

MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

NORTH LOOP / WAREHOUSE DISTRICT

NRP PHASE II

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

Legal Opinion Reference Date:	August 5, 2010
Date Adopted by the Policy Board:	August 23, 2010
Date Adopted by the City Council:	September 24, 2010
Published in Finance & Commerce:	October 2, 2010

Warehouse District North Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Program Phase II Action Plan

City of Minneapolis, MN



**NORTH
LOOP**
NEIGHBORHOOD



Warehouse District North Loop Neighborhood Association
July 2010

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HISTORY OF THE NORTH LOOP NEIGHBORHOOD

The North Loop Neighborhood, located in what is frequently referred to as the Warehouse District, played an important role in Minneapolis history. Recognized as a bustling commercial hub and industrial center, this part of the city served everyone from manufacturers and millers, farmers to furriers, through the 1800's. In addition, the "north loop" of rail lines – the railroad and city streetcars running through the neighborhood brought vital transportation to businesses and consumers alike.

With the decline of the industrial boom, businesses favored trucks over trains, and the Neighborhood slipped into disinvestments. Many buildings were abandoned and left to decay. The 1970's brought a new era of artists seeking large spaces and low rents. These artistic pioneers found what they were looking for in the North Loop, and are largely responsible for bringing life back into this significant neighborhood. Today the North Loop is once again a vibrant community, offering unique housing options, award-winning arts, entertainment, fine dining, and specialty shops, many within the original warehouses of the North Loop's historic heyday.

North Loop boasts the unique position of offering some of Minneapolis's newest residential opportunities in one of the oldest neighborhoods in the City.

ABOUT THE NORTH LOOP NEIGHBORHOOD

North Loop neighborhood makes the northern part of the loop that encircles Minneapolis' downtown. The neighborhood extends from Plymouth Avenue North on the north to Interstate 394, which makes the southern boundary. The western boundary is Interstate 94. The boundary continues along 12th Street North to Third Avenue North, then to Washington Avenue North, and Hennepin Avenue North. The Mississippi River is the northeastern boundary.

The neighborhood grew very fast in the last few years, as industrial buildings and old warehouses were converted for residential and commercial uses. This transformation was followed by new residential construction. The North Loop, which used to be industrial land, is now a vibrant residential neighborhood, very conveniently located near the downtown core.

North Loop experienced significant increases in residential population between the 1990 and 2000 census. There was a 250% growth during that time. North Loop will experience an even more significant increase in the 2010 census.

The North Loop Neighborhood is the gateway to the Minneapolis riverfront and the link to neighborhoods in Northeast Minneapolis. The North Loop is a mix of eclectic shops, vibrant restaurants, new and renovated multi-family housing, historic warehouse buildings, public service uses and riverfront recreational opportunities. The neighborhood can be defined by very unique character districts. The districts are:

- a) **Waterside Residential District** – Most of the new residential developments in this area are bordered by West River Parkway, 8th Avenue North, 2nd Street North and the Railroad tracks between 3rd and 4th Avenue North. Before 1995, the 250 units in the Itasca and Riverwalk buildings were the main residential areas. This area saw the addition of residential developments such as River Station, Landings, Creamette, Lindsay Loft, Garr Scott Lofts, Renaissance on the River, Heritage Landing, Mill City apartments, Reserve, Rock Island Lofts and many more.
- b) **Mixed-Use Loft District** – this district contains a wide variety of uses including residential, arts, businesses and light manufacturing. The buildings are a mix of historic warehouses converted to residential living and newer buildings constructed in a way that respect the historic character of this district.
- c) **Washington Avenue North Corridor** – this area is the commercial core and heart of the North Loop. It has a wide variety of uses.

- d) **Charitable Organizations/ Farmers Market District** – In addition to the Minneapolis Farmer's Market, the eastern edge of the North Loop is home to some significant charitable organizations including Sharing and Caring Hands/Mary's Place, the Salvation Army and the Glenwood residence of Catholic Charities.
- e) **City Services/Utilities/Industrial District** – North Loop contains numerous facilities that support the infrastructure and services for the City of Minneapolis including the MTC bus garage, the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center, the Curry and Royalton City of Minneapolis maintenance facilities, the Excel Energy Service yard and the Ninth District Federal Reserve Bank.
- f) **Twins Stadium/Northstar Commuter Rail and Hiawatha Light Rail Transit Center** - this district contains the newly constructed Target Field and transit center.
- g) **As home to the so-called Transportation Interchange**, the North Loop has enjoyed the benefits of being at the region's transit hub, but the neighborhood will have to work diligently to keep livability at the forefront as these important transportation investments are made.

