



# **CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORT**

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## **HOMEOWN SERVICES: THE NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITY**



Citizens League Report

**HEMGROWN SERVICES:  
THE NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITY**

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## MAJOR IDEAS IN OUR REPORT

**“Neighborhood service delivery” means neighborhood residents are involved either in producing, arranging, or purchasing services—public or private—at the neighborhood level.**

Neighborhood service delivery makes it possible to design a particular service to fit the scale at which it can most effectively and efficiently be delivered. The role of residents as buyers, arrangers, or producers can be carried out through ad hoc groups, formally established neighborhood organizations, or locally based firms and civic groups whose purview is the neighborhood.

Neighborhood service delivery is not an euphemism for citizen involvement in public policy making. Cities and neighborhoods have long struggled with the question of local voice in public policy. Neighborhood service delivery focuses not on policy making but on service delivery: local initiative in meeting local needs.

Neighborhood service delivery is not simply dividing a city into districts and providing services on a decentralized basis. Local residents must participate in one of the roles cited above, shaping services and delivery mechanisms to fit local preferences. Nor is neighborhood service delivery fundamentally a strategy simply for reducing service costs through the use of volunteer labor. The presence of paid staff was a key element in some of the most significant case studies examined by the committee. In fact, neighborhood service delivery offers flexibility to mix and match all types of resources—public, corporate, voluntary, charitable, and personal; the ability to inspire neighborhoods to take action on their own behalf instead of turning to high cost professionals; the ability to discover and pursue local entrepreneurial opportunities.

**A number of high-impact opportunities exist for expanding neighborhood service delivery in the Twin Cities area.**

The committee’s report presents a range of general recommendations for institutional changes which will foster growth of neighborhood service delivery. At the same time, several targets of opportunity were also found where efforts should be made now to develop specific new neighborhood service arrangements.

One such target is in the City of Saint Paul where the

committee recommends a convergence of the neighborhood service delivery concept with the benefit-based financing concepts being developed under contract with the Rand Corporation. Specifically, the committee urges that one of the pilot revenue centers being established in Saint Paul be set in a District Council, turning over to the neighborhood the responsibility and authority for managing city park and recreation facilities and services within its jurisdiction. This recommendation is aimed both at utilizing the city’s benefit-based financing thrust to foster neighborhood service delivery, and at drawing on the neighborhoods to help resolve the city’s budgetary problems concerning its parks and recreation programs.

Two targeted recommendations are made to the City of Minneapolis. One is to build on the city’s current work to decentralize employment programs by contracting with a neighborhood to take responsibility for arranging, buying, and/or producing training and placement services within its jurisdiction, with its performance tied to city-established goals and performance measures. The second recommendation pertains to the city’s maintenance of small, scattered public properties (“malls and plazas”) such as parking lots, traffic triangles, and the like. The committee urges the city to contract with a neighborhood organization to take over the maintenance of those properties within its jurisdiction.

The committee also recommends that the counties of Ramsey and Hennepin expand and replicate the St. Anthony Park Block Nurse Program described in the report’s appendix. Rationale for expansion lies in the committee’s sense that this program to provide in-home care for elderly residents could be applied to a variety of other human service needs within the neighborhood as well. The rationale for replication lies in the potential to achieve a broader impact from this program by recreating it in other neighborhoods.

The committee recommends that suburban communities consider three alternative neighborhood-based service initiatives: group contracting for home repair, given the aging of the suburban housing stock; establishment of youth enterprises as a means of providing a broader range of full- and part-time work opportunities for youth; and creating neighborhood-level fire inspection and prevention initiatives in tandem with suburban fire departments as an example of public service unbundling.



**A new system of collaborative relationships, methods of co-production of services, monitoring, and coordination to advance neighborhood service delivery should be pursued.**

Many services that do not lend themselves to neighborhood service delivery in their entirety are an amalgamation of individual tasks, some of which can best be carried out at the neighborhood level. This "unbundling" of public services—breaking them into the component tasks and identifying the appropriate level at which each task can best be carried out—calls for partnership or co-production arrangements in which neighborhoods work hand-in-hand with other public or private organizations that have responsibility for producing related tasks that make up the larger service. Examples include crime watch, home care for the elderly, recreation programs, and snowplowing.

Because the city retains policy responsibility—and ultimate accountability for performance—for publicly funded services, regardless of who carries them out, a collaborative relationship between local government and neighborhoods takes on new significance in monitoring services for which neighborhoods take the responsibility to produce.

Certain public services can be adapted to neighborhood delivery only if provisions can be made to assure equitable access to the service by all residents of the neighborhood, including the indigent or disabled. In such cases a partnership may be required between the neighborhood which produces the service, and city hall which provides the means for certain residents to gain access to the service.

**Expanding neighborhood service delivery requires that some things be done differently.**

Government must embrace such functions as facilitating, brokering, coordinating, collaborating, providing back-up service capability, and supporting innovative service delivery arrangements, rather than focusing primarily on producing services. These tasks involve the unbundling of public services to focus high-cost public resources on high cost problems; contracting with neighborhoods for those functions they are better equipped to perform locally; creating incentives for neighborhood initiative; and providing a range of technical assistance to help neighborhoods get established in their new roles and to help resolve institutional barriers to neighborhood service delivery.

**A neighborhood is a submunicipal region of a city.**

Sometimes its boundaries are defined "internally" by local residents who band together to promote the well being of their immediate community. Other times a neighborhood is defined "externally", for example when the city of Saint Paul established District Councils to promote resident participation in identifying and meeting community needs. The

important concept here is not how a neighborhood gets defined, but recognition that a service area which is smaller than an entire city may be a more effective basis on which to organize to meet a given need, and that the size and shape of that area may vary from one service to another. By seeking the optimum service area, we can free ourselves from the limits of arbitrary service boundaries that bear little relation to the scale of the need or the effectiveness of production arrangements. By this definition, neighborhood service delivery holds potential for suburban as well as urban communities.

**Neighborhoods need not receive, and should not seek, special consideration over other potential vendors in their bids to become producers of public services.**

When contracting for services, government should base its contract awards on the merits of the producer's ability to achieve the desired results within acceptable costs. On the other hand, neighborhoods should not be denied contract awards because they lack a track record; where they can be helped to develop their capabilities and establish a track record through government contracts—while meeting performance requirements—they should be helped to do so.

**Neighborhood service delivery is not right for all neighborhoods or all services.**

Some neighborhoods may choose not to undertake the effort required to engage in neighborhood delivery arrangements. Others may lack the resources to become service producers, playing a greater role as buyers and arrangers.

Some services do not lend themselves to neighborhood-based delivery. These may include services that can only be effective or efficient on a larger scale. Plowing of arterial streets, operation of prisons, and the construction, operation and maintenance of major utilities like sewer and water systems are examples. Services that require uniform delivery throughout a city, like emergency fire and police response, may not lend themselves to neighborhood delivery.

**Neighborhood service delivery offers many potential benefits.**

Where neighborhood delivery is feasible it offers an opportunity to fit the service to the market. It enhances local self-reliance and stimulates local creativity. The shape of a service can be defined by those who consume it. It provides an opportunity to focus on prevention of problems and public costs versus focusing on services that are geared to repair or correct. It builds neighborhood spirit and identity. It provides opportunities for families and neighbors to play an intimate role in identifying and meeting local human service needs, often in partnership with the human service

professionals whose skills, if properly supported, may only be required on a limited basis.

Neighborhood service delivery provides an opportunity to focus high-cost public resources on high-cost problems, and to match needs that do not require specialized equipment or expertise with local resources that not only may cost less but may be more effective. And, not the least, neighborhood service delivery presents opportunities for local residents to meet some needs for which government isn't about to spend public funds—and some of these can be developed into local entrepreneurial opportunities that build local capabilities by tapping sources of fee income not normally available to neighborhood-based organizations.

#### **Many barriers exist.**

Some barriers are institutional, such as civil service prohibitions against development of new service arrangements that result in the loss of jobs for public employees; laws that preclude cities from purchasing services from local producers who do not pay prevailing wages; problems of protecting neighborhoods from liability when they accept responsibility for producing public services.

Another kind of barrier is the lack in many neighborhoods of a responsible party to arrange service production, or to buy services, or to produce them. Cities that choose to contract with neighborhoods for service production need an organized entity with which to do business. Many neighborhoods lack the resources or capacity to perform such a role, although in many cases these can be developed.

Still another barrier to neighborhood delivery is the need to assure equitable access to public services by the poor and disadvantaged; on the other hand, a move to reorganize certain services for delivery at the neighborhood level can substantially increase local resident access to important decisions about how those services will be shaped, funded, and produced.

Although the need for uniform delivery of certain services throughout a city can also be a barrier to neighborhood-based delivery, the need for uniformity may not be significant as many people think. Uniformity varies substantially from one city to another across the metropolitan area. Few suburbs spend public funds for as broad a mix of services as the central cities do; Minneapolis city services are different from those of Saint Paul. Where lack of uniformity is acceptable from one city to the next, variations may also be acceptable from one neighborhood to the next.

Finally, attitudes can be a substantial barrier to neighborhood service delivery. Neighborhood leaders with a tradition of local activism who see themselves in an adversarial position to city hall may not have the skills or temperament to

develop the kinds of sustained, collaborative relationships needed to develop and carry out service delivery responsibilities. Likewise, elected officials and public employees who see their primary role as service producers and managers, who distrust the motives of neighborhood leaders, and who fear a loss of control when entering contractual relationships may frustrate even the most skillful neighborhood efforts to develop local capabilities to meet local needs.

#### **New distinctions must be made in the roles and responsibilities of local government and those of neighborhoods.**

Neighborhoods are not "little city halls." As a unit of general local government, a city or county has policy responsibility for deciding what community needs will be addressed through services that are funded with public money. Policy responsibility is integral to the government's function and cannot be passed to neighborhoods. However, neighborhoods can play an important role in supplementing the policy making role by identifying local service needs and preferences and making policy recommendations to city hall.

How a service will be produced is a separate consideration from the policy question of whether it should be funded with public money. Various alternatives exist for producing public services. In this respect, one of the most significant roles that neighborhoods can play is to buy, arrange, or produce such services within the neighborhood through their own private initiative.

Once a neighborhood has developed the capacity to produce services, public or private, it has the potential to grow into an entrepreneurial service entity meeting diverse needs of its client base. Looking at the neighborhood as a "market" from an entrepreneurial perspective may result in the development of a unique variety of homegrown services tailored to local needs.

#### **Accountability lines must be clear.**

When a neighborhood organization performs the role of a service producer under contract to city hall, it is accountable to city hall for its costs and results. Local residents who are unhappy and cannot get satisfaction from the neighborhood organization have a right to appeal to city hall, just as they would when they are unhappy with any other city-contracted service vendor.

When a neighborhood organization performs the role of a service producer for private services which are paid for by local residents through fees—that is, no public funds are involved—the neighborhood organization is accountable directly to its customers, the neighborhood residents, and those who cannot get satisfaction should have the right to look elsewhere for service.

When a neighborhood organization is acting on behalf of its residents in buying a service from an outside producer, the board of the neighborhood organization is accountable to the organization's members. Therefore, it is particularly impor-

tant that membership in the organization be open to all residents and that membership on its policy board be based on regular open elections.

## BACKGROUND

### WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Local governments in the Twin Cities metropolitan area are undergoing a period of financial stress and re-evaluating the delivery of public services. In recent years, the state Legislature has reduced or capped many forms of local assistance including Local Government Aid to cities. Indirect forms of transfer, such as the homestead credit, are growing less rapidly. Levy limits curtailing property tax increases remain in place. Federal support for local units has also been declining with many grants for a variety of purposes being ended or capped. Social service and medical reimbursement—including Medicare and Medicaid—have been capped.

A study by the Rand Corporation for the City of Saint Paul has projected a substantial gap between revenues and expenditures for the foreseeable future. Minneapolis finds itself in much the same situation. Suburban cities, some of which have stopped growing in population, also have financial problems and have, in some cases, been even more hard hit by decreases in state aid.

The choice which has generally been offered to people in the area is one of decreased service, increased taxes, or some combination of the two. No one—not citizens, not policy makers, not the people who work for government—is happy with these options. Little evidence exists that people want their snow cleared away more slowly, want potholes, want an end to social services, or want to give up parks and recreation programs. Minnesotans have traditionally chosen to have extensive public services and have paid higher taxes to support them but are increasingly reluctant to have taxes rise any higher.

Public concern that city and county services may erode is matched by similar concern by elected officials and decision makers. Many of them are unhappy about having to offer nothing new to voters but tax increases. Some officials are frustrated by the relative inflexibility of managing public agencies which have adopted a standard method of operation. In many cases, administrative considerations and efficiencies of scale require centralized service delivery but other service delivery arrangements are a result of political boundaries drawn many decades ago. Delivery patterns are frequently the result of past practices and not current needs.

Some public officials are beginning to question what services local government should provide and others are questioning the way in which services are provided. Part of the doubt and controversy stems from the centralization-decentralization cycle which is part of the life of any group of institutions, public or private. In some ways, the debate locally is part of the national discussion about the size and scope of government institutions. The decisions made beginning roughly a century ago to centralize public service delivery systems is being questioned. Government-staffed bureaus responsible through regulatory and administrative controls are now under fire with many people saying they want more direct control over what services they receive and how they receive those services.

Right now, there is a quilt-like pattern of local government service delivery around the region. Some cities provide services which others do not. The actual provision of services may be through city or county staff or through contract arrangements. In some cases, citizens have a choice of vendor for services and in others they do not.

### FINANCIAL RESOURCES LIMITED

As local government added new responsibilities over the decades, a variety of considerations and values guided the decision makers. Minneapolis has always felt the need for extensive parks and library systems. Centralized street snow removal quickly became a priority as new housing tracts were built. Many human services which years ago were provided principally through informal, family-based or church-based networks were eclipsed by government-run programs guided by extensive rules advanced by new professionals. The informal networks frequently remain and in many cases, as with longterm care for the elderly, are still the dominant system, even with the tremendous growth of state-local spending for institutional care.

