & write articles in Corcoran News**  
Safety & Livability information published in the Corcoran News is accessible to all residents in the neighborhood. It allows us to reach out to people even if we can't make one-on-one contact. Information is sometimes translated into Spanish.
- **Educate Landlords**  
Landlords are always invited to block clubs, events, Neighborhood Night and other CNO events and are encouraged to call and visit CNO with questions and concerns. Past guests at events have included a tenant screening service, city inspectors, and

CCP/SAFE Crime Prevention Specialists who are willing to work with Landlords to help solve tenant issues and assess properties to make a security improvement plan.

- Community Fundraiser event  
The CNO Safety & Livability Committee works with community businesses to include them in supporting the neighborhood. Businesses often give donations to our events and volunteer recognition dinners. We are also working with businesses that are willing to host benefits or fundraising events for our organization. Duigi's Italian Restaurant hosted an event and donated proceeds from the sales to CNO. The Chatterbox Pub is looking into hosting one as well.

## **Goal 2: Enhance the safety of the neighborhood**

### **Objective 1: Address petty crime in neighborhood: focus on preventative actions.**

- National Night Out and Block Clubs: Attachment D  
CNO Safety & Livability Committee provides assistance to block clubs in planning events, copying, soliciting prizes, and coordinating food donations for NNO and throughout the year. The committee works closely with CCP/SAFE to assist when needed. The Corcoran News prints relevant information about NNO and different opportunities and services available to block clubs throughout the year.
- Intern for fundraising for anti-prostitution efforts
- Closed Sauna at Cedar & Lake  
Residents from the community and representatives from CNO worked together to effectively and permanently close down the former sauna (prostitution business) on the corner of Cedar & Lake. Through public pressure, partnerships, and community participation in reporting crime to the authorities we were able to accomplish this success story.
- Funded Southside Prostitution Task Force  
CNO maintained a strong partnership with SPTF, an organization that fought prostitution on the streets through a public awareness campaign in addition to regular patrols of prostitution-infested areas. CNO granted funds to the organization as well as acting as fiscal agent for one of their outside grants.
- Created Corcoran Document  
Corcoran residents came together with social service organizations and activist groups to create a document about prostitution and how the community could work together to address the issues. The document clearly stated the various issues surrounding prostitution and gave specific direction on how solve the problems. The result was a better partnership with police, including a philosophy shift leading to more arrests of the men (the demand side of the equation), legislation directed at prostitution issues, and the closure of several "saunas" or prostitution businesses. No money was spent on this project because a volunteer donated their time to research and write the document.
- Updates to Corcoran Document  
Now that the solutions from the first version of the Corcoran Document have been implemented, we are looking at what next steps we can take to address prostitution. A person was contracted to look at what resources and partners are available, and to evaluate how far we came with the first document. The process has involved

participation in workshops, the forming of small action groups, and working with policy makers. \$1,600 was spent on this initiative.

- Home Security Workshop 1997 & 2000  
Partnering with CCP/SAFE, we invited residents to an event where they could learn about different home security devices and their use, personal safety and how to avoid being the victim of a crime. At the workshop in 2000, we gave each resident who attended a security device to use in their homes. These included window locks, lights and lighting devices, and door hardware. Volunteers from the neighborhood helped others install the devices if needed.
- Home Security Grants: Attachment D  
Residents can get at 50/50 matching grant for installation of home security improvements including lighting, doors, garage security, glass block windows, window locks and other items. Participants must have a CCP/SAFE home security audit done, select a project from eligible project guidelines, apply for the program, then have the work done to submit for a reimbursement. As of December 2003, CNO has leveraged approximately \$14,000 and spent \$5,000 on the project. This program will continue with \$3,000 remaining in the program to be spent in 2004.
- Corcoran Walkers Patrol and networking events  
In the mid-nineties the Corcoran Walkers group was formed. This group's mission was to monitor the neighborhood for crime issues, graffiti, housing inspections violations, and other trends and to report issues to the proper resource – CCP/SAFE, 911, inspections, etc. The group was very autonomous and those involved preferred a less structured outlet for their involvement. In 1999 and 2000 we tried to organize events for the group, but didn't have much success. Some people involved in the original "Walkers" are still routinely walking and reporting information, while others have let their participation lapse. There is currently a group of residents on the northwest end of the neighborhood working on creating a walking patrol as a tool to address crime issues on their blocks.
- Monitor Community Court  
Community members periodically attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct Community Court to monitor cases, present impact statements, and provide a community presence in the courtroom.
- Restorative Justice  
Midtown Community Restorative Justice is a partnership between the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood and Corcoran. This program empowers community residents to have a hands-on experience in effecting the outcome of crimes being charged in the neighborhood. Offenders are offered the option of forgoing the traditional court system and sentencing in favor of meeting with a panel of community members, working out a contract and repairing the damage their crime has caused the community. The restorative justice process can be mutually beneficial, and both parties end up feeling empowered and restored through their participation. The program budget for 2003 was \$77,361. 100% came from grants or program income. CNO did not contribute any NRP funds to this program which paid for half of the salary of our Community Organizer who dedicated 20 hours per week to Restorative Justice organizing and volunteer recruitment.