NRP PHASE II PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The NRP Phase II Plan Development Process was coordinated by Warehouse District North Loop Association (WDNLA) Board Member J.R. Maddox who was appointed by the Board.

The Board coordinator hired a consultant and monitored the consultant to ensure that all work products agreed to in the professional services agreement were delivered to the organization accurately and efficiently and that NRP Policy was followed in development of the plan.

The WDNLA conducted a neighborhood wide survey during the Phase I plan review process. The results of this survey were used to determine the issues that the neighborhood visited during the planning process.

The neighborhood hosted a focus group on June 5, 2010 to ascertain what neighborhood stakeholders think about the important issues facing the neighborhood and to extract suggestions for strategies to address these issues.

The focus groups were:

Housing – The housing focus group will address current housing issues in the neighborhood based on the survey results and determine the best way to invest NRP funds in a way to maximize organization return on investment.

Parks, Green space, community gathering places and accessibility – Based on the survey results people have shown high interest in maximizing utilization of existing park spaces, finding creative ways to create more green space, establishing community gathering places and making all of these accessible to everyone. An emphasis was placed on making the North Loop more family friendly.

Businesses – The North Loop has a fast growing business climate in both retail and other commercial businesses. Even though the survey did not deal with business interests it will be important to discuss issues of importance to local businesses and include the results of those discussions in the Phase II plan.

Transportation and Parking – With the opening of Target Field and the growing population of the neighborhood, transportation and parking are major issues. The survey was completed before Target Field actually opened. The survey results reported great concern about parking in the neighborhood.

Government and other organizational partners were invited to participate and provide information at these focus groups.

The results of the survey and the information gleaned from these focus groups helped the consultant and Board to develop a draft of goals and objectives for the Phase II NRP Plan.

The consultant compiled all suggested strategies that were offered at the focus groups and mail-in postcards as well as any that were made in the oral comments in the survey.

An all neighborhood meeting was held to report the suggested strategies and to allow neighborhood stakeholders to choose the priority strategies that will be funded using a process called dotmocracy.

The consultant prepared a draft Phase II plan with strategies for presentation to the board using the priorities identified by the neighborhood at-large.

TIMELINE

Saturday June 5th, 2010 Focus Groups

- 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Parks, Green space, community gathering places and accessibility
- 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Housing
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Businesses
- 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Transportation/Parking

The focus groups was held at Sapor Café located at 428 Washington Ave N. (Julie Steenerson has graciously donated the use of her café for this workshop)

Monday June 14th, 2010

Distribution of draft Goals and Objective to the WDNLA Board, NRP Coordinator and board members.

Wednesday June 30th, 2010

Neighborhood wide stakeholder prioritization meeting (Dotmocracy process)

Wednesday July 7th, 2010

Distribution of draft Phase II NRP Action Plan to board members and neighborhood for feedback and comment. The required 21-day notice of final vote by neighborhood was given on this day.

Wednesday July 28th, 2010

WDNLA Board and full neighborhood voted to approve final NRP plan.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

A grievance procedure was established as defined below. However, there were no grievances submitted at any point in the planning process.

Any complaint against the organization or any of its activities shall be made in writing and directed to a meeting of the Board of Directors, which shall respond in writing within five business days of their meeting. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors, the complainant has the option to submit the complaint to the NRP Policy Board. The NRP Policy Board will only consider complaints that are regarding potential violations regarding NRP Policy.

NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

SECTION 1:

Goal 1: To encourage a highly integrated, mixed-use residential development pattern that holds a variety of housing options, suitable to a wide range of household types and income levels.

Objective 1: Encourage the Development of a Wider Range of Housing Options.

Strategy 1: Contact developers to attract new styles of housing not present in the North Loop.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager – City of Minneapolis DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

&

Livable communities, healthy lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 2: Work to increase a mix of ownership and rental housing in the neighborhood.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

&

Livable communities, healthy lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Objective 2: Encourage all Residential Buildings of Significant Size to be Mixed Use and follow the principles that define transit oriented development.

Strategy 1: Work with city of Minneapolis officials to have the Neighborhood Design Guidelines (March 2006) adopted by the City of Minneapolis.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

&

Livable communities, healthy lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 2: Encourage the development of “life-cycle” housing that can provide opportunities to all family configurations and age groups.

NRP Resources - \$0

City of Minneapolis: CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

&

Livable communities, healthy lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 3: Work with the City and private developers to find future uses for developments that were abandoned during the economic down turn.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

&

Livable communities, healthy lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Objective 3: Ensure the housing stock remains strong and well-maintained and reduces the neighborhood carbon footprint.