A look at the growth of state-local spending during the past few decades reveals that government-run services have grown greatly. According to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), general expenditures for state and local government in Minnesota, excluding education, in 1942 totalled 6.8 percent of personal income.

By 1957 that percentage had increased to 8.7 percent, and by 1977 to 14.7 percent.

The situation is now changing. State-local expenditures as a percent of personal income in Minnesota and the nation peaked in the late 1970s and are now declining. In 1980, according to the ACIR, the percent of personal income going to non-education state-local spending in Minnesota was 14.1 percent and recent ACIR reports indicate spending levels as a percentage of income are stable or declining slightly. Local taxpayers have repeatedly expressed their view that they do not want to pay higher taxes.

Significant demographic changes are also under way. The number of school children has declined and the population as a whole is getting older. Workforce participation rose in the 1970s with fewer working-age women staying home all of the time. Families are getting smaller and the percentage of families in which only one parent is present has risen.

Within this context, the reasons shift for providing public and other services in certain ways. Administrative considerations and economies of scale are important, but user satisfaction is, too. A sense of community may be more important to a neighborhood which is less settled and less family oriented than the most economically efficient delivery of a service. People in a neighborhood may find it more satisfying to meet their neighbors and plant their own trees than to pay the city to do it for them. At the same time, with the rise in two-worker families and single-parent households, the availability of volunteer time in the traditional house has declined.

## WHY LOOK TO NEIGHBORHOODS?

The region has a strong tradition of neighborhood self-help which is manifested in many ways. In this report, the reader will learn of many neighborhood-level responses to public and private service needs.

During the 1960s when government resources were plentiful, many voices challenged the way in which government did things. People sought more local control and more direct access to services. Today, people are also concerned about the quality of services, both public and private. An environment receptive to change and innovation has been created by the desire for more direct control, the desire for quality services, and the economic problems of local governments.

Controversy exists over such basic definitions as what constitutes a neighborhood. Asking different people brings different answers.

Everyone lives in a neighborhood of one type or another.

In one context, in a conversation taking place in another part of the country, a person might reply when asked where she lives that she lives in Minneapolis or Saint Paul, when in fact the person lives in a suburban city. In a conversation in a shopping center in the suburbs, a person might say that he lives in Royal Oaks or River Hills, neighborhoods in Woodbury and Burnsville. A conversation in a neighborhood cafe or grocery store may involve someone saying she lives on the next block, or on the other side of a major traffic artery.

The word neighborhood comes from the Middle and Old English word meaning to dwell nearby. Others have identified neighborhoods as areas or groups of people with distinctive characteristics. In our inquiry, we learned that sometimes different groups of people act together—on the neighborhood level—in unlikely combinations, as in the Lexington-Hamline neighborhood in which people of various economic, social, and ethnic backgrounds have joined together to form a cohesive and powerful neighborhood association. Alexis de Tocqueville, who more than a century ago identified the American habit of creating informal arrangements in response to local needs, would not be disappointed in a visit to the Twin Cities area today.

When this committee refers to neighborhoods, we will be talking about a submunicipal region of a city (except in very small suburbs) which is either a community of interest or an optimum service area. In some instances, the neighborhood unit may be important because local residents see themselves and think of themselves as a cohesive unit which is able and willing to perform certain tasks. In other instances, a neighborhood may be an area small enough to organize services more efficiently or effectively. In other instances, the neighborhood may be the appropriate level at which to make decisions about service provision—public or private.

In general, there are two ways in which a neighborhood can be defined. A neighborhood may define itself from within and settle such questions as where the end of the neighborhood lies. Some areas never generate this spontaneous self-definition. Some people seek out places to live precisely because those places offer anonymity. In other situations, a city government may seek to define neighborhood boundaries externally, using a variety of criteria. Sometimes, public planners have sought to lump together blocks which have little or no common interest and to call the newly defined unit a "neighborhood." Saint Paul set up District Planning Councils to assist city government in land use and other decisions and many of the councils have gotten involved in many other issues. Some suburban municipalities are small enough that they are the same size in population as city neighborhoods. Some suburban neighborhoods may be without an articulated delineation but may still be seen as neighborhoods.

## ROLE OF NEIGHBORHOODS

This committee has considered the role neighborhoods can play in the changing situation in which we now find ourselves; what neighborhoods can and should be expected to do for themselves and how they can work with local governments. The activism and grassroots neighborhood response of the 1960s and 1970s is converging with the fiscal stress of local government in the 1980s to offer new opportunities to empower people to make more choices about what goes on in their block and to make sure they will get the services they need.

Neighborhoods have figured prominently in past Citizens League reports and recommendations, fitting into public and private delivery of services in a variety of ways.

The 1973 League report, "Building Confidence in Older Neighborhoods," put forward the concept that organizing neighborhoods for group contracting could help stabilize inner city neighborhoods more effectively than other types of action. This concept was expanded in a later statement to include actions in suburban as well as urban areas.

"Making Better Use of Existing Housing: A Rental Housing Strategy for the 1980s," a League report on rental housing, recommended that neighborhoods should have control over the expansion of accessory units.\* The League recommended a system in which neighborhood residents would control "shares" of housing conversion rights to determine whether, if, and where accessory units would be allowed.

State and city efforts to control Dutch elm disease have by and large been ended because of public financial problems, but the League recommended in 1977 that one way to control the spread of the disease would be through neigh-

bor-level action. Because Dutch elm disease control requires decentralized efforts and certain activities such as inspecting private trees represent an intrusion into a family's property, neighborhood-level action was seen as a logical response. Some neighborhoods are still successfully combating Dutch elm disease through neighborhood action despite public money cutoffs. In some areas, the Dutch elm programs have spawned other neighborhood activities and a heightened sense of community.

The League's report on solid waste disposal in 1981, a followup statement on flow control in 1982, and survey on municipal trash collection costs said decentralized efforts to reduce the solid waste stream showed greater potential for solving the problem of waste disposal than massive, expensive, centralized facilities. Decentralized collection had a strong correlation with lower prices. These concepts have special importance in 1983 because the seven metropolitan area counties are in the process of making major decisions about solid waste disposal which will set the pattern for years to come.

"A Positive Alternative: Redesigning Public Service Delivery," a 1982 League report, suggested many ways to alter the delivery of services, including expanded roles for neighborhood groups and changes in the way cities and counties do business. To a large extent, this committee is trying to find ways to involve neighborhoods in a restructured system of service delivery, as well as what neighborhoods can do to provide services not thought to be the responsibility of government.

There are varying views on the capacity and roles of neighborhoods to make a meaningful contribution to this complex set of problems. Some perceive a greater role of neighborhoods in meeting the needs of their own areas to be a step forward in the evolution of our service delivery system. Others see it as a step backward, a lowering in the quality of life because it requires a rededication of time and effort to meet needs which previously were met for us by our public institutions. The report discusses and explains what we know is happening in cities and suburbs in the region as well as an expanded role neighborhoods can play.

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\* Accessory housing units are apartments created by the division of an existing house into smaller units or the construction or an addition to an existing structure to create a new unit.

## FINDINGS

### I. There are many different opinions about what a neighborhood is.

*We have defined neighborhood as a sub-municipal region of a city. Such a region can be thought of either as a community of interest or an optimum service area.*

**Community of Interest.** A neighborhood is commonly thought of as a group of people living near each other who have certain common interests. The boundaries of such neighborhoods are often defined by residents banding together in a voluntary association to promote the well-being of their immediate community. Such associations frequently organize and produce or purchase services to meet their own needs—like “producing” crime watch programs or “buying” trash collection—and these are examples of neighborhood service delivery.

**Optimum Service Area.** We also use the term “neighborhood” to mean an optimum service area for a service that is smaller than the whole city. Some services—such as the curbside recycling program or job training and placement services in Minneapolis—may be deemed more effective if they are organized and carried out in subregions of the city. In such cases of neighborhood service delivery, the definition of “neighborhood” changes to fit the service. This flexibility represents one of the main attributes of organizing to deliver services at the sub-municipal level—you can define the service area at whatever size will result in the greatest effectiveness and efficiency for the service under consideration rather than being arbitrarily bound to defining the service area as coterminous with the city’s boundaries.

In some cases the optimum service area may be larger than a conventional neighborhood as in the case with job training and placement services in Minneapolis; in other cases the most practical service area may be smaller than a conventional neighborhood as in the case of alley plowing in Saint Paul which is organized by residents on a block by block basis.

**Neighborhood Service Delivery.** The delivery of service involves a transaction between two or more parties; one

who produces the service and the other who consumes it. The consumer may or may not also be the buyer, the party who pays for the service. In general, the character of the service and the terms under which it is delivered are determined by the producer and the buyer.

With this understanding, the committee has come to define neighborhood service delivery as the delivery of services at the sub-municipal level through arrangements which involve local residents in one or more of the following functions:

- Organizing or arranging the service they will consume
- buying the service
- producing the service

In evaluating which neighborhood groups and neighborhood-based organizations might play a role in service delivery, we learned that a good deal of the service delivery capacity is in groups and organizations not typically thought of as the traditional neighborhood group.

Cities come in all sizes. A neighborhood in one city may be larger than an entire suburban municipality. Neighborhood service delivery has two essential ingredients: resident participation and adaptation of the service area to achieve optimum effectiveness and efficiency. For small cities, neighborhood service delivery may simply mean alternative delivery arrangements, where, in some cases, the optimum service area is the entire city.

A. Neighborhood groups and associations involve only a fraction of the people living in an area. Leaders of the groups are not necessarily the real leaders or all of the real leadership, although they clearly do represent neighborhood sentiment.

For example, an ad hoc group formed to fight the construction of a highway or the closing of a park will frequently identify itself as representing the neighborhood, but may involve only a portion of the people in the neighborhood. An ad hoc group set up to organize trash collection in the neighborhood may be organized by a very few individuals and only half the homes in the area may choose to participate.

In some cases this causes problems and in others it does not matter. If a group of residents wants to form an association for group contracting for home repair or for trash collection, it should be of little importance either to area residents who choose not to enter into the association or to city government. If, on the other hand, public money is to be committed for a public purpose, it may be necessary to insure that a neighborhood group performing the service is representative of its residents.

B. The structure and form of neighborhood groups varies. In some places, there is a city-sanctioned organization, like the Saint Paul District Councils. In others, there is a nonprofit group run by a volunteer board, such as the Phillips Neighborhood Improvement Association.

Churches are locally-based, service-providing voluntary organizations.

Condominium and townhouse associations and co-op boards perform many of the functions of a decentralized government.

Fraternal and business groups frequently are active. The Grand Avenue and Lake Street business organizations participate in public events, clean-ups, and other activities. Fraternal groups such as the Lions and Kiwanis organize and run services like recreation programs and parks in many suburbs. In some cases they donate park capital facilities such as trees, benches, and playground equipment.

These sorts of neighborhood activities raise many issues of public policy. Condominium and townhouse residents sometimes feel they are taxed twice for services such as streets and maintenance; once by the city and once by the association. City officials often say that if a townhouse or other organization chooses to purchase privately a higher level of service, there is no reason for the city to get involved.

Services provided by city government in one city may not be provided in another. For example, alley snowplowing is supplied in Minneapolis but not in Saint Paul.

The capacity to deliver a service may be organized through many of these structures. A distinction can be made between "neighborhood associations," which have the primary purpose of maintaining or improving the quality of the neighborhood, and "neighborhood-based organizations," the numerous other organizations whose primary purpose is more focused but whose constituency is roughly equivalent to the boundaries of the neighborhood as defined by local residents.

C. Many neighborhood organizations begin as single-purpose entities, organized, for example, to fight a pro-

posed freeway or another type of development. In some cases, narrowly focused organizations are able to expand into broad-based organizations active in other issues and in other cases they dissolve after the initial purpose is satisfied.

Distinguishing between a neighborhood group whose main purpose is advocacy or lobbying in city hall and a neighborhood group which delivers a continuing service is important.

D. We spent a great deal of time and effort in understanding the similarities and differences between the various types of neighborhood groups and discussed them at length before deciding on the definition above.

We came to understand that a neighborhood group does not necessarily identify itself as such. Critical to our study is the need to find organizations which are able and prepared to be involved in service delivery. Organizations, typically not identified as neighborhood groups, perform important services to small areas. Condominium and townhouse organizations, for example, exist precisely for the purpose of performing services. Many churches and fraternal groups are already in the service delivery business, one way or another.

E. Neighborhoods around the Twin Cities metropolitan area vary widely in resources, income, needs, physical characteristics, level of organizational activity, and other factors which affect the ability to produce, buy, and decide about neighborhood delivery.

1. Saint Paul has an institutional structure for neighborhood-level involvement in government decisions. Many Twin Cities area neighborhoods have strong, voluntary neighborhood groups with long histories.

2. Some neighborhoods do not organize themselves. In others, outside efforts, public or private, at organization are unsuccessful.

**II. A variety of services—encompassing a wide range of activities—are being provided at the neighborhood level in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The phenomenon is not confined to the central cities; it includes suburbs. Neighborhoods of varying economic strata and other resources are involved.**

A. We have heard about nursing services being delivered in St. Anthony Park, recycling in south Minneapolis, trash collection in Saint Paul's Tangletown, jobs program in Minneapolis' Phillips, gardening in Snelling-Hamline, energy audits in Lexington-Hamline, foodshelves in St. Louis Park, crime watch all over the area, and numerous other services being delivered at the neighborhood level.



In our survey on neighborhood activity in the suburbs, we learned about extensive fraternal activity in recreation programs and sports leagues: churches active in providing a broad range of human services, including emergency care, food shelves, counseling, meals delivered to shut-ins, and other activities.

Four neighborhood housing services—partnerships between local businesses, individuals, and government officials—are active in metropolitan area neighborhoods.

These and other examples are discussed in Appendix A of this report.

B. In some instances, the services represent self-help efforts by people in the neighborhood to supply services which generally are not seen to be a public responsibility. Recycling, energy audits, and youth sports leagues fall into this category.