**Objective 2: Improve physical appearance & minimize danger zones in neighborhood.**

- Police Buy-Back program bicycle patrol  
CNO hired off duty police officers through the 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct Police Buy-Back program to do bike patrols in the neighborhood from 1997-2000. Through resident calls and feed-back we were able to focus on issues and areas where an additional police presence was needed. In addition to stopping crime, the patrols made residents feel safer and provided a sense of goodwill with the police officers. CNO contributed \$18,000 of NRP funds for this program.
- Work with residents to address concerns on 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. & E. Lake St.  
A cluster of block clubs began meeting in September 2003 to address the issues surrounding abandoned buildings and problem properties along Lake Street, especially at 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. The group continues to meet monthly and is trying different approaches to solve the problems through community building and grassroots action.
- Problem Properties Caucus  
A group of staff members from CNO, CCP/SAFE, Housing & Business Licensing Inspectors, and City Council Ward 9 meet on a monthly basis to work on problems with homes and businesses throughout the neighborhood. Members work together to bring resources to address the issues more efficiently.
- Safety Workshop for Business owners  
Partnering with the Hiawatha & Lake Business Association, the Minneapolis Police Department and CCP/SAFE, the CNO Community Organizer planned a workshop for over 30 members of the business community. The workshop resulted in many businesses taking advantage of free audits offered by the police and improved security throughout the area.
- Security System at Corcoran Park  
CNO contributed \$2,000 for a security system and surveillance cameras at Corcoran Park. These funds were supplemented by a grant from the Hanuman Family who used to live near the park. They contributed \$6,800. The cameras are being used as an effective deterrent for after-hours crime at the park.

**Objective 3: Market Safety & Livability of neighborhood to new renters and homeowners.**

- Purchased CNO Magnets  
Magnets have CNO's phone, fax, address, and website in an easy to access format of a refrigerator magnet. We include these in Welcome Wagon Packets and bring them to outreach events.
- Welcome Wagon Packets  
Volunteers compiled information that is important to new people moving into the neighborhood and put it together in an easy to use format. Folders were printed to hold the information and we are currently working on creating a coupon book featuring neighborhood businesses that are willing to offer discounts to new residents.
- Corcoran "Where You Can Live" posters  
CNO sponsored a design contest for a poster graphic that we can use to promote the neighborhood. We had posters printed from the design and encourage residents and neighborhood businesses to display them in windows. We also used the art on our

Welcome Wagon folders. The artist gave CNO computer files of his art so we are able to use the design on t-shirts, billboards or other promo tools in the future.

**Partnerships:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct Advisory Council, Midtown Community Restorative Justice, Southside Prostitution Task Force, Lake Street Partners Safety Committee, Community Court, Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association, Minneapolis Police and CCP/SAFE, Hiawatha & Lake Business Association

**In conclusion:** The Safety & Livability Committee learned a lot throughout the NRP process. One major lesson was that in order for a program, project, or event to succeed it needs to come from the community. Programs work best when they address a problem or concern that arises, and people are more likely to get involved if an issue personally affects them. Experience and trial & error taught us lessons about organizing community. For this reason, we will look at changing or omitting some of our programming in Phase 2. Some examples of programs that found little support from the community in Phase 1 include: the Corcoran Action Team, educational speakers for Peace Month and monitoring Community Court. These activities may be better left to other organizations that are already doing them in the community.

#### **Recommendations for NRP Phase II**

- Continue community-building activities that bring residents together and involve them in CNO. Examples include: Clean Sweep, Welcome Wagon, block Club support, and Police Buy Back bicycle patrol.
- Expand programs that help residents improve security of their homes and garages and encourage better lighting.
- Continue Restorative Justice partnership with Powderhorn and allocate funds to help expand the program.
- Continue anti-prostitution efforts and partnerships aimed at reaching the goal of zero street prostitution in Corcoran Neighborhood.