Strategy 1: Implement a loan program that will provide NRP funding to homeowners and homeowners associations to improve the housing stock and incorporate energy-efficiency elements.

NRP Resources - \$205,105

Contract Manager : City of Minneapolis DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

&

Livable communities, healthy lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 2: Encourage “green” “eco-friendly” projects that help with energy efficiency.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

&

Eco-focused. Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future.

PARKS, GREEN SPACE AND COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES.

SECTION 2:

Goal 1: To ensure that the natural environment plays a central role in the daily lives of North Loop residents, daily workers and visitors

Objective 1: Maximize the Recreational Amenities and Open Space Opportunities in the North Loop.

Strategy 1: Establish a family friendly play area and green space.

NRP Resources - \$25,000

Contract Manager: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB)

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Eco-focused. Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future.

Strategy 2: Develop strong connections between the North Loop riverfront, bicycle paths and other community gathering places in the neighborhood.

NRP Resources - \$2,939

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works and MPRB

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Eco-focused. Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future.

- Strategy 3:** Promote the development of future parks, trail connections, open Spaces, a civic center and boulevards in the Neighborhood.
- NRP Resources - \$2,939
- Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works and MPRB
- City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Eco-focused. Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future.
- Strategy 4:** Ensure the continued existence of a dog park in the neighborhood.
- NRP Resources - \$0
- Contract Manager : City of Minneapolis DFD
- City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Eco-focused. Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future.
- Strategy 5:** Work with the City and the Park Board to develop a tree plan and Future green space plan that compliments the bicycle trails and access points to the river and follows the neighborhood design guidelines approved on March 2006.
- NRP Resources - \$1,470
- Contract Manager: NRP and MPRB
- City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Eco-focused. Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS

SECTION 3:

Goal 1: To support and enhance the vitality of existing neighborhood businesses and attract appropriate retail and services to create a self-sustaining neighborhood.

Objective 1: Achieve a Higher Level of Local Grocery Service in the North Loop.

- Strategy 1:** Explore different options for achieving a higher level of grocery service in the North Loop.
- NRP Resources - \$7,347
- Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED, DFD and NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Jobs and Economic Development. A world class city and 21st century economic power house.

Objective 2: Attract New Retailers and Service Businesses to the North Loop.

Strategy 1: Continue to work toward attracting retail businesses that service the residents living in the neighborhood.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Jobs and Economic Development. A world class city and 21st century economic power house.

Strategy 2: Work with local businesses to design a neighborhood map that identifies where businesses and other neighborhood amenities are located.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Jobs and Economic Development. A world class city and 21st century economic power house.

Strategy 3: Work to have kiosks installed throughout the neighborhood that will show the neighborhood asset map and provide directions for residents and visitors.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Jobs and Economic Development. A world class city and 21st century economic power house.

Objective 3: Provide a venue for neighborhood businesses to connect with one another and the Warehouse District North Loop Association Board.

Strategy 1: Establish a business committee of the Board of the Warehouse District North Loop Association.

NRP Resources - \$7348

Contract Manager: NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Jobs and Economic Development. A world class city and 21st century economic power house.

Strategy 2: Encourage the use of the cities “Great Streets” program.

NRP Resources - \$0

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Jobs and Economic Development. A world-class city and 21st century economic power house.

Objective 4: Work with the City and local property owners to ensure that parking lots and commercial areas are maintained.

Strategy 1: Ensure that the City enforces ordinances regarding litter, graffiti and overgrown weeds and that property owners are encouraged to keep their properties in order.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Zoning

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Jobs and Economic Development. A world class city and 21st century economic power house.

TRANSPORTATION

SECTION 4:

Goal 1: To create as many transportation options as possible, ensuring that they integrate well within the Neighborhood, minimize auto usage and traffic congestion, and maintain a high standard of safety.

Objective 1: Reduce Traffic Hazards and Manage Traffic Effectively.

Strategy 1: Coordinate with the City of Minneapolis to ensure the development of a Traffic management plan for the North Loop.

NRP Resources - \$4,408

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 2: Encourage the City of Minneapolis to improve safety at critical intersections. (i.e. cross walk markings to ensure vehicle traffic respects pedestrians)

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 3: Work with local business owners and the City to provide short-term Parking spaces that accommodate customers of local businesses during Twins games.

NRP Resource - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Objective 2: Enhance a variety of Transportation Opportunities for North Loop Residents.