In other cases, the services represent a delegation of authority by city officials. Saint Paul now involves the District Councils in its planning process, with the councils generating land use plans for the neighborhood. The city retains the responsibility to mesh all of the neighborhood plans into one city-wide plan.

The city of Saint Paul is also considering involving neighborhood-level organizations in the planning for the future of city services which are under fiscal stress. Saint Paul has developed an innovative matching grant program called the Neighborhood Partnership Program which is discussed in Appendix A of this report. In some cases, a neighborhood-level response may replace a service which was formerly the responsibility of the public sector. Foodshelves and emergency shelters frequently serve people and families who in the past had received publicly-supplied services. In Saint Paul's Tangletown, the neighborhood organized itself to contract for garbage collection after the city discontinued the service.

C. The range of services being provided is extensive and includes health and human services (Block Nurse, foodshelves) as well as "bricks and mortar" services (snow removal, park maintenance) which are frequently associated with city public works departments.

D. Both Minneapolis and Saint Paul have formed advisory processes which involve neighborhood groups in city government. Appendix A discusses in detail the Minneapolis and Saint Paul systems.

The two cities contrast sharply in form. The Saint Paul system is characterized by a formal delineation of the city into districts, with District Councils authorized and partially financed by the city. It is worthy of mention that different District Councils have undertaken entirely differ-

ent sorts of activities and roles in different parts of the city. Some neighborhoods have chosen to become active in land use planning and others have oriented themselves to street fairs and other social events. Some have worked on landscaping and aesthetic endeavors and others have worked on urban gardening.

In Minneapolis, the city recently abolished its structured citizen participation program and substituted a system in which the various neighborhood groups contact city staff about their concerns, working through a Center for Citizen Participation in city hall. Aside from the staff persons in the Center for Citizen Participation, no city staff persons are assigned directly to work with neighborhood groups, on a permanent basis as had been the case in the past. These two types of organizations are discussed more fully in the appendix.

**III. A variety of benefits may be available through neighborhood-based service delivery. Economic benefits such as cheaper service or, indirectly, lower taxes, may result. Greater effectiveness and more responsiveness are also possible. Because residents—not strangers—are involved, some sorts of activities otherwise impossible or difficult become possible or easy.**

A. A neighborhood-based strategy may be the only practical way to solve a problem. Many Twin City area neighborhoods have crime watch programs at the block level. It would be too expensive to use paid police to watch alleys, streets, and homes. Recycling is another activity which is frequently organized at the neighborhood level. Again, it would be too expensive to have paid professionals sorting glass, cans, and newsprint in people's homes or after it has been collected.

B. Decentralized systems can be cheaper. The Citizens League has learned that in the collection of trash, smaller areas organized to seek competitive bids will get lower prices. This occurred in the Tangletown area of Saint Paul, where the average cost to the homeowner was reduced slightly when a group contract for trash collection was set up. In this case, the variable seems to be the scale of the operation, not the use of volunteer labor instead of paid labor.

C. In some cases, decentralization may cause higher costs. Centralized police administration and dispatching, cooperative use of laboratories by health facilities, coordinated capital planning and spending for major public works projects are probably more economically efficient than decentralized provision of these services. Here, elimination of unnecessary administrative structures and economies of scale are important variables.

D. The substitution of volunteer labor for paid labor

may save money. In a wide variety of public activities, volunteers are used to provide part of the needed labor. This is common in recreation programs in suburban areas where volunteers do a lot of the work. As the fiscal difficulties of local units persist, use of volunteers organized at the neighborhood level may be tapped to provide services which otherwise would have to be cut.

E. Greater effectiveness and user satisfaction may result. In the Block Nurse Program in St. Anthony Park, the use of people in the neighborhood who are intimately familiar with the service recipients has enhanced the quality of care. (See Appendix A.) The same could be said for recreation programs, where the close relationship between the service recipient and the delivery of service is likely to lead to a good match between services offered and services wanted. As the Citizens League Youth Sports study found, children in different neighborhoods may want to participate in different activities and at different times.

In the case of the Block Nurse Program, the familiarity of the service deliverers with the people in the neighborhood was also cited as a key to early detection as well as defense against overuse of services offered. The program's director told the committee that people in the neighborhood knew who could afford the service and be expected to pay for certain things, and who really needed help. The close understanding of local conditions reduces the need for regulations or other means of oversight to make sure public resources are not flowing to those who do not need assistance.

F. A greater sense of community may result. Kenwood has a successful Dutch elm disease control program which involves the activity of many people. Although the program was begun as a pragmatic response to a neighborhood problem, people familiar with the program told us that many residents are active in the program because of the community spirit which surrounds it. It gives people a chance to meet their neighbors and feel they are part of a community. Most of the people active in the program would be able to pay someone else to perform the service as effectively as the neighborhood-level organization can, so it is likely the people in Kenwood choose to get involved out of a motivation not stemming from an attempt to save money or to have the service provided in the absence of other practical arrangements.

G. Building blocks to greater neighborhood service capacity may result. The District Council structures in Saint Paul were set up to assist in land planning and to advise city hall about policy matters but now arrange and carry out a variety of activities including cultural and social events, clean-ups, tree plantings, and other activities.

H. Increased entrepreneurship may result. The Phillips Neighborhood Improvement Association was created as a

citizen participation mechanism, but has become involved in jobs, housing rehabilitation, and other ventures (These programs are discussed in Appendix A).

Any time a neighborhood organization is delivering services, it is in a position to expand either the market scope of its activities or to engage in new ventures. Once a functioning organization has been created with a staff in place, a governing structure, and the expertise to get things done, it is in a position to function as a new business, adding to the community's economic base and self-reliance.

I. Stronger, more positive links between residents and neighborhood services may result. With some services, there is a "we-they" relationship between the service producer and the user. There may even be an adversarial relationship. For example, vandalism in city parks and lawsuits stemming from injuries in parks may reflect the residents' lack of identification with the producers or services. However, if neighborhoods were to deliver parks services themselves, perhaps residents would identify the park as their own. They might feel a responsibility for the service and the facility, not just a right to receive the service or use the facility.

**IV. The neighborhood can accomplish many different roles in service delivery. It can be the buyer of services, either on contract from a private provider or from a governmental agency; it can be the producer or seller of the service itself, perhaps even marketing the service elsewhere; it can pay for the service; it can be the service recipient with another entity, perhaps the city, paying for the service. It can decide about the need for a service. Practical and workable roles tend to result.**

A. In the case of the Tangletown trash collection system, the neighborhood association buys the service on a contract basis from a private trash hauler. A townhouse association which purchases street and building maintenance is another example of a neighborhood which is buying its services independently, not from city government.

B. Northern States Power buys energy audit services from the Lexington-Hamline Community Council. In this case, NSP buys the service from the neighborhood and the neighborhood delivers it to some residents.

C. As mentioned, the City of Saint Paul has taken steps to involve District Councils in the planning process, partially fulfilling the decider role. The City of Minneapolis had a similar structure until recently covering all city neighborhoods. The Minneapolis Planning District Citizen Advisory Committees and neighborhood groups were involved in economic development and other issues in the city. In both cases, however, the final decision is made by the city.

Neighborhoods could be called upon to help make decisions about the use of public money in their communities. For example, a city could decide to let a neighborhood choose how to spend a certain sum of money, with the neighborhood deciding how much would go for recreation, how much for libraries, and how much for tree planting. This idea has come up in Saint Paul.

City officials seeking to manage cutbacks are now more often consulting with neighborhood groups to make choices about which services they want and which ones they do not want, or are willing to provide privately.

D. Controversy exists over which role or roles a neighborhood should play. Some people are concerned that the divestment of public responsibility to neighborhoods would work well in some areas and not others. Wealthier areas would be in a position to supplement services through private arrangements. Some neighborhoods would have the ability to offer sophisticated mixes of service like the Block Nurse Program and others would not. Some people are concerned that the overall quality of public services would deteriorate. Others say that the civic identity would suffer if city wide concerns are fragmented and addressed at the neighborhood level.

**V. The impetus for neighborhood service delivery can come from several sources. We have found three: 1) from within the neighborhood; 2) from government; and 3) from a private service vendor.**

A. Existing neighborhood-developed initiatives typically seek to meet private needs (that is, services not provided by government), or to enhance a level of service. Neighborhoods will organize themselves for recreation programs not seen as the responsibility of the public sector or for group contracting of home repair.

In Tangletown, the neighborhood organized to get more efficient trash removal, a service from which the city had withdrawn.

B. Government initiatives undertaken at a time of fiscal stress frequently seek to reduce costs in order to minimize political liability. At other times, government may act to make service delivery more efficient or effective.

These sorts of efforts are often perceived as purely negative. Sometimes the reason neighborhoods organize is to fight cutbacks in public service.

The City of Saint Paul's Rand Study currently underway is explicitly an attempt to manage fiscal stress at the local government level.

C. Private vendors take up initiatives likely to make

money such as selling trash hauling service or building and street maintenance to a condominium association. As mentioned, some people in condominium and townhouse organizations feel these services should be part of the general public service responsibility.

**VI. There are many impediments to and problems with the development of neighborhood service delivery. They fall into five main categories: 1) institutional barriers, 2) responsibility barriers, 3) resource/capacity barriers, 4) equity barriers, and 5) attitudinal barriers.**

A. **Institutional barriers.** Civil service rules of city charter provisions as interpreted by courts prohibit use of volunteer neighborhood residents if city staff layoffs would result. Saint Paul has these restrictions. If cities decide to pay neighborhoods to produce services, other legal barriers may exist.

Residents who receive payment for their tasks may be viewed legally as employees of the city and not as independent contractors. Being an employee may entitle the person to city fringe benefits, a city pension, and other rights. It may entitle a person involved in service delivery to workers' compensation and unemployment insurance, items which do not apply to volunteers. Prevailing wage laws—such as the ones in Saint Paul—may prevent savings which would otherwise result from using lower priced part-time or para-professional labor purchased by neighborhood groups. In Saint Paul, the prevailing wage law does not apply to contracts less than \$10,000, so many neighborhood contracts would be exempt. Liability can be a problem. Cities seeking to contract with neighborhood groups might have to pay for liability insurance or require performance bonds by neighborhood groups.

Some sources of public money, federal or state, cannot be used flexibly by local units. Revenue sources designated for use in a certain way by local units may not be available for contracting with neighborhoods because of state or federal rules and regulations.

There are institutional barriers in neighborhood institutions as well. Some neighborhood groups were formed as single-purpose units and may find it difficult to expand the scope of their activities. Many neighborhood organizations are ad hoc groups and, as such, do not lend themselves to delivery of services over long periods.

B. **Responsibility barriers.** The lack of a representative body with sufficient authority to organize producers or consumers of a neighborhood service is another frequent barrier. Some forms of organization, such as the condominium or townhouse organization which were legally created as entities when the housing was built or converted do not have this problem.

Some sort of appropriate organizational framework is typically necessary for a service operation. If one does not exist, the service cannot be organized. Service providers are reluctant to enter into contracts with groups having no legal status.

In most public services, the city or county is responsible for making sure the service is there if needed. If a local unit of government were to give up this responsibility, and move it to the neighborhood, the public would have to be assured the service would be available.

**C. Resources/capacity barriers.** A neighborhood may not have the capacity to produce or pay for a given service. To produce snowplowing of alleys, it is necessary to have the snowplows and somebody to run them. Managerial or technical expertise may be lacking for some types of tasks.

The use of volunteers in service delivery is itself a problem. We were repeatedly told that volunteers are unwilling or unable to perform certain functions. Volunteers have limits on the amount of time they can donate. Most successful neighborhood groups with service delivery capacity have paid staff to supply continuity and accomplish complex administrative tasks.

The neighborhood may not be the most appropriate scale for delivery of some sorts of services. To use the snowplowing example again, it may be more efficient to plow major arterial streets and freeways through the use of a centralized delivery mechanism than to have each neighborhood responsible for certain stretches of road. But alleys and sidewalks may be most efficiently cleaned on a neighborhood basis.

**D. Equity/uniformity of service barriers.** Frequently, a neighborhood-based strategy works well in some but not all neighborhoods, leaving the city with the problem of assuring uniform services. Any service delivery model which allows individuals or families the choice to take the service only if they pay for it raises equity issues, namely, what about the people who cannot afford to pay for the service?

Public demand for uniformity of service is also a factor. In some cases such as recreation, uniformity is not an important factor. In other cases, like emergency police response, it is. For example, a proposal to allow different response times for emergency police or fire response in different neighborhoods would meet public opposition.

**E. Attitudinal barriers.** We were told that some government officials have a mindset which makes it difficult to work with neighborhood groups. Public officials may feel threatened by new ways of doing things or simply not be interested in new working relationships. Public officials typically see themselves as part of a service delivery organization and not as brokers, coordinators, or organizers of resources in

the neighborhood.

Many citizens see public services as exclusively the role of public agencies. Many people feel they pay taxes and are entitled to services, and are not interested in organizing or providing services for themselves. Many neighborhood activists began their careers as adversaries to government and may find it difficult to reshape their perspective and style to engage in more cooperative relationships.

**VII. Some services which in their entirety are not suitable for delivery at the neighborhood level are an amalgamation of many separate tasks, some of which may be appropriately performed at the neighborhood level. The "unbundling" of some services—breaking them down to their component tasks—is one strategy which can increase the delivery options, including the option for neighborhood-based delivery.**

**A.** Although neighborhood delivery cannot be applied in all areas and to all services, neighborhood and neighborhood-based methodologies can create new service delivery options.

There is neither one clear pathway to nor method for moving any given service to neighborhood-based delivery. No one set of services especially lends itself to neighborhood delivery. Different options exist depending on the circumstances of the neighborhood, the city structure, and the service needs and resources of the neighborhood.

**B.** Unbundling services can increase the delivery options. In the parks area, for example, it may not be possible or practical for neighborhood groups to plan, acquire, maintain, and operate a city parks system. It may, however, be possible for neighborhood groups to accomplish the maintenance and operation functions, or parts of them. Major physical renovation may require integration into a city's capital planning, special equipment, and technical skills, but clean-up, grass mowing, tree pruning, and the operation of a youth sports league can easily be organized at the neighborhood level.