#### **Transportation**

**Note:** Corcoran Neighborhood has experienced some major new developments since the original writing of the NRP Action Plan. Hiawatha Avenue has been reconstructed and the Hiawatha LRT line is being built. These two changes caused a shift in direction for the neighborhood. The Transportation Committee is now the Land Use and Transportation Committee and their major focus over the last 5 years has been the planning and implementation of the Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan, Transit Oriented Development Planning and the “Community Campus” idea. Due to outside funding sources for these community plans (CNO received over \$75,000 to do community planning from sources other than NRP); most of the money that was allocated for transportation in the original NRP Action Plan has been moved to other strategies. The neighborhood decided to focus on long-term planning and development to address many of the items in the plan. Countless volunteer hours went into the creation of the Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan that will eventually lead to an estimated \$100 million dollars of redevelopment in Corcoran Neighborhood. The City of Minneapolis adopted the plan

and it now serves as the premier planning document for our neighborhood. A copy of the full Midtown Revival Plan was submitted with this evaluation on disk.

## **Goal 1: Increase safety on the streets for neighborhood residents.**

### **Objective 1: Provide safe pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists**

- The Midtown Revival Plan calls for designated bike routes and safe walking routes for pedestrians. Transit Oriented Development is about creating a pedestrian-friendly environment connected to transit.
- Corcoran maintains an active representative on the Midtown Greenway Coalition Board who communicates information between the Greenway Coalition and the Land Use and Transportation Committee. They advocate for safe connections to the Greenway from the Corcoran neighborhood and a safe experience once bicyclists arrive on the greenway.
- Corcoran has a volunteer who represents the neighborhood on the Lake Street Reconstruction Project. He advocated for wider sidewalks, better lighting and more trees to improve the experience on Lake Street for pedestrians.

### **Objective 2: Reduce traffic speeds and encourage through traffic to use Cedar Avenue, Lake Street and Hiawatha Avenue**

- CNO worked with the Public Works Department to create a speed table on 34<sup>th</sup> Street by the park. This speed table slows traffic in an area where children frequently cross. Total NRP investment: \$4,106
- Volunteers created a traffic flow plan for the neighborhood.

## **Goal: Finish roadway plans set in motion by the reconfiguration of Hiawatha Avenue**

### **Objective 1: Make 31<sup>st</sup> Street an attractive residential road**

- 31<sup>st</sup> Street remains open at South High and has not been down graded to a residential street that is eligible for traffic calming. Although traffic has eased somewhat now that 31<sup>st</sup> Street does not go through to Hiawatha, it is still in need of some traffic calming, especially near the YWCA and South High.

### **Recommendations for Phase II:**

- Continue to have a staff member who works with the Land Use & Transportation Committee to implement the Midtown Revival Plan.
- Continue to promote safe pathways for pedestrians and bikes, especially as it relates to LRT and the reconstruction of Lake Street.
- Promote LRT ridership and encourage people to get off the train at the Lake Street/Midtown stop.

## **Business**

### **Goal 1: To recruit, promote and retain businesses and business corridors in the Corcoran neighborhood.**

#### **Objective 1: Support the construction of the YWCA on Lake Street**

- CNO contributed \$200,000 to the construction of the new YWCA on Lake Street. The YWCA and its staff have been a great amenity for our neighborhood. By contributing \$200,000, CNO was able to get a \$21.4 million investment in our neighborhood.

#### **Objective 2: Recruit new businesses to locate in the neighborhood business corridors.**

- CNO decided to focus on long-term planning for Lake Street and focused their efforts on the creation of the Midtown Revival Plan rather than recruiting businesses. Now that the plan is complete and recognized by the City of Minneapolis, the neighborhood is working on implementing the plan along with the City of Minneapolis and developers. Planning has started on a \$24 million project at Cedar Ave. and Lake St. that will bring in 50,000 square feet of retail with 114 units of housing. Construction is anticipated to start in June 2004.
- The Midtown Public Market opened in Corcoran in July 2003. It is an outdoor, seasonal farmer's market that features a lively mix of locally grown produce, food vendors, artisans, craftspeople and community groups. Volunteers created the market and they continue to run and organize it. CNO was able to leverage over \$75,000 of outside investment in 2003 by allocating staff time to the project. In addition, over 2,755 volunteer hours went into this project in 2003.

#### **Objective 3: Improve physical appearance of businesses in the neighborhood**

- CNO created the Business Fix and Paint Program with the MCDA. See Attachment E for details. It was designed as a matching grant program to improve the physical appearance of businesses within the neighborhood and along Cedar Ave. Businesses located in the redevelopment district along Lake Street were not eligible because the neighborhood did not want to invest NRP funds in an area that will eventually be torn down. Fifteen businesses improved their exterior facades through the program. There are two eligible properties that have not participated. \$83,996 of NRP money has gone into this program which has leveraged at least an additional \$90,000 of improvements.

#### **Funds Leveraged:**

- \$21.2 million from the YWCA
- at least \$90,000 in improvements to businesses
- \$75,000 from the Midtown Public Market
- If the Cedar/Lake project moves forward, it will bring a \$24 million project to our community which would not have happened without community planning and staff recruiting developers to our neighborhood.