Strategy 1: Promote the Development of Alternative Modes of Transportation.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 2: Work with Metro Transit to provide better circulation transit in the neighborhood. (i.e. River City Trolley)

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED and Met Council

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 3: Design bicycle racks on Washington and other strategic areas of the neighborhood to encourage more bicycle use in the neighborhood.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 4: Work to establish an all-inclusive full service bicycle station like the one on the Midtown Greenway.

NRP Resources - \$1,470

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 5: Work to encourage higher use of pedi-cabs in the neighborhood, especially during Twins games or other high-traffic events occurring at Target Field.

NRP Resources - \$1,469

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED, DFD and NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Objective 3: Ensure that future transit station development addresses neighborhood needs.

Strategy 1: Work with the Hennepin County and the Met Council to ensure that the Southwest Corridor transit station includes a plan to address the need for the Minneapolis Farmer's Market expansion and corresponding parking plan.

NRP Resources - \$5,878.00

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED, Hennepin County

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

SECTION 5:

Goal 1: To build a strong sense of shared identity, purpose, community pride and collective knowledge/awareness among residents, daily workers and business/property owners across all parts of the North Loop.

Objective 1: Foster Regular, Positive Interaction Between Residents, Daily Workers and Business/Property Owners.

Strategy 1: Develop regular events.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager – NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

Strategy 2: Develop programs to support local businesses and to engage them in the community. (i.e. establish business committee)

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CPED

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

Objective 2: Teach the Outside World About the Great, Unique Benefits and Features of the North Loop.

Strategy 1: Create an annual, signature event or block party that symbolizes the North Loop and/or creates awareness of the community to the larger world.

NRP Resources - \$1,470

Contract Manager: NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

Strategy 2: Design and install neighborhood directional signs to help residents and visitors find neighborhood assets.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager – City of Minneapolis DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

Strategy 3: Develop promotional materials and utilize local media to raise awareness of the North Loop.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY

SECTION 6:

Goal 1: To create a neighborhood where land uses and infrastructure support a safe, healthy community in which to live, work, host visitors, seek entertainment and pursue recreation.

Objective 1: Keep Crime Low and Improve the Perception of Safety in the North Loop.

Strategy 1: Promote all tools that residents can use to avoid dangerous situations and to report criminal activity.

NRP Resources - \$5,878.00

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CCP/SAFE and NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

Strategy 2: Coordinate with the City of Minneapolis to identify potential crime areas and install crime prevention hardware.

NRP Resources - \$4,408

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis CCP/SAFE and DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

Strategy 3: Work with the City to develop a lighting plan for the neighborhood.

NRP Resources - \$2,939.00

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

Objective 2: Preserve the Infrastructure and Character of the Neighborhood.

Strategy 1: Work with City of Minneapolis to capture a “fair share” of city services.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis Public Works

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: A safe place to call home. People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city.

ARTS AND CULTURE

SECTION 7:

Goal 1: To create a neighborhood where arts, culture, history and entertainment opportunities are plentiful, diverse and well supported.

Objective 1: Preserve and Enhance the Existing Arts, Cultural, Historical and Entertainment Opportunities in the North Loop.

Strategy 1: Develop an awareness of existing Neighborhood assets.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: NRP

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 2: Tie local arts, entertainment, historical and cultural institutions together through a North Loop Arts and Culture Association.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

Strategy 3: Help create promotional programs for local arts, historical, cultural and entertainment organizations.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: City of Minneapolis DFD

City Goal accomplished by this strategy: Livable Communities, Healthy Lives. Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 8:

Goal 1: Encourage all members of the neighborhood to participate in its evolution and well being, and foster strong channels of communication to ensure that all neighborhood initiatives are implemented.

Objective 1: Ensure a High Level of Communication With Key North Loop Stakeholders.

Strategy 1: Support and Enhance the North Loop e-newsletter.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: NRP

Strategy 2: Continue to support and enhance the neighborhood association web-site.

NRP Resources - \$2,939.00

Contract Manager: NRP

Strategy 3: Hold regular WDNLA-sponsored gatherings to update key stakeholders on neighborhood issues.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: NRP

Objective 2: Set Up a System to Ensure Full Implementation of Neighborhood Plans.

Strategy 1: Work with Minneapolis City Staff to gather resources in support of plan implementation.

NRP Resources - \$0

Contract Manager: NRP

Strategy 2: Hire consultants as necessary to assist with the planning and implementation of the NRP Plan, to organize various events and to conduct research as necessary.

NRP Resources - \$10,000 (Phase II Plan Development Advance Fund)
\$20,105 (Phase I Rollover funds)

Contract Manager: NRP