Many successful examples of neighborhood activity involve neighborhood groups in just one part of a larger service delivery operation. Block watch and other crime prevention activities are only part of the overall anti-crime effort which involves professional police and prosecutors.

**C.** Many benefits are possible from pursuing a strategy of unbundling services. For example, it makes it possible to fit the tasks to the appropriate level of responsibility. It reduces the number of all-or-nothing decisions, that is, it makes possible the option of offering varying levels of services. It allows greater flexibility by public decision makers over how to deploy resources.

## CONCLUSIONS

**I. Untapped potential exists for neighborhood-level activity in a variety of services some of which are now being delivered by city and county governments, as well as services which now result from purely private initiatives.**

A. The scope and breadth of existing neighborhood activity demonstrates the capacity and willingness to deliver services in a variety of different organizational modes.

Many neighborhood-based organizations—such as condominium associations—already exist with service delivery capability and can easily be tapped.

A small investment may bring major returns as has been the case with the District Planning Councils in Saint Paul. The presence of a paid staff person, regular meetings, and city recognition has made possible many activities—from street clean-ups to block parties to crime prevention programs—which did not occur before the councils were in place.

A central issue is *what role* neighborhood groups can play as service delivery mechanisms, not *whether* neighborhoods are able to deliver services.

B. Although most of the current neighborhood activity is in private services—that is, those for which there is no direct government responsibility—there is no inherent distinction between public and private services which makes it more difficult for neighborhoods to deliver services which are the responsibility of government.

Right now, no one should object or be concerned if a neighborhood organizes itself for group contracting as in Tangletown or for youth sports as is common throughout the region. Reliance on neighborhood-based groups to help participate in the delivery of services which are within the public scope of responsibility—whether nursing care or crime prevention—is thought to be problematic because the use of public money raises issues of equity, fairness, representativeness, and equal access. The main problem relates to the public policy not to the capacity of the neighborhood to deliver service.

Although the neighborhood groups do not always have the

technical expertise or other skills necessary to actually perform a service, many services can be bought by neighborhoods on a contract basis from independent suppliers. Services such as snowplowing, street maintenance, tree maintenance, health services, and others are available for purchase.

Services which are public responsibilities in some cities are private in others. Most suburban cities and Saint Paul do not arrange for trash pickup leaving that responsibility to the homeowner.

Saint Paul and to a lesser extent Minneapolis own and staff recreation centers. Most suburban cities do not run extensive recreation programs at public expense leaving it up to volunteer groups to perform those services.

Since citizens in the metropolitan area tolerate different service levels among municipalities it seems reasonable to conclude they can tolerate different levels of service within a municipality.

C. Untapped potential also exists for neighborhoods to substantially increase their involvement in the delivery of private services to local residents. By definition, private services are non-governmental services typically paid by consumer fees and the producer of those services takes the form of private service entity. We found neighborhood-based organizations getting involved in a variety of purely private service arrangements like alley snowplowing, home winterization, and group contracting for home repairs. These sorts of activities can be expanded as part of an effort to develop entrepreneurial, job-creating businesses geared to employing local residents in services that are tailored to meet local needs—lawn care, sidewalk shoveling, child care, chore services, and certain transportation services come readily to mind.

Building on these opportunities may have many benefits—meeting unmet or poorly met service needs, providing local jobs, strengthening neighborhood service capacity and continuity, fostering local creativity and confidence in solving local problems.

D. The greatest cost-savings through neighborhood

service delivery may come in its application to human services. Currently, expensive institutional care or quasi-institutional care is the main alternative to the informal, family-based care for the elderly, the disabled, or the chemically dependent.

Public policy makers are reluctant to create incentives which move people out of informal care networks into institutions or to supplant informal care with public services. Neighborhood-based programs offer a way to combine the strengths of both systems. Neighborhood-based systems can include a mix of professional care and informal networks, holding down costs and creating a more personal involvement between caregiver and recipient.

Counties purchasing services or seeking to de-institutionalize human service delivery will find opportunities.

## **II. Neighborhoods should become more involved in the delivery of services. Neighborhoods can do as good a job as municipalities in providing certain services.**

A. Because of their flexibility, knowledge of local needs, intimacy with service recipients, and smaller market size, neighborhoods *can* frequently deliver services more efficiently and effectively.

The match between market size and efficient provider is an important consideration. There are often diseconomies of scale related to market size in services like garbage collection.

Knowledge of local needs is important in getting high quality services. Different neighborhoods are interested in different youth sports and recreation activities and the flexible, decentralized system which exists to meet those needs is able to respond accordingly.

In Minneapolis, winter parking policy does not work well in some areas of the city because of different characteristics of individual neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods characterized by many apartment buildings and resultant higher population density need a different sort of parking policy than single family neighborhoods. If neighborhoods decided policy for their own blocks within the limits of city requirements for emergency vehicle access it is likely they could balance the need for parking and snow removal.

In the Block Nurse, energy audit, and Dutch elm control examples, the very fact that the service is being performed by neighbors is important. People are more willing to let neighbors into their homes or yards than officials in uniform or employees of a large business.

B. In evaluating neighborhood service delivery potential, the standard should be the quality and efficiency of exist-

ing service production through centralized means versus what the neighborhood is able to accomplish. Neighborhood service delivery should not be judged against an idealized standard of what service delivery might be available or what a city might be able to do under ideal conditions, but what the city or existing provider is actually doing.

In Cayuga Park in Saint Paul, for example, if city money had been given to the neighborhood, they may have done a better job, most likely, than the city was able to do with the same amount of money. The city-provided recreation service was not of a very high quality and service use was declining.

The policy options considered by the city, though, did not include giving neighborhood residents the choice of providing the services themselves.

In theory, a city forestry department, with access to capital, technology, and trained people, may be in a better position to maintain the urban forest but without the involvement of the people who live near the trees, when it comes to reforestation or drought, it is unlikely the trees will live long.

C. Because many of the kinds of non-government services local residents need vary significantly from one neighborhood to another, or can only be produced efficiently on a neighborhood scale, neighborhood organizations should become more involved in the delivery of private, nongovernmental services as well as those for which government bears responsibility.

Some of the most interesting examples we found of neighborhood service delivery are private initiatives that meet needs unique to the neighborhood in which they are occurring, or which are simply too small to be of interest to large service firms. Energy audits, home chore services, and group contracting for home repairs are some examples.

## **III. Consideration of a service for neighborhood delivery should be done on a case-by-case basis, with no service excluded. Some services--and some portions of services--lend themselves more easily to neighborhood delivery than others.**

A. Unbundling of services, that is, breaking a service down to its component functions, makes it possible to find the portion of a service which may be easily handled at the neighborhood level. (Refer to Appendixes B and C for more on this point.)

For example, the public responsibility to provide police protection or run courts seems to be a service which would be inappropriate for neighborhood delivery but portions of

the larger service—namely block watch clubs and mediation of disputes among homeowners—can *only* be accomplished through neighborhood-level involvement.

A good deal of this is already happening. Youth sports programs could not operate without volunteers performing the coaching and organizing, with cities owning and maintaining park land. People in neighborhoods would have a hard time maintaining and operating sophisticated fire equipment but the fire department is in no position to find fires unless someone calls them first and in Saint Paul the fire department will ask people to clear snow from around hydrants. In these two examples there are appropriate roles for both centralized service providers and groups in the neighborhood—organized and unorganized—in providing park and fire services.

B. The key characteristics for services which are best accomplished at the neighborhood level are market size, ability of the city to tolerate varying levels of the service or function, containment of all impacts within the neighborhood, no need for mandatory participation, ability to contract for or produce the service, ability to finance the service and the ability to assure equity in delivery.

1. **Market Size.** As has been mentioned, if there is a close match between the size of the market to be served and the size of neighborhood unit, a more efficient arrangement can be set up.

In Saint Paul's Tangletown area, trash haulers were offered the opportunity to bid on jobs for collection which approximated the amount of trash which one truck could carry.

In other service areas—snowplowing and tree maintenance comes to mind—it can reasonably be assumed that there are many service providers able to service the relatively small neighborhood-size unit, as opposed to the larger city-wide unit leading to a more flexible and efficient service arrangement.

Conversely, functions requiring large numbers of users—hospitals, sewers, regional mass transit systems—do not match the neighborhood market size.

2. **Ability of the City to Tolerate Varying Levels of Service.** There are clearly some services in which city-wide, uniform delivery of service is necessary. To allow different emergency police or fire response times to vary widely would be intolerable.

The same cannot be said about crime watch clubs or recreation programs. If some areas show a strong interest in recreation programs—as has occurred in many neighborhoods in the city and suburbs—they probably should have more activities than other areas.

3. **Containment of All Impact Within the Neighborhood.** If a neighborhood in Saint Paul chooses not to have its alley plowed, it can do so. The effect of the choice is purely local. If, on the other hand, a neighborhood allowed a major street to go unplowed and traffic could not flow from one side of the neighborhood to the other, the city-wide interests would be at stake.

4. **No Need for Mandatory Participation.** Some services—like street repair or water supply—in which universal participation is needed must be supplied to all households, unlike services which involve some user choice—like child care or elderly support services. If a neighborhood were to be expected to take the responsibility for street repair and a few of the households chose not to take the service or pay for it, problems would result.

5. **Ability to Contract for or Produce the Service.** The many neighborhood newspapers could not exist if there were not editors, ad salesmen, and graphic artists widely available in the community and many print shops to print the newspapers.

For some services—like waste water disposal or emergency fire response—there are few service providers available to contract for purchase of the service and little indigenous capacity, making it difficult for the neighborhood to purchase or directly produce the service.

6. **Ability to Finance the Service.** Provision of such services as sewers, health care, street maintenance, and libraries are expensive. To expect neighborhoods without adequate financial resources to supply these kinds of expensive services is unrealistic unless financing arrangements can be restructured in concert with the restructuring of delivery arrangements.

7. **Ability to Assure Equity in Delivery.** A system in which more choices about what level of service different neighborhoods may receive and reliance on local financial resources to pay for them would be more efficient and effective in many areas and for many households. For example, people in Highland Park, Bloomington, or St. Anthony Park could probably set up trash collection, health care, or recreation programs with dramatically less public involvement. These programs would work well, be more efficient, and more responsive to special needs of the neighborhoods. Some low-income households, however, within each area would be unable to participate in the activities if fees and charges wholly financed the programs. Other neighborhoods without the same levels of income might not have the money to set up the programs. The responsibility to insure equity in service delivery rests with local units of government.

C. A critical issue is the willingness of the neighborhood to enter into some sort of partnership with government. We have been told that some neighborhoods have no interest in becoming active in service delivery. Right now, some neighborhoods in the region have service delivery organizations in place and the means and willingness to act, but others have no interest, no organization, and therefore no means to do so.

Using centralized, government-owned delivery mechanisms, government has the means to compel things to happen. Eden Prairie can simply instruct the police to patrol an area and Maplewood can hire people to plant trees. Any sort of neighborhood-based strategy will have officials making offers, motivating people, getting people organized, and accepting that some neighborhoods will not become active in some services, no matter what.

**IV. A new system of collaborative relationships, methods of co-production of services and, in general, a redefinition of functions of government and neighborhood groups is needed to advance neighborhood service delivery.**

A. Neighborhood groups and neighborhood-based organizations do not exist in isolation. Neither does city government. The variety of characteristics of different neighborhoods has been noted in several different contexts.

We envision a new set of roles for government and for neighborhood taking into account the different and variable circumstances in which they find themselves.

B. Cities, counties and neighborhoods have distinctly different responsibilities and roles in meeting community needs.

1. **Role of the city as policy maker.** As a unit of general local government a city or county has policy responsibility for deciding what community needs will be addressed through public services that are paid for in whole or in part with public money. Policy responsibility is integral to the government's function and cannot be passed to the neighborhood.

2. **Role of the neighborhood in supplementing government policy making.** Although neighborhoods lack the authority to make policy decisions, they can play an important role in supplementing the policy making role by identifying local service needs and preferences and making policy recommendations to city hall.

3. **Role of neighborhood as buyer, arranger, or producer of public services.** As past reports of the Citizens League have made clear, determining *how* a service will be produced is a separate consideration from the policy questions of whether or not a service should exist and be

funded with public money. Various alternatives exist for producing public services; they can be carried out by government staff, by private contractors (either profit-making or nonprofit), or by neighborhood groups.

In this respect, one of the most significant roles we found that neighborhoods can play is to buy, arrange, or produce public services that are wholly or partially publicly funded. An example would be a neighborhood association that enters into an agreement with the city to plan and manage recreation activities in a local public park. The neighborhood may appear to carry out a policy making role if it has been given the authority by the city to determine which recreation activities will be scheduled and how they will be offered. The actual relationship, however, is one in which the city establishes specification and performance expectations (policies) to be met by the neighborhood association acting as a service producer under contract to the city with operational discretion for deciding how best to provide the service.

4. **Neighborhood role in supplementing the production of publicly financed services.** Among the advantages of this service production role by neighborhoods is the neighborhood's ability to enhance a publicly-paid-for service by supplementing it with added private initiatives. An example is the St. Anthony Park Block Nurse Program where many of the services of the Ramsey County Public Health Nursing Service are carried out locally by neighborhood resident health care professionals under contract and supplemented by a range of voluntary and privately purchased services for the homebound elderly—such as companion services and chore services which are performed by private home-care agencies, area church groups, scouts, and other neighborhood-based organizations.

5. **Neighborhood role as buyer, arranger, or producer of privately initiated and financed services.** Another role that neighborhoods can play—a role that is independent of government—is to identify common needs of local residents for services that government has not taken responsibility for financing, and to arrange to buy or produce such services within the neighborhood through their own private initiative. Two examples are alley snowplowing in Saint Paul, and the energy audit services of Old House Energy, Inc., a nonprofit corporation created by the Lexington-Hamline Community Council and financed in part by a contract with Northern States Power Company.