**Recommendations for Phase II:**

- Discontinue the Business Fix and Paint Program since most businesses have participated (some more than once) and those that have not have been given many opportunities.
- Discontinue grants to businesses. Find ways to support new construction and our existing businesses through low interest loans, deferred loans or other methods that will allow CNO to eventually recoup the money which can then be used to improve other businesses.
- Continue running and expanding the Midtown Public Market.
- Continue to have a person on staff who works with the Land Use & Transportation Committee to implement the Midtown Revival Plan.

**Neighborhood Resource Center**

As stated in the Action Plan: CNO plans on creating a resource center to address the needs of the community relating to housing, youth and family, and business. The resource center will provide a “one-stop shopping” network for residents and business owners and provide a central gathering place for the entire neighborhood.

- CNO purchased and rehabbed an office space in 2000 for \$264,000. It is located on Cedar Avenue and is highly visible in the community. The neighborhood worked with NRP to become the first neighborhood organization to own their office space. The neighborhood wanted to ensure that it would have a place for the community to host meetings, use computers, conduct business, get information and socialize for years to come. A Senior Center was built as part of the space and has been utilized by seniors on a regular basis. The Center for Energy and Environment rents space in the building and we are always looking to add tenants that would offer a service for our residents. The Midtown Public Market office is also located in our building. Residents can send faxes or make copies at the office. Purchasing the building is part of an overall strategy to become self sufficient.

**Funds Leveraged:**

- \$13,800 of income from rents paid to date (current rents receivable is \$650/mo.)
- At least a \$10,000/year savings in operating expenses since we no longer pay rent

**Recommendations for Phase II:**

- CNO would like to expand its revenue potential by redesigning the space to accommodate more offices.
- The Senior Center has not been utilized to the degree that was originally expected. In Phase II planning, the neighborhood will need to look at alternative or additional uses for the space.

## **Administration**

As stated in the Action Plan: Administrative funds will be used to hire an NRP Executive Director and two organizers. Funds will also be used to lease office space, and pay for other necessary office equipment and supplies.

- CNO highly values their human resources. CNO currently employs a full time Executive Director, a full time Community Organizer, a part time Office Manager, and a full time Lutheran Volunteer Corp. employee. In addition, CNO has a contractual agreement with the Center for Energy and Environment to meet our housing needs. The staff mix has varied over the years to accommodate the needs of the organization. In 2003, 47% of the CNO staff budget came from sources other than NRP.
- The Corcoran Neighborhood News is a monthly newspaper that is distributed to every household and business in the Corcoran Neighborhood. It is a fantastic source of neighborhood news and allows us to connect to our residents on a monthly basis. Results from our randomly selected neighborhood survey show that 82% of the people surveyed read the newspaper on a regular basis and 71% of the people surveyed rated the quality of the paper as good or very good. The newspaper costs approximately \$15,800 per year. CNO covers this cost through advertising revenue and subscription fees of approximately \$6,000 and a \$10,000 a year grant from the MCDA Citizen Participation fund.

## **Recommendations for Phase II:**

- Continue to build on the knowledge and momentum that we've gained in Phase I and continue with our current staff levels. CNO has learned how to leverage NRP funds to bring in thousands of dollars to help run our programs, support our staff and maintain our office. In order to best leverage NRP funds in the future, CNO will strive to have 50-75% of staff expenses covered by sources other than NRP.
- Continue to provide a high quality, monthly newspaper for our residents.



**Corcoran Neighborhood Organization  
Community Survey**

**The Corcoran Neighborhood Organization conducted this door-to-door survey in June 2002. Homes were randomly selected and volunteers and staff conducted the survey's. Ninety-two surveys were completed.**

**Survey Questions**

1. Is English your native language? 91% Yes 9% No
  
2. Are you 18 years old or older? 98% Yes 2% No
  
3. How long have you lived in the neighborhood?  
6% less than 1 year  
19% 1-3 years  
13% 4-6 years  
12% 7-9 years  
11% 10-12 years  
7% 13-19 years  
4% 20-30 years  
9% 31-40 years  
5% 41-50 years  
8% 50+ years
  
4. Overall, how do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?  
  
Very Good 22% Good 63% Fair 15% Poor 0 Don't Know 0
  
5. Over the past three years, do you think Corcoran has gotten better, gotten worse or stayed about the same?  
  
Better 48% Stayed the Same 40% Worse 8% Unsure 4%
  
6. Do you think that you will be living in Corcoran five years from now or will you be living someplace else?  
  
Corcoran 57% Another Neighborhood in Mpls 5%  
Someplace Else 12% Don't Know 26%

7. For the following statements, please state whether you agree, strongly agree, disagree or strongly disagree.

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know |
|--|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| a. People in my neighborhood look out for one another                          | 10%            | 76%   | 9%       | 0                 | 5%         |
| b. My neighborhood is a safe place to live                                     | 8%             | 71%   | 15%      | 0                 | 2%         |
| c. My community has a good selection of stores and services that meet my needs | 12%            | 47%   | 28%      | 0                 | 3%         |
| d. My neighborhood is clean and well maintained                                | 2%             | 37%   | 31%      | 23%               | 0          |
| e. Traffic speeds in my neighborhood are not a problem                         | 2%             | 40%   | 33%      | 25%               | 0          |
| f. I would like to be more involved in my neighborhood                         | 3%             | 50%   | 31%      | 2%                | 14%        |

8. Are you familiar with the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), in which each neighborhood in Minneapolis develops projects for improving housing, parks, the environment, and other aspects of the community?

Yes 64% No 29% Somewhat 7%

9. Do you know what the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization is?

Yes 72% No 25% Somewhat 3%

10. How would you rate the impact the NRP has had on your neighborhood?

Very Positive 15% Positive 36% No Impact 4% Negative 0  
Very Negative 0 Don't Know 45%

11. Have you attended a Corcoran Neighborhood Organization meeting or event?

Yes 50% No 50%

12. What Corcoran community programs have you participated in or benefited from? (Check all that apply)

- Block Clubs 48%
- Clean Sweep 49%
- Housing Loan Programs or Educational Open Houses 22%
- Teen Fair 2%
- Housing Fair 25%
- Peace Month 5%

Festivals 24%

Other 11%

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13. What do you like about living in the neighborhood? (check all that apply)

1. Housing conditions 67%

2. Schools 28%

3. Community events 37%

4. Businesses 45%

5. Park facilities and programs 55%

6. Neighborhood appearance 54%

7. Safe place to live 58%

8. Property values 55%

9. Sense of community 58%

10. Access to jobs 36%

11. Other 38%

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14. Which of the items that you selected in #13 do you like the best about your neighborhood? (Choose only one and write the number in the blank) \_\_\_\_\_

Housing Conditions 13%

Schools 5%

Community Events 3%

Businesses 6%

Park Facilities and Programs 8%

Neighborhood Appearance 5%

Safe Place to Live 13%

Property Values 7%

Sense of Community 23%

Access to Jobs 10%

Other 7%

15. What concerns do you have about the neighborhood? (check all that apply)

1. No concerns 12%

2. Litter 53%

3. Lack of youth activities 16%

4. Prostitution 41%

5. Drugs 48%

6. Other crimes (please specify) 34%

7. Poorly maintained properties 35%

8. Speeding cars 57%

9. Graffiti 54%

10. Noise 32%

11. Other (please specify) 13%

16. Which of the items selected above is of the most concern to you? (Chose only one and write the number in the blank) \_\_\_\_\_

- No Concerns 2%
- Litter 7%
- Lack of Youth Activities 2%
- Prostitution 15%
- Drugs 21%
- Other Crimes 9%
- Poorly Maintained Homes 8%
- Speeding Cars 14%
- Graffiti 10%
- Noise 7%
- Other 5%

17. As you probably know, Corcoran is faced with the task of providing services on a limited budget. With this in mind, please help us to prioritize the following services for CNO. (Should *Preserving Corcoran Housing Stock* be a high, medium or low priority for CNO in the future?)

|  | High Priority | Medium Priority | Low priority | Don't Know |
|--|---------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Preserving Corcoran housing stock  | 54%           | 25%             | 4%           | 17%        |
| Dealing with problem businesses and unkempt properties   | 43%           | 36%             | 13%          | 8%         |
| Organizing community wide clean-up events  | 39%           | 40%             | 9%           | 12%        |
| The Corcoran News- Our monthly community newspaper   | 43%           | 35%             | 13%          | 9%         |
| Revitalizing and improving our commercial corridors  | 43%           | 28%             | 16%          | 13%        |
| Dealing with residents concerns  | 60%           | 27%             | 3%           | 10%        |
| Block club leader recruiting   | 19%           | 38%             | 24%          | 19%        |
| Youth programming  | 45%           | 27%             | 13%          | 15%        |
| Graffiti clean up  | 38%           | 43%             | 10%          | 9%         |
| Coordinating events like a volunteer recognition dinner, peace month, or a neighborhood garage sale  | 19%           | 34%             | 33%          | 14%        |
| Promoting housing programs such as MCDA's Rehab Support Program or encouraging residents to check with their insurance provider after a hail storm | 55%           | 29%             | 6%           | 10%        |