6. **Neighborhood as an Entrepreneurial Organization.** Once a neighborhood has developed the capacity to produce services, public or private, it has the potential to grow into an entrepreneurial service entity meeting diverse needs of its client base. Looking at the neigh-



neighborhood "market" from an entrepreneurial perspective may result in the development of an unique variety of home-grown services tailored to local needs.

For example, a neighborhood under contract with city hall to provide recycling services can be thought of as a small business. It employs people and sells service. Once the operation is in place, this neighborhood-based small business could develop other related pick-up services for its own neighborhood or branch into new areas like processing or marketing recycled materials.

Likewise, a neighborhood that develops in-home support services for its elderly residents may be in a position to market those services to cost-conscious health care providers like health maintenance organizations, expand into a variety of related chore and home-making service for sale to other neighborhood residents, or approach the county for contracts to produce a range of related social services within the neighborhood.

**7. Neighborhood accountability.** It is clear that a city or county is held accountable through its elected officials for its expenditures of public funds and for the results of its public services. However, it is not so clear how neighborhood organizations are held accountable, who they are accountable to, or for what they are accountable.

As a general rule, accountability follows the flow of money. For example, when a neighborhood organization performs the role of a service producer under contract to city hall, it is accountable to city hall for its costs and results. Local residents who are unhappy and cannot get satisfaction from the neighborhood organization have a right to appeal to city hall, just as they would when they are unhappy with any other city-contracted service vendor.

When a neighborhood organization performs the role of a service producer for private services which are paid for by local residents through fees—that is, when no public funds are involved—the neighborhood organization is accountable directly to its customers, the neighborhood residents and those who cannot get satisfaction should have the right to look elsewhere for service.

Less clear is the case in which the neighborhood organization is acting in behalf of its residents in either buying a service from an outside producer or in advising city hall on policy issues such as how to allocate city funds for discretionary services within the neighborhood. In both situations, the board of the neighborhood association is accountable to its local residents. Therefore, it is particularly important that membership in the organization be open to all residents and that membership in its policy body be based on regular open

elections. However, as cited above, whenever public funds are involved, ultimate accountability traces back to elected officials in the governmental unit from which the money is flowing.

**8. Neighborhoods as individual residents, versus neighborhoods as organized entities.** In some cases neighborhood service initiatives come from ad hoc collections of individual residents such as residents of a block who cooperate once a year to purchase plowing services for their common alley. In other cases neighborhood service initiatives are arranged by more formal associations which are recognized by city hall as representing local interests such as a neighborhood association that enters into a contract with the parks and recreation department to establish and supervise a recreation program in a local park.

When neighborhoods fill the role of supplementing public policy or enter relationships with city hall to buy, arrange, or produce publicly-financed services, some form of city recognized, formally established neighborhood association is typically required because city hall needs a formal entity with which to conduct such business. However, purely private neighborhood service initiatives may emerge either from such an association or as the collective initiative of an informal, ad hoc group of neighborhood residents.

**C. Collaboration between neighborhoods and city hall** may take many forms: collaboration in formulating public policy, co-production arrangements to integrate separate components of a larger service, monitoring and coordination of services, and partnerships to assure equity.

**1. Collaboration in making public service policy.** An organized neighborhood can work closely with the city or county government in shaping service delivery policies to best meet the needs of local residents. In a period of fiscal stress where different neighborhoods have differing service needs counties and cities cannot afford to provide all services to all neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that can help elected officials understand local service priorities will enhance subsequent policies regarding the allocation of limited public funds.

**2. Co-production of services.** As cited elsewhere in this report, many services which do not lend themselves to neighborhood delivery in their entirety are an amalgamation of individual tasks, some of which can best be carried out at the neighborhood level. This "unbundling" of public services calls for partnership or co-production arrangements in which neighborhoods work hand in hand with the other public or private organizations that have responsibility for producing related tasks that make up the larger service. (Examples: crime watch, Block Nurse Program, recreation programs, snowplowing.)

**3. Monitoring and coordination of service production.**

The city retains policy responsibility—and therefore the ultimate accountability for performance—for publicly financed services, regardless of who carries them out. Therefore, a collaborative relationship between local government and neighborhoods is a vital component in monitoring services for which the neighborhood takes the responsibility of producing.

Similarly, in cases where a few neighborhoods take over production responsibility in their locality, but the city retains production responsibility in other localities that do not lend themselves to neighborhood-based delivery there is a strong coordination role to be filled by the city in cooperation with the neighborhoods who are producing services.

**4. Partnerships to assure equity.** Certain public services can be adapted to neighborhood delivery only if provisions can be made to assure equitable access to the service by all residents of the neighborhood including the indigent or disabled. In such cases a partnership relationship may be required between the neighborhood which produces the service and city hall which provides the means for certain residents to gain access to the service.

D. In any sort of collaborative relationship of a large scale the city will pick up some new functions.

**1. Coordination among neighborhoods will become necessary.** For example, if neighborhood groups are given the responsibility to program recreation activities, it will become necessary for cities to coordinate activities so that different neighborhood groups do not seek to use the same facility at the same time.

Cities may also need to provide communications among different neighborhoods to facilitate service delivery.

**2. Backup service capability may be necessary.** If a city decided to have neighborhoods take responsibility for snowplowing residential streets and a certain neighborhood chose not to perform the service, the city would have to be in a position to supply the service. An arrangement of this sort could be extremely simple with city government offering the opportunity for a neighborhood to perform the service with a block grant available to pay for it. If a neighborhood chooses to participate it gets the block grant and a set of specifications it is expected to meet. If a neighborhood chooses not to participate the city plows the streets itself and the neighborhood foregoes the opportunity to provide the service on its own terms and the financial gain which would accrue if the service were supplied more cheaply.

**V. Neighborhoods should be helped to develop the**

**capacity to function as producers, buyers and arrangers of services.**

A. For some neighborhoods and some services the best role will be as *purchaser* of service on a contract or other basis and in others it will be as the actual producer (or doer) of the service. As we have seen, there are some services which *only* neighborhoods can produce, or do, so in these instances in the neighborhood will be the producer.

B. A missing link in the chain of service delivery frequently inhibits neighborhood-level efforts. There may be an absence of financial capacity or organizational capacity. If a public agency already performs the service there is no incentive for the neighborhood to become involved.

C. Some characteristics of successful neighborhood groups we have found are: good leadership, the capability to develop new leadership or continuity of leadership, the presence of people with spare time in the neighborhood or the willingness to find time, the ability to find financial resources, the ability to motivate others to participate, and the ability to build on previous projects.

Most neighborhood groups with a high degree of credibility also have open membership and elected policy bodies.

**VI. City government should foster neighborhood service delivery and the flexibility to work with neighborhoods of varying capacity.**

A. A variety of options are available to foster neighborhood capacity. In Saint Paul, with the existing District Council system, the city and neighborhoods are in a position to move immediately and have neighborhoods become buyers and arrangers of service. The debate over whether and how to do so has already begun.

In Minneapolis, the Center for Citizen Participation could be instructed to accept offers from neighborhood groups, condominium associations, and any other neighborhood-based organizations for any number of services.

Minneapolis is already exploring the idea of offering to pay neighborhood groups to clear snow from street corners. Under this proposal groups would come forward with proposals to do the work and, if completed successfully, the city would pay them for it. Neighborhood groups would decide how to actually produce the service. They would decide whether to mobilize volunteers and who the volunteers would be, or to contract for the service, or to get people to shovel their own corners.

This sort of approach plays to the strengths of the neighborhood group. The city gets the service done much more efficiently than it would have through centralized delivery,

and if people are unsatisfied with the service, they know where to go for change.

B. Cities could offer block grants to neighborhood organizations allowing the neighborhood to put more or less money into discretionary services like recreation, park maintenance, tree maintenance, or other functions. The city would still retain the responsibility for maintaining basic service levels like park land, emergency fire response and others. The advantage of a block grant approach is that it resolves problems of equity, finance, and mandatory participation. It may create more efficient market sizes. It allows the neighborhood to be flexible and responsive to local needs. The disadvantage is that it involves a delegation of public authority, but this seems to have functioned smoothly in Saint Paul's District Councils.

C. Under the current arrangement, city service delivery monopolies foster a dependency on city services. It has become commonplace that if the neighbors are having a loud party people call the police, not the neighbors.

**VII. Other units of government—state agencies, counties, and school districts—should look for opportunities to foster neighborhood service delivery.**

A. Because city government is closest to neighborhoods and cities have taken the lead in mobilizing neighborhood resources, cities should have the primary responsibility for setting up organizational mechanisms. Ramsey County has no need to try to duplicate what Saint Paul has already done in establishing the District Councils.

If a county seeks to use neighborhood capacity to deliver services, say through the replication of the Block Nurse Program, it should work through recognized neighborhood groups for neighborhood communication.

B. All of the metropolitan counties are currently wrestling with the problem of solid waste disposal. Most of them are primarily considering resource recovery and landfilling. Through neighborhood level actions to reduce the waste stream—using source separation, recycling, and composting—counties have other options to solve the problem. Any county pursuing recycling, source separation, and composting should use the neighborhood communication and organization systems already in place.

**VIII. Neighborhoods should use their unique ability to offer services which emphasize prevention rather than repair.**

A. The 1982 Citizens League report, "A Positive Alternative: Redesigning Public Services," discussed the distinction between services which emphasize repair and those

which emphasize prevention.

Reducing the waste stream through recycling and composting is a prevention strategy; landfilling is a repair strategy; letting trees die without sanitation programs lets the disease spread, requiring widespread, short-term replanting. This is a repair strategy.

In example after example, we have seen neighborhoods with the capacity—often unique—to carry out prevention strategies.

Crime watch clubs prevent the need for police to catch criminals, courts to try them, and prisons to institutionalize them. The Block Nurse Program keeps people out of nursing homes, preventing the need for expensive institutional care.

B. Often, the ability to carry out prevention strategies stems from the labor saving costs which volunteers can provide, such as in crime watch or Dutch elm disease inspection. Often, just as important is that the person actually carrying out the service is a neighbor, someone known to the service recipient. A police officer or tree inspector in uniform is going to be perceived differently upon arrival at somebody's front door or walking down an alley than somebody who lives on the block.

C. The greatest applicability of neighborhood-level service delivery may be in human services. Neighborhood-level human service programs are an alternative to institutional care which offers a more effective, more efficient service.

Unlike "bricks and mortar" services in public works departments which require expensive equipment and special expertise, human services offer an opportunity to use a mix of professional, para-professional and volunteer labor. Using this sort of mix in a neighborhood to provide support service and in-home professional services can create a new service option between costly full-care institutionalization and total reliance on family and friends with no professional care.

The Block Nurse program uses this approach for an alternative to nursing home care but the same approach offers potential in care for the emotionally or physically disabled and juveniles.

D. Intimacy with service recipients and familiarity with local conditions allows neighborhood-level action to achieve prevention strategies more easily than city or county action. For example, in the Block Nurse Program, we were told, the combination of paid professional nurses contracted for and neighborhood volunteers made the service work better. If a woman living alone needed to be reminded to take medication someone from the same street could

stop by and make sure the medication was taken. The nurse identified the medical need but could not follow up every-day and make sure the proper action would be taken. If no volunteer were available it might have been necessary to institutionalize the woman simply to assure consistent medication.

Also in the Block Nurse example, we learned that familiarity with local conditions enables service providers to make sure the service recipient really needs the service. One family with both husband and wife working wanted to make use of the home chore service to make their home more comfortable for an older relative living with the couple. The volunteer board running the program quickly decided the couple could easily pay for the service if they wanted it. In this instance, a common sense decision was made on the basis of knowledge of the situation rather than through the application of complex rules and regulations drafted to cover a variety of situations.

E. Neighborhood-level action offers a unique ability for early intervention often relieving the need for higher-level action. This is the case in the Block Nurse Program, shade tree disease inspection, and crime watch.

**IX. Where becoming the producer of services is not practical for neighborhood organizations, neighborhoods should consider acting as buyers or arrangers of services which can be delivered at the neighborhood level by other producers.**

A. When we began this study, many of us thought the most important resource which a neighborhood group would have would be the volunteer base. A critical issue is how this base is used. In some instances, as we have seen, volunteers are a unique resource which should be tapped. But in others, the use of volunteers in service delivery has limitations. Limitations on volunteer time, limits in the number of volunteers, and the difficulty insuing volunteers to provide a service, especially a vital service which must be delivered in a timely fashion and over long periods are stumbling blocks.

We have also learned that volunteers can organize, arrange, and contract for services, using their knowledge of local

conditions and need. We would expect, for example, that the snow removal service in Minneapolis neighborhoods which is arranged by neighborhoods is going to do a better job of shoveling immediately those corners which are used most and leaving for last those which are used least.

People are likely to know which corners need to be shoveled first. City hall would probably have to conduct traffic surveys and pedestrian counts to figure out the same thing.

B. Using neighborhood groups to buy services overcomes many of the capacity problems. Private contractors exist for many services like trash removal, tree maintenance, and snowplowing. Neighborhoods could make choices about contracting with public providers as well.

The use of neighborhood groups to decide about services expands the potential of creative use of neighborhood-level service delivery. Instead of expecting the volunteers to put in time working at tasks which government can no longer afford to supply or chooses not to supply, the group is asked to be creative about what is needed and to use his or her special understanding of local conditions and needs.

C. Using neighborhood groups to arrange and organize is likely to stretch scarce dollars, with the District Council system in Saint Paul being a good example. People will make choices about what they really want and don't want. In Saint Paul, different neighborhoods have put the resources available to them to different uses. If city governments are going to continue to face unpleasant choices about spreading resources thinly, neighborhood-level influence about decisions should help set priorities.