18. We'd like to find out how you feel about the current neighborhood conditions. Please rate the quality of each of the following topics as very good, good, fair poor or don't know.

|                                  | Very Good | Good    | Fair    | Poor    | Don't Know |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| Housing maintenance              | 12<br>%   | 51<br>% | 33<br>% | 3<br>%  | 1<br>%     |
| Yard maintenance                 | 13<br>%   | 48<br>% | 34<br>% | 4<br>%  | 1<br>%     |
| Street and alley maintenance     | 8<br>%    | 39<br>% | 39<br>% | 12<br>% | 2<br>%     |
| Park and recreational facilities | 15<br>%   | 46<br>% | 23<br>% | 1<br>%  | 15<br>%    |
| Street lighting                  | 12<br>%   | 64<br>% | 20<br>% | 2<br>%  | 2<br>%     |
| Alley lighting                   | 8<br>%    | 57<br>% | 24<br>% | 6<br>%  | 5<br>%     |
| Parking                          | 13<br>%   | 48<br>% | 19<br>% | 15<br>% | 5<br>%     |
| Shopping facilities              | 10<br>%   | 35<br>% | 29<br>% | 23<br>% | 3<br>%     |
| Community life                   | 7<br>%    | 49<br>% | 30<br>% | 2<br>%  | 11<br>%    |
| Safety                           | 6<br>%    | 51<br>% | 33<br>% | 8<br>%  | 2<br>%     |
| Drug traffic control             | 7<br>%    | 27<br>% | 17<br>% | 20<br>% | 29<br>%    |
| Neighborhood business appearance | 3<br>%    | 42<br>% | 35<br>% | 19<br>% | 1<br>%     |
| Litter                           | 3<br>%    | 32<br>% | 34<br>% | 29<br>% | 2<br>%     |
| Crime prevention                 | 3<br>%    | 38<br>% | 36<br>% | 9<br>%  | 14<br>%    |
| Senior citizen services          | 1<br>%    | 22<br>% | 14<br>% | 3<br>%  | 59<br>%    |
| Schools                          | 4<br>%    | 39<br>% | 17<br>% | 3<br>%  | 37<br>%    |
| Property values                  | 24<br>%   | 44<br>% | 9<br>%  | 8<br>%  | 15<br>%    |
| Quality of newspaper             | 26<br>%   | 46<br>% | 13<br>% | 2<br>%  | 13<br>%    |

19. Do you read the Corcoran News, the monthly community newspaper, on a regular basis? (If no, please skip to #21) Yes 82% No 18%

20. Please rate how useful the information in the paper is to you.

Very Useful 36%   Somewhat Useful 46%  
Not Useful 1%   Doesn't Read the Paper 17%

21. Would you like to volunteer in your neighborhood?

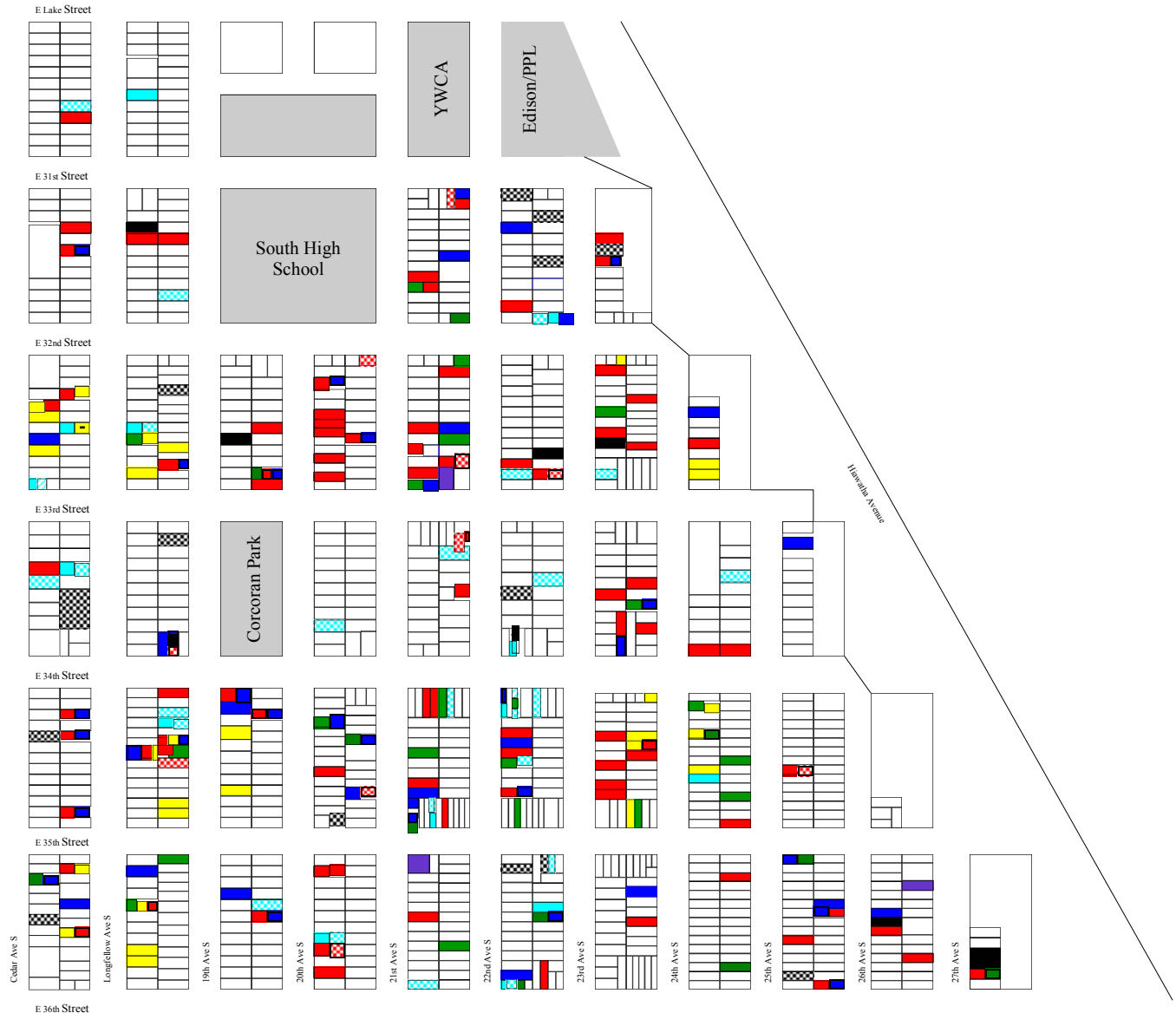
Yes 26%   No 47%   I Already Do 22%   Maybe 5%

22. If yes, may we have your name, phone number and email address so that a staff member can contact you?



# Map of Corcoran Neighborhood

## NRP Funded Housing Programs

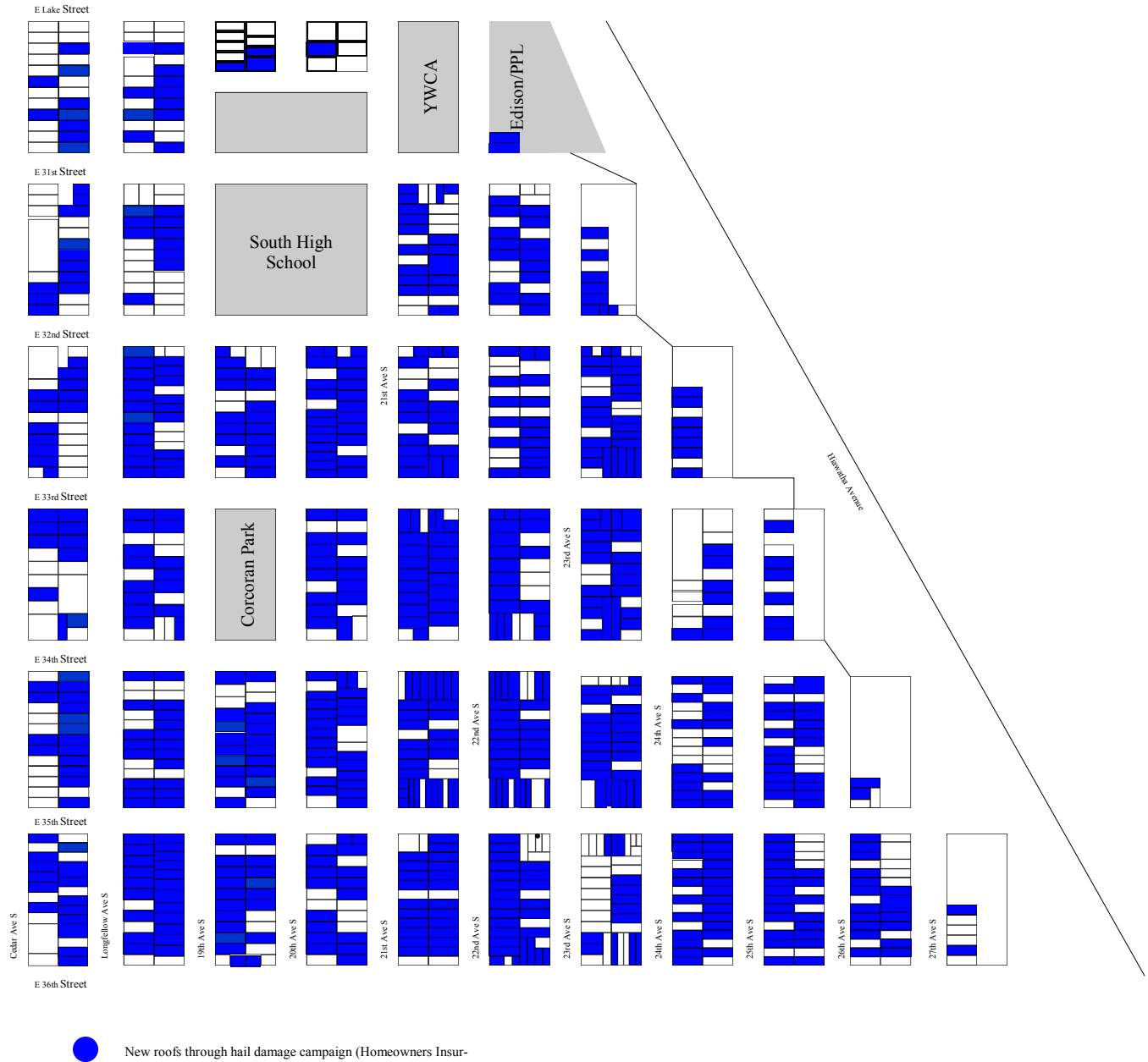


- Rehab Support Program through the MCDA (Non-NRP)
- Downpayment/Closing Cost Assistance– Homebuyers Program (CNO/NRP)
- Rehab Assistance– Homebuyers Program (CNO/NRP)
- ▨ Rental Conversion Program– Homebuyers Program (CNO/NRP)
- Matching Grant Owner-Occupant '96 & '97 (CNO/NRP/CEE)
- ▨ Deferred Loan Owner-Occupant (CNO/NRP)
- Revolving Loan Owner-Occupant (CNO/NRP)
- Block Fix-up Program Grant (CNO/NRP)
- Child Care Grants (CNO/NRP)
- Emergency Grants (CNO/NRP)
- ▨ Rental Matching Grant Program (CNO/NRP)

# Map of Corcoran Neighborhood

## Roof Replacement Campaign

1998 Hail Storm Damage





Information on this map is based on observations by the CNO Housing Coordinator.

# Map of Corcoran Neighborhood

## Block Clubs and Home Security Matching Grant Recipients









|   |   |
|---|---|