D. Decisions made closer to home are likely to end the "we-they" distinction which sometimes plagues public service delivery. Moving the decision making one step closer to individuals makes it easier for people to become involved in those decisions and to share responsibility for the results. For example, a decision by city hall on closing recreation centers will almost certainly result in neighborhood criticism but encouraging the neighborhood to help decide how to allocate limited recreation center money is likely to result in their taking direct responsibility for tradeoffs and giving priority to centers of greater value. It will also probably stimulate local creativity for continuing to support some services for which public money is unavailable.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**I. In the course of this study the committee identified several timely targets of opportunity which should be pursued now for expanding neighborhood service delivery in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. These are the most immediate and substantive opportunities the committee could identify. Other opportunities are listed in Appendix D.**

**A. Neighborhood Revenue Centers\* in Saint Paul for Park and Recreation Services.** Saint Paul is creating pilot revenue centers to test the benefit-based financing concept recommended by the Rand Corporation. The city also is struggling to maintain its park and recreation services. One of the pilot revenue center demonstrations should be a neighborhood revenue center wherein a Saint Paul neighborhood is helped to establish the capacity to arrange and produce neighborhood park and recreation services.

This demonstration should be integrated with Saint Paul's Homegrown Economy project and the demonstration neighborhood should be helped to develop other revenue-generating business activities in line with the goals of that project. Once a neighborhood has set up a recreation program under contract with the city, the city should seek to help the neighborhood use the new organization to get into new lines of business or to market its services elsewhere.

**BENEFITS.** Besides allowing the city to test the revenue center approach and helping to solve its budget problems in the recreation area, our analysis shows the following potential benefits would come from matching recreation services to neighborhood capabilities. By letting neighborhoods choose the recreation programs they desire the city will ensure people get the service they want. Adding the volunteer resources in the neighborhoods will make new

resources available for recreation programs and if few new resources are generated by a neighborhood, it will demonstrate a relative lack of interest in the service. The market scale of recreation services is right for neighborhood-delivery because the bulk of the users are likely to come from nearby.

**PROBLEMS.** The switch from centralized delivery to neighborhood delivery will likely displace some city workers, although a demonstration program in one neighborhood might dispose only a few workers. The city should offer any displaced workers different city jobs. Over the long-term, recreation department workers could be encouraged to and work with the neighborhood to become part of the new neighborhood-based system, functioning as entrepreneurs. Because continuing budget pressure will probably force recreation reduction, this approach may actually offer a brighter economic future for current workers.

**METHODOLOGY.** The city should instruct District Councils to develop proposals on how to provide recreation programs using money the city now puts into that part of the city. The city would work with the District Councils on the proposals, with the District Councils taking the initiative to show an interest. Once the city has proposals, it should evaluate them and choose the best one. Then, it should give money to the District Council and the Council would either contract for service, provide service itself, or develop some mix of the two.

**B. Neighborhood Employment Services in Minneapolis.** Minneapolis should contract with a neighborhood group for employment services. The new Minneapolis employment strategy calls for tackling the employment problem on a submunicipal basis, matching local area employers and non-profit agencies with local residents needing training and employment. However, this strategy falls short of redesigning city-funded manpower programs to operate as neighborhood-based services or flowing city and federal manpower funds to neighborhoods to design and produce their own manpower services.

**BENEFITS.** The city has already chosen to use a submunicipal approach to fight unemployment. The decentralized approach is hoped to offer greater potential for involving small businesses and create a close link between local

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\* One of the ideas being explored by the Rand Corporation for the City of Saint Paul is the creation of revenue centers in city government. Revenue centers are organizations or departments operating with separate and distinct budgets, functioning independently and seeking to finance their operations out of revenue generated wholly or partially through services provided. This approach is different from the usual publicsector practice of financing a service out of a general fund.

jobs and unemployed residents. Because of the special needs of different subgroups (e.g., recent immigrants from Southeast Asia, low-skilled city residents, women entering the labor force for the first time), a decentralized approach should offer a way to try many different strategies at the same time. Neighborhood-level support services like transportation and daycare may be a critical added component which cannot be produced city-wide but can in an individual neighborhood.

**PROBLEMS.** Some of the money currently spent on city-wide manpower contracts with training and placement service providers may need to be redirected to the neighborhood contract. Neighborhoods should be encouraged to consider buying services from established vendors.

**METHODOLOGY.** Several designated neighborhood organizations should be invited to bid for contracts with city hall—funded through the city's manpower budget—to develop and carry out neighborhood-based employment programs. Their efforts should build on the work that already has been started, but also should be based upon city-established performance specifications and performance evaluation and technical assistance to help the neighborhood organization (in concert with local nonprofits and employers) to arrange, buy, and/or produce job readiness and placement services on a neighborhood basis. Under such a system, neighborhood contractors should be free to determine the most effective strategies for achieving the results specified in their contracts with city hall. This may include purchasing some services from established manpower providers, purchasing other services from other sources, and arranging to produce some services through their own local agencies.

Incentives ought to be structured into this arrangement to reward existing manpower service providers for cooperating and assisting the neighborhood initiative, and some form of performance rewards ought to be made available to the local neighborhoods who match or exceed the performance of the traditional manpower service providers.

**C. Using neighborhoods in Minneapolis to maintain city malls and plazas.** The city of Minneapolis expects to spend \$896,730 in fiscal year 1983 to maintain malls and plazas scattered around the city. These are not the main parks or areas of public land but unconnected individual parcels like isolated triangles. Efficient maintenance of these scattered properties is difficult.

By contracting with neighborhood providers to cut grass, pick up litter, and otherwise maintain these parcels, the city could set up a more efficient system.

**BENEFITS.** Subcontracting should be cheaper. Current city service is inefficient because of travel time and the need to

move equipment around. If nearby residents did the maintenance and cleanup work, the work would likely be done better because they would have more of an interest in doing things well.

**PROBLEMS.** The sense of pride which might help neighborhood groups maintain these scattered parcels well also is a possible detriment. A neighborhood group might want to have control over use of the land and keep others off the malls and plazas. The city needs to be clear that it wants people to keep parcels of land clean and in good repair and is not delegating decision-making about use of the parcels.

A second problem is the possible displacement of city workers. If the program worked well enough that all of the parcels went to neighborhood contract maintenance, city workers may have less to do. The city should therefore phase in this approach and allow workforce shrinkage by attrition rather than layoff.

**METHODOLOGY.** The city should solicit bids from neighborhood providers for all malls and plazas which it currently maintains. Minneapolis should instruct the Center for Citizen Participation to use its information network to ask for proposals. The Center also should develop specifications for contracts, working with the Public Works Department. The city could then evaluate proposals and pick the best ones. Over time, if this approach works satisfactorily, the city could phase out centralized public provision of mall and plaza maintenance altogether.

**D. Replication of the St. Anthony Park Block Nurse Program.** Both Ramsey and Hennepin Counties should undertake to replicate the St. Anthony Park Block Nurse Program in at least one other neighborhood in the county; at the same time, the counties should develop specifications and solicit proposals from neighborhoods to apply the Block Nurse Program concept to low-cost, non-institutional neighborhood delivery of other human services for which the county is currently responsible such as child care, services to physically and developmentally disabled, services to youthful offenders, and services to the mentally ill.

**BENEFITS.** Lower costs and greater user satisfaction seem to result from the block nurse approach. It is generally agreed that many persons are in nursing homes who do not want to be there, but must be because of a lack of alternatives. State-level policy makers and others are looking for alternatives to institutional care, and this should be a good opportunity to develop one. If successful, these sorts of neighborhood-based programs also may provide a fundamental alternative to institutional care in many sectors. Secondly, the sorts of services which are part of the Saint Anthony Park Block Nurse Program may be marketable elsewhere—say to cost-conscious health care pro-

viders—resulting in the development of new neighborhood businesses. Sub-municipal transportation systems might be tapped—for a fee—by local merchants. Two-income families might have groceries delivered—for a fee— by the same people who do shopping for shut-ins.

**PROBLEMS.** The main barriers are the payment policies—especially Medicare/Medicaid and other public reimbursement systems—and the frequent lack of a legal entity to operate the program. Equity is also a barrier, because, under the St. Anthony Park model, a private grant is underwriting the gap between the sliding-scale fee, public reimbursement and what some people can pay. None of these barriers are insurmountable.

**METHODOLOGY.** Counties ought to develop requests-for-proposals for Block Nurse Programs, which should spur the creation of legal entities to act as service providers. Other District Councils in Saint Paul might be interested, as might a variety of other organizations. Because the counties stand to save substantially if fewer people end up in institutions, counties ought to act as financial underwriters for those who cannot afford the fees. The request-for-proposal could spell out the terms under which the county would make available additional dollars for those unable to meet fee schedules.

The Ramsey County blue ribbon panel looking at nursing home care should study the St. Anthony Park program in detail and see what can be learned from it and applied to the problems it is studying.

**E.** We have identified three sets of packages for suburban municipalities to consider. One deals with housing, one with fire prevention, and the third with youth enterprises. Although these packages may apply in the central cities, they relate, in varying degrees, to problems which are of major or special importance in suburban areas.

**Group Contracting for Home Repair.** For many inner-ring suburbs, the housing stock built immediately after the Second World War is reaching an age where deterioration may be a problem. Developing the ability to group contract for home repairs may be a way to prevent deterioration.

**BENEFITS.** The city's incentive to act is to protect the tax base. We are proposing a prevention strategy for the city. Homeowner's self-interest in keeping up their property and doing so at a reduced cost is self-evident.

**PROBLEMS.** Helping people keep up their homes is not seen as a public responsibility. Many people are not interested in government getting into new services. Public involvement in later blight clearance may be the result of not acting now.

**METHODOLOGY.** The main role of the city would be to make available to interested neighborhood groups a list of contractors and sample contracts. The city should leave to neighborhoods any actual contracting because of the risk that the city could become too involved and end up responsible for controlling the service or getting involved in political selection of contractors. The city's role is purely in supporting neighborhood initiatives.

**Fire Safety and Inspection Program.** Suburban cities should act to prevent fires through neighborhood-level actions. Volunteer fire departments generally do not run the sorts of fire inspection and safety programs which city departments with full-time staff do.

**BENEFITS.** The general public's safety is protected by fire reduction. Tax base is preserved, and private property is protected.

**PROBLEMS.** As a new service, these sorts of activities may be seen as unnecessary or an intrusion.

**METHODOLOGY.** The city and its fire department should conduct an analysis of what sorts of conditions cause residential fires in the city and develop a set of preventive goals such as ending improper storage of paper or other combustible material, upgrading building standards, installation of smoke detectors, and other activities. Then, the city should request proposals from neighborhood groups to meet these goals, offering partial payment. Neighborhood groups might explore the possibility of getting grants or other financing from an interested insurance company. The city should keep detailed records of fire incidence and causes and see if the neighborhood program is helping prevent fires. If only one or two fires were prevented, the entire city investment would be recouped, to say nothing of private costs.

**Youth Enterprises.** Suburban cities should act to develop new neighborhood-level businesses to help employ teenagers and other out-of-work young people. Because most young people live in suburbs, this proposal particularly applies to the suburbs, although it could work in center cities as well.

**BENEFITS.** Small business development is of general economic benefit. It also would likely reduce vandalism, burglary, and other crimes associated with out-of-work teenagers and young people. In addition, youth enterprises are more useful than subsidized makework.

**PROBLEMS.** The activity is not seen as the responsibility of city government.

**METHODOLOGY.** Cities should make available start-up

matching grants for neighborhood-based youth enterprises which achieve other city goals. For example, a city could offer to match a proposal from a fraternal organization which wanted to sponsor in business a lawn-maintenance firm or snow-removal firm operated by teenagers. The city should decide on some priority functions which might offer long-term reductions in city costs, like recycling. Over time, the city could see if the money saved from landfill costs exceeded the cost of the grants, creating a net reduction in city costs.

**II. In addition to these targeted opportunities, city and county governments should develop policies to create cooperative service arrangements on an institutional basis with neighborhood organizations. Existing city and county policies and attitudes should be reoriented to foster these arrangements.**

**A. ATTITUDES.** For city/county-neighborhood partnerships to work, government policy makers and neighborhood activists must reorient their thinking about who ought to deliver services and how service delivery systems ought to be structured.

Government should become more of a broker and buyer of service with more responsibility for arranging and carrying out services taking place at the neighborhood level. Government will retain its responsibility for *deciding* which services are to be provided and publicly financed, but can delegate much of the responsibility for the actual delivery of services.

Many cities and counties are now looking for opportunities to engage in contract-for-service arrangements, in some cases getting out of actual service providing, and in other cases looking for contract vendors to handle new services. Neighborhoods are one option for sub-contracting.

Cities are now responsible for trash collection and counties for trash disposal. In Minneapolis, for example, city crews collect trash for much of the city. Hennepin County--faced with the prospect of no private landfills to bury the trash--is considering building a central incinerator. The county is likely to own the facility and employ the workers.

In a neighborhood-based solid waste disposal system, the city and county could still pay for the service with tax money and decide on how it would be disposed. The city could offer legal and technical assistance to neighborhoods that wanted to recycle and compost some wastes and group-contract for trash hauling. The county would still need to ensure the waste was disposed of in an environmentally sound manner.

Neighborhoods which took action to reduce the waste stream could have taxes reduced by the amount of reduced

flow to the landfill-incinerator, or could receive cash back for the neighborhood to use as it sees fit. Neighborhoods which did nothing would still have trash removed by city crews and forego the benefits available through the reduction of the waste stream.

**B. INCENTIVES.** Incentive must be built into service delivery systems to encourage neighborhood-city partnerships. Few incentives now exist for neighborhoods to take on public service responsibilities and public service providers have no incentives to let them go. A neighborhood which wants to get involved in recycling can save the city money, but except to the extent overall public financial needs are lessened for the entire city, neighborhoods will receive no direct benefit. A public works official who wants to promote recycling and composting is unlikely to get a promotion or pay raise for such action. Most change in service delivery which reduces the size or budget of the department is seen more as a threat than an opportunity.

To a large degree, the accomplishments of neighborhood service delivery so far have occurred in spite of, not because of, the way the system is structured, although evidence exists of changing views both among elected officials, neighborhood activists, and public employees.