|  | Corcoran Block Clubs                    |
|  | Home Security Matching Grant Recipients |

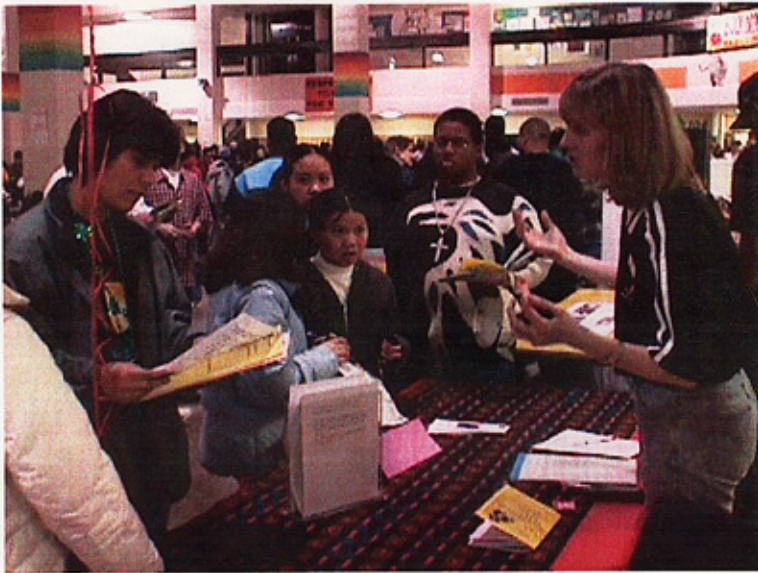
# Corcoran Neighborhood

## Business Improvements



-  Businesses that are eligible for Fix and Paint funds but did not utilize them
-  Businesses improved by the Fix and Paint Program
-  Businesses Ineligible for the program because they are in a redevelopment district
-  Corcoran contributed \$200,000 of its NRP funds to the construction of the YWCA
-  Corcoran contributed \$10,000 to South High to build an outdoor playground
-  CNO purchased and rehabbed their property with NRP money

# CORCORAN NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH & FAMILIES



**Teen Job & Opportunity Fair**  
photo by Pat Cernia

Building a sense of community through fun activities with kids!



**Corcoran Park Computer Lab is a great investment in our neighborhood youth! Bringing access to underserved populations & bridging the digital divide.**

# MIDTOWN PUBLIC MARKET