**C. BARRIERS.** A variety of legal and institutional barriers which inhibit neighborhood service delivery should be addressed.

**1. Civil Service Systems.** It may be illegal for municipalities with civil service systems to enter alternative service delivery arrangements which result in the loss of jobs for public employees. City charters should be amended to allow such arrangements to be entered into with neighborhoods which can produce better services. Exemptions for neighborhood producers may be necessary. the city council, the state Legislature, or ballot initiatives charter action can make these changes.

**2. Prevailing Wage Laws.** If cities contract with neighborhoods for services, city prevailing wage laws might force the same pay schedules on neighborhood providers and prevent cost savings. Two city actions can clear the way for cost-effective neighborhood service provision. First, the threshold of these laws could be raised to a higher level. In Saint Paul, for example, the prevailing wage law is not in effect for contracts of less than \$10,000. This contract ceiling could be raised. Second, all nonprofit organizations or community councils could be exempted from the prevailing wage law.

**3. Liability Costs.** For some services, liability insurance costs could be high, and if the city required neighborhoods to pick up all of the costs, neighborhood-service delivery options would narrow. The city should explore



the possibility of sharing the cost of liability insurance with the neighborhood or continue full city coverage. Neighborhoods may find that riders on existing insurance policies would be cheaper than drawing up new policies.

**4. Reverse Assessments: A System for Different Taxation.** Cities have the opportunity, through assessments, to add taxes on properties directly benefiting, but cannot reduce taxes on properties or neighborhoods which take action to reduce overall city costs. If, for example, a neighborhood were to generate less trash through an aggressive recycling program, the city has no option to reduce the taxes paid by that neighborhood. The city, therefore, does not have the ability to use reduced taxation as an incentive for neighborhoods to engage in services delivery.

The Legislature should allow cities and counties to reduce property taxes on neighborhoods which reduce public costs through such actions as reducing the waste stream or opt out of a public service system.

**5. A System to Allow Public Workers to Compete for Contracts.** We are recommending service redesign options which in some cases will have the effect of neighborhood providers or neighborhood-contracted providers competing with existing public service delivery systems. In some cases, it is likely the centralized service delivery will be the most efficient. Mechanisms are needed to allow public workers to compete for contracts with neighborhoods who are purchasing services.

**D. COST ANALYSIS.** City government needs to know better what it actually costs to deliver a service before it can compare these costs to alternative service delivery by contract, whether or not the proposed contractor is a neighborhood group. Contractual relationships between city government and neighborhood groups are likely to be a central element of any neighborhood-city partnership or any other method of service redesign and cities ought to develop mechanisms to allow fair cost comparisons necessary for contracting.

Public budget administrators frequently purport to know what it costs to plow snow or remove trash from a household or from a neighborhood, but frequently the price does not include indirect costs such as pensions, overhead or administration. In all fairness, allocating costs with precision is difficult when public workers may cut grass one month and shovel snow another, using a variety of equipment, and with their pensions guaranteed by an entirely different level of government. If, however, an elected official is going to be able to make a choice based on cost between neighborhood provision of a service or central provision by city staff the official will have to know the

true costs to provide the service.

Monitoring and evaluation capacity on the part of the public sector is also necessary for this strategy to work. If public bodies are to become brokers of service and successfully evaluate multiple proposals for service delivery, they need to better understand what is being offered and at monitoring performance. Because many services are centrally provided by public workers, this is not an important consideration, but it will become more important in any redesigned service system.

**IV. Cities should set up mechanisms to enable these policies to be pursued. There are a variety of ways to do so.**

**A. UNBUNDLING OF SERVICES.** A critical first step in considering neighborhood service delivery will be to unbundle the component parts of the service. As has been discussed elsewhere in the report, neighborhoods are unlikely to have the capacity to do all of what a city department does, but are capable of doing some of the things. Neighborhoods cannot reasonably be expected to take over snow plowing of interstate highways, but they can clear alleys and street corners, and under the right circumstances, residential streets. Neighborhoods cannot be expected to provide their own emergency police response, but they may be the logical ones to promote crime prevention, reducing the need for emergency police response.

**B. PUMP PRIMING.** The use of a small public investment can generate substantial returns through neighborhood action. The money used by the District Council's in Saint Paul represents a tiny portion of the city's budget, but the District Councils are active in a broad spectrum of services and activities.

**C. CONTRACTING.** Minneapolis is considering contractual agreements with neighborhood groups for snow clearance from street corners. The city determines what it wants done, letting neighborhoods decide how. City focus is on the service outcome. Neighborhoods decide if they want to bid on service delivery.

**D. BLOCK GRANTS FOR DISCRETIONARY SERVICES.** To our knowledge, this has not been tried yet, but is being considered in Saint Paul. In this method, a neighborhood could decide how to spend a block of money. The city could pick a group of discretionary services (such as recreation programs, tree trimming, supplementary street cleaning) which it can no longer afford to finance fully. The advantage here is not only in cost-effectiveness, but in making sure the priorities of individual neighborhoods are served. Some areas may put a high priority on recreation programs and others on protecting trees.

Block grants also could pay for services which the city determines are necessary everywhere, but could be better served at the neighborhood-sized market. Snowplowing and trash removal would be examples. Neighborhood groups would contract for the service level they wanted, with the city setting minimum standards, allowing more responsiveness to neighborhood desires.

One neighborhood might place high priority on twice-a-week pickup, another on door front pickup of trash. In snow removal, a neighborhood could decide which streets should be plowed first.

In both of these examples, cost savings would be likely because of the competition induced in service delivery.

In both of these examples, the city would need to retain backup capacity (perhaps on contract and not through central provision) for neighborhoods which did not choose to participate.

**E. SUPPORT SERVICES.** Cities should develop offices to facilitate neighborhood service capacity. Support service would include legal advice, information about organizational models (discussed more in Recommendation V), contract specification writing, advice, research capacity, solicitation of private financing, technical assistance, information about insurance contracts, tools for determining citizen satisfaction, and other services.

City staffs could be mobilized to help the neighborhood groups form service delivery entities by helping them to incorporate and apply for tax-exempt status at the state and federal levels, obtain seed capital and generally support start-up activities.

**F. MATCHING GRANTS.** Saint Paul already is doing this with the Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP). In the NPP arrangement, the city sets aside a pot of money and announces that neighborhoods should make proposals on how to use it, in much the same way a foundation accepts applications for grants. The NPP system calls for the neighborhoods to match—financially or in-kind—the city grants. In Saint Paul, the wealthier neighborhoods have to come up with a higher match-to-grant ratio than poorer ones. The initial round of grant-making in Saint Paul, described in Appendix A, indicates a readiness in the neighborhoods to engage in a variety of services and an ability to pry loose substantial resources from many sources.

**G. TAX REDUCTION/OPT-OUT.** A city could allow a neighborhood to opt-out of a city service arrangement, setting up its own. For example, a city could allow a neighborhood to sign a contract with an outside provider for recreation service, snowplowing, or any service, costing less

than what the city would otherwise spend for the service, saving the city money and allowing the neighborhood more discretion on the service it gets.

A variation of this theme would be to reduce taxes in exchange for neighborhood provision of the service. A neighborhood, for example, which did its own tree maintenance would have its tree-maintenance assessment deleted from property tax bills.

The city could determine minimum service levels or specifications, or allow the neighborhood broad latitude in determining service levels using this approach.

In using this tactic, city governments would have to be wary of attempts to break out residential areas with significant tax base or commercial-industrial areas. By offering a *dollar* tax reduction as opposed to a *mill rate* reduction, problems of this type would be alleviated.

**V. Neighborhood groups and organizations should begin to develop capacity and strategies for service delivery. The more neighborhood groups are willing to participate in service delivery, the greater the likelihood the strategy will develop into positive movement.**

**A. ATTITUDE.** In addition to an attitudinal shift on the part of public officials, many people active in neighborhood-level activity also will need to reorient their thinking. Development of service capacity—either as producer or buyer—requires different skills and thought processes than stopping freeway construction or working on a one-time, short term project.

There is no question that many neighborhood groups have the ability to engage in service delivery, given what we have learned. Just as with public sector officials, the issue is whether or not neighborhood people will want to do so and will take the steps necessary to do so.

**B. CONTINUITY AND STAFFING.** Neighborhood organizations which seek to deliver services need to be continuing, dependable organizations. Frequently, these demands exceed what can reasonably be expected of volunteers. Volunteers bring other skills and abilities to neighborhood-level activity, as we have said already, but without some sort of permanent staff, service capacity is elusive. Neighborhood groups will need to develop the ability to administer programs and, in general, be there when problems arise. There are a variety of ways to do so.

Elsewhere in this report, we describe a variety of neighborhood-level service operations. The administrative structure on which these service-delivery operations are based vary considerably.

The Lexington-Hamline Community Council was organized as a nonprofit group run by a volunteer board, subsisting on membership dues and other donations. Lexington-Hamline subsequently spun off a private company, Old House Energy, which operates as a private business, but is run by Lexington-Hamline.

Condominium and townhouse associations have restrictive memberships and force members to pay into the association through deed covenants. They also tend to be run by volunteer boards and contract for most actual service delivery.

Many neighborhood groups are purely ad hoc, with little continuity. Some organizations—such as the Tangletown trash system or the STEP program—seem to owe a lot to the efforts of one individual.

The Block Nurse Program in St. Anthony Park represents a partnership of public agencies, a District Council, and a special purpose board.

The many fraternal organizations operating recreation programs in the suburbs are organized through a variety of mechanisms.

No one structure is best, and the structure should be dictated by service delivery and neighborhood needs.

**C. REVENUE STREAM.** As neighborhoods examine their alternatives for getting into neighborhood-based service delivery, one factor they should consider is the potential to generate revenues which will enable them to build an entrepreneurial organization that can eventually pro-

duce a mix of public and private services to area residents.

To the extent that neighborhood organizations become dependent upon government funds to support their service production, they will be susceptible to government funding cutbacks. However, an organization that starts out with a single government contract but subsequently adds service offerings that generate revenue from other sources will have greater long-term viability and more flexibility in the scope of their activity.

#### **VI. Corporations and foundations should promote neighborhood service delivery in their efforts to effect social change.**

A. The Minneapolis Foundation's MNSHIP Program offers a good model for building neighborhood capacity. MNSHIP has a pump-priming effect and helps establish continuity and support personnel with a neighborhood initiative.

B. Corporations can provide seed capital for new, neighborhood-based service ventures or can support these ventures by buying services from them as NSP does when it buys energy audit services.

C. Corporations can forge cooperative ventures with neighborhood groups and perform the administrative and legal functions necessary for a service operation as Honeywell has in the Phillips neighborhood where it works with the Phillips Neighborhood Improvement Association in a variety of programs.

## WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The Citizens League Board of Directors in June 1982, authorized the formation of the Neighborhood Services Committee. The charge to the committee was as follows:

Identify those specific public services which seem to offer the highest practical potential for being handled by neighborhoods, rather than local governments, and suggest specific practical mechanisms to achieve consensus and cooperation in neighborhoods to make such delivery of services possible.

We would explore the experience in certain cities where initiatives already have been taken by neighborhoods, in such areas as park maintenance, garbage collection, street maintenance and snow plowing. In contrast to previous attention to the "neighborhood" issue, we would make a distinct attempt to look at neighborhoods broadly, including those in the suburbs, and not just as a central city phenomenon, or even more narrowly as a low-income central city phenomenon. We will build on previous Citizens League work in this area, including our report on "Building Confidence in Older Neighborhoods," and on community representation. We will review the experience condo-townhouse associations have had in providing services for their member households.

The work of the Neighborhood Services committee was part of an overall League research program around the theme of community responsibility.

In addition, this study is another step in the continuing League efforts in public service redesign.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

A total of 58 persons signed up for the committee. A total of 17 persons participated actively in the work. The members are:

**Peter Brown, Chairman**

**Joel Alter**

**Douglas W. Barr**

**Jane Boyajian**

**W. Scott Carlson**

**Timothy D. Culver**

**Mary Lilly**

**Craig W. Luedemann**

**John Rukavina**

**Elaine Saline**

**Carol Thacher**

**Albert Trostel**

**Dennis Daniels**

**Pam Fricke**

**Todd Jeffrey Lefko**

**Parker Trostel**  
**Lois Yellowthunder**

In addition, Craig Dawson, who attended many of the early meetings, participated by phone in the later work of the committee.

The committee was assisted in its work by Robert de la Vega, Char Greenwald, Paula Ballanger, and Joann Latulippe of the League staff.

### COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

The committee met 27 times beginning on Monday, November 22, 1982. The committee met every other week, except near the end of the study when it met weekly. Initial committee meetings were devoted to hearing about neighborhood activity from a variety of perspectives and in a variety of different communities. Comments were sought from people in government, foundations, and academic life familiar with neighborhood activity.

As always in League work, the committee would not have been able to fulfill the charge without the important participation of these persons.

Below is a list of persons who spoke with the committee, showing their titles and positions at the time of their appearance:

**Ronnie Brooks**, chairman, Citizens League Services Redesign Committee

**Mary Ann Curry**, Lakeville City Council member and consultant

**Jim Fleischmann**, head organizer, Minnesota ACORN

**John Gorra**, Community Management Organization

**Peter Hames**, finance & management services director, City of Saint Paul

**Charles Hanna**, director, City of Minneapolis Center for Citizen Participation

**Ron Hick**, community organizer, Lexington-Hamline Community Council

**Margaret Jamieson**, director, Block Nurse Program

**Daniel Krivit**, source separation director, City of Minneapolis Department of Public Works and Engineering

**Ron McKinley**, program officer, Minneapolis Foundation  
**Robert D. Miller**, member, Minneapolis Source Separation  
Task Force  
**Susan Nelson**, executive director, STEP

Besides direct contact at committee meetings, a variety of methods were used to provide information to the committee.

A survey of suburban municipalities was undertaken by the committee with a total of 42 cities responding. The results of that survey are included in Appendix C of the report.

Reports of different examples of neighborhood activity were relayed to the committee from neighborhood newspapers, and government publications. Conversations with public officials also brought forth information, much of which is summarized in Appendix A of the report.

Committee member Joel Alter, as part of his work at the Hubert Humphrey Institute, authored an academic inquiry into neighborhood activity in the parks and recreation area

and some of the results of his research are included in the report. Alter's research was important in uncovering many of the legal barriers to neighborhood participation in service delivery.

Finally, committee members active both in neighborhood organizations and local government were able to bring a good deal of information to the committee in the form of their own personal experiences.

#### **BOARD ACTION**

The ad hoc representative of the League Board to the Neighborhood Services Committee, Duane Scribner, met with the committee chairman Peter Brown and various League staff members twice to discuss the committee's progress.

The League Board discussed the report at its October 19 meeting and at a special meeting November 3. The board passed the report unanimously.

## Appendix A

### CASE STUDIES

In the course of its study, this committee learned of many examples of neighborhood service delivery involving a variety of institutional arrangements. This appendix lists several of the more important examples to illustrate the variety of services now being provided through neighborhood-level initiatives in various partnerships between government and private business.

For the reader unfamiliar with neighborhood activity in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, reading this section first will be helpful in understanding the main text of the report. For those more familiar with neighborhood activity here, it is hoped these examples will provide more context and new ideas about neighborhood service delivery.

#### CENTER CITIES

The two largest cities in the metropolitan area, Minneapolis and Saint Paul, have chosen sharply different approaches to ties and partnerships with neighborhoods. The cities differ in government structure, and these differences have had an effect on how the two units of government have chosen to approach the topic.

Saint Paul has a strong mayor form of government, in which the mayor's office is the focus of administrative and policy action. City departments report to the mayor's office and take direction from it. Neighborhood groups seeking to affect policy, therefore, will likely approach the mayor's office first, as opposed to city council members. Until recently, members of the Saint Paul City Council did not represent wards or areas of the city, but ran at large and were not seen as representing pieces of real estate. They were less likely to attract the attention of neighborhood groups. By contrast, Minneapolis' government structure is diffuse. The mayor proposes a budget, but many important city departments report to the city council. Aldermen—members of the city council—represent wards and neighborhood groups are likely to approach them first. Many of the city's aldermen got their start in politics through neighborhood activity.

The two central cities contain only about one-third of the metropolitan area population, so the citizen participation systems described here are not typical for Twin Cities metropolitan area residents; most of them live in suburbs. The two cities do represent urban government of a larger scale than is found in most suburbs. Because the suburbs are smaller in population—Bloomington, the largest, has a

population of roughly 80,000, compared to 360,000 for Minneapolis and 265,000 for Saint Paul—they have not developed the formal apparatus for neighborhood or citizen participation that the larger cities have. Elected suburban officials are rarely full-time office holders. So, for the majority of metropolitan area citizens, the relationship between the neighborhood and city government is considerably less formal, structured, and systematic than the systems described here.

#### Saint Paul

The City of Saint Paul has a system of 17 District Planning Councils formally recognized by city government which cover the whole city. All neighborhoods fall into a planning district. The District Councils have become the center of neighborhood activity since they began to be formed in 1975. The formation of the councils began by the Mayor announcing a public meeting open to all to discuss the process of citizen participation.

Although no formal statement of purpose was adopted by the city, the main role of the District Councils, as far as the city was concerned, was to provide an orderly system for planning and making land use decisions. The city will not, for example, usually sell a piece of property unless it has first asked the council for an opinion. The city's comprehensive plan—a survey of land uses which all metropolitan municipalities must develop in conjunction with the Metropolitan Council—was developed in partnership with the District Councils.

The councils also serve as a formal means of the communication between city government and Saint Paul citizens.

In addition to advising the city on planning and land use, the District Councils have become involved in a variety of activities. A 1982 city survey on District Council activities shows the following partial list: crime watch, fall festival, park cleanup, recycling, alley cleanup, alley lighting, alley snow plowing (not a city service in Saint Paul), support of women's advocates, arts programs, library committees, energy company, garden plots, senior information service, youth job program, oral history project, housing revitalization, recreation center operation, business inventory, lot cleanup, newsletter, operation ID (crime prevention), snow shoveling complaints, stump removal, parking control, tree buying, group contracting for home repair, food shelf, economic development liaison, and others. Many of the services occur in several neighborhoods.

Of the roughly \$400,000 of public money used to support the District Councils in 1983, \$321,743 came from federal Community Development Block Grant monies. The federal program requires neighborhood participation in development decision making. The money—federal or local—is used to pay for staff, office space, office supplies, and communications. Each council comes to the city with a budget request for these things.

The District Councils vary in size and structure. Some have seats for organizations. Most hold elections for certain seats. Some call themselves community councils. Some existing neighborhood groups were rechristened as District Councils when the city set up the system. Jerry Jenkins, who coordinates the work of the various councils for the city, said they vary in their approach and scope of activity. Some are very active and some only react. Some are interested in zoning, and some in communication.

The City of Saint Paul began another major effort to tap into neighborhood service capacity with the Neighborhood Partnership Program, announced in May 1983. The city set up a \$2.25 million fund which is available for grants which neighborhoods apply for in much the same way they apply for foundation grants.

The city requires neighborhoods to match the grants with their own resources, either financial or in-kind. There are few restrictions on what neighborhoods can use the money for, although the proposals must conform to the guidelines of the two sources of money tapped: city capital improvement bonds or federal Community Development Block Grants.

In August 1983, the Saint Paul City Council approved eight projects which will receive a total of \$750,000 in grants or loans. Roughly four times that amount of money and in-kind contributions has been pledged by the neighborhood as the matching component. The programs range from commercial and neighborhood rehabilitation, energy conservation projects, tree plantings and stump removal, to

youth jobs, conversion of a warehouse into artists quarters, and landscaping.

The Lexington-Hamline Community Council's proposal to develop a housing repair/energy fixup program for low-income housing in that neighborhood is one of the projects. Several single-family houses rented to low-income families by the city's public housing authority are part of the neighborhood. Because of budget problems, the city wanted to sell the houses, but the community council decided they wanted to help these long-time residents stay in the neighborhood. The community council proposed a program under which the council would acquire the properties, rehabilitate them, and own them as cooperatives, continuing to rent them to the current low-income residents. The city agreed to lend Lexington-Hamline from \$70,000 to \$118,000 (depending on house prices and interest rates at the time the deal is closed) with the council pledging \$381,000, mostly in the form of energy rehabilitation work.

Contracts have not yet been signed on any of the proposed neighborhood projects. Following the August City Council action to approve the proposals, the city has been working with the neighborhood groups to make sure all of the commitments are in order. Under the Neighborhood Partnership Program, the city allows the neighborhood five months to get plans proposed and shaped into firm commitments before the contract is signed. If the neighborhood is unable to meet the terms it proposed, the city can withdraw from the deal or pro-rate the amount of money it will grant or loan.

The program uses a sliding scale to determine the amount of a neighborhood's matching contribution, based on the median income of the neighborhood. Higher income neighborhoods must leverage more highly their proposals. The city had initially hoped for a three-to-one overall ratio of grants and loans to neighborhood efforts, but achieved four-to-one in the first cycle described here.

The neighborhood proposals must be run through the District Councils, with each council identifying one proposal as the top priority for the neighborhood. The city staff rates the projects on the basis of a variety of criteria, including management and financial feasibility, neighborhood contribution, level of participation, overall impact, conformity to existing plans, level of benefit to low-income households, likelihood of the money's being recycled back into the program, opportunities for the program to become self-sustaining, and level of coordination with other programs. The proposals identified by the District Council as top priority are given extra points in the rankings. The mayor proposes a slate of projects to the city council, which approves or disapproves them.

Another major initiative the City of Saint Paul is under-

taking may lead to more neighborhood involvement in public services and service delivery in general. The city is seeking to redefine fundamentally the role of city government and city services in order to break out the spiral of increasing taxes and incremental service decreases. It has contracted with the Rand Corporation of California to study city services and the Rand Corporation is attempting to classify services as either "responsive" or "essential." Rand has defined essential services as having one or more of the following characteristics:

- The consumption of it by one person confers benefits on others not directly consuming the service.
- The consumption of the service by one person does not limit the opportunities of others to consume it.

Public golf courses would not be essential, and therefore fall into the responsive category because only one group of people can use the facility at a time and because the benefits are basically limited to those using the course. By contrast, a traffic light controls traffic by all, and the use of it by one person does not limit the use of it by another, so it is seen as an essential city service.

Financing for services that are found to fit the responsive category will be restructured to draw more from user fees and less from the city's general fund. City departments responsible for providing responsive services may be restructured into "revenue centers" where the costs of delivery are directly compared to the fee-income generated, and incentives established for high performance.

One of the main themes running through Saint Paul's effort in conjunction with Rand is that city government will have to do less and let others do more, and city officials have said they see neighborhood organizations as potential partners. Ideas such as giving neighborhoods a pot of money to use for responsive services have come up as part of this discussion.

The city has established an advisory task force to work with the Rand Corporation as it develops the plan. The task force includes many people active in neighborhood and community affairs.

### Minneapolis

The City of Minneapolis recently restructured its citizen participation system, jettisoning a structured system of Planning District Community Advisory Committees (PDCACs) in favor of a less-structured, citizen initiated system of increased reliance on the long-standing citizen involvement in the Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC). In the past, the city had had PDCACs covering all areas of the city, with each group determining

its own bylaws and rules. The PDCACs were important in developing comprehensive plans and in giving the city advice on zoning changes and other land use decisions, although their performance varied from neighborhood to neighborhood. They served as a formal means of communication between city government and neighborhood groups.

Now, the city has an Office of Citizen Participation which registers and maintains a list of neighborhood and community organizations as advisory organizations. There are no restrictions on what kind of groups can register, but the city policy is that the group should have public or community interests as their general purpose.

The city mails the groups a variety of information, highlighting city government policies or programs which are of particular importance to the area in question. Notices of public hearings and budget information is included in mailings to registered neighborhood groups.

As of September 1983, 88 groups were registered with the city, including ten of the 11 former PDCACs. The city's 1983 budget included slightly more than \$200,000 for citizen participation, \$120,000 of which comes from the general fund. The balance comes from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. An additional \$62,000 in CDBG money is used by the Minneapolis Community Development Agency for citizen participation in its economic development, redevelopment, and housing programs.

The major formal opportunity for citizen involvement in Minneapolis city government—beyond the usual activities in public life—now lies with the Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC), an organization which has for decades advised city government on capital spending. CLIC was originally set up to take some of the politics out of capital spending decisions, and has now been designated as the city's City-Wide Citizens Advisory Organization to advise the mayor and council on the formation of annual Capital Improvement Budgets, Five-Year Capital Improvement Programs and on policy matters.

Of the 23 CLIC members, two members are selected by each of three task forces made up of community representatives on CLIC. The task forces are made up of 27 members, 11 of which are designated as community representatives and chosen by the registered neighborhood groups. Additional task force members are chosen by the city council and mayor.

The other 17 members of CLIC are chosen by the mayor and city council.

CLIC is purely an advisory body, but it has, over the years, been influential in determining city capital spending.



Besides the formal means for citizen participation in Minneapolis described here, citizens are urged to work through the offices of their aldermen. Aldermen's offices are often the places where organized groups seeking to effect city policy bring their complaints or concerns.

Minneapolis Mayor Donald Fraser has proposed a major initiative to involve neighborhood groups in clearing snow from street corners. Fraser's proposal is to contract with neighborhood groups for the service. The city would offer to pay groups for clearing specified corners in a specified period of time after a snowfall, with payment pro-rated to performance. The system is seen as efficient, neighborhood-controlled, and responsive to local needs.

### LEXINGTON-HAMLIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

One of the most active neighborhood groups in the Twin Cities metropolitan area is the Lexington-Hamline Community Council, a membership organization run by a volunteer board of directors. Lexington-Hamline has a full-time staff of three and a part-time staff of 10 and delivers a variety of services. Lexington-Hamline was formed in 1968 and soon got into the business of organizing group contracting for home repair.

The Lexington-Hamline neighborhood, between Lexington, Hamline, University and Summit Avenues in Saint Paul, is mixed economically and racially. In the early 1970s, housing deterioration was a problem. The Citizens League's 1973 report "Building Confidence in Older Neighborhoods" suggested group contracting as a possibility for lowering the cost to homeowners for needed repairs and the Lexington-Hamline council picked up the idea. Through group contracting, many households agree to buy a certain type of work from a contractor. The contractor offers a price discount because of the volume of work. According to the community council, savings of 15-20 percent on group contracts occur regularly, and sometimes the bid which is accepted is half the price of other bids.

The community council has moved into other areas of housing services in more recent years. Right now, it operates an energy audit program for homes on contract from Northern States Power, has an energy library, and has developed a private firm, Old House Energy, which does energy conservation work as a contractor for any homeowner who wants the service.

Old House Energy operates as a private firm with a separate board of directors although it is connected to the Lexington-Hamline council. It sells its services anywhere it is wanted and has so far worked on roughly 65 homes. Old House Energy often uses subcontractors, with the work coordinated by its staff. All of Old House's income is from its sales.

Of the roughly 4,500 people living in the neighborhood, 511 are dues-paying members of Lexington-Hamline. Anyone can join. A board of directors runs the organization and hires and fires the staff. A variety of subcommittees are set up for specific roles and volunteers are tapped on an ad hoc basis for things like preparing for fundraisers.

One service Lexington-Hamline sought to become involved with but could not was the operation of the recreation and other programs at Dunning Park, a public park located on Marshall Avenue between Concordia College and Central High School. Neighborhood residents sought a more direct role in the park's planning and operation, feeling they could bring the operation more in tune with neighborhood needs. The group hoped to use boosters and other volunteers to develop better programs.

The city and Lexington-Hamline planned a contractual arrangement which called for the community council to determine how the park would be used, but with the city retaining the responsibility for maintaining the park's physical plant.

The contract was never implemented because the city attorney issued an opinion that the contract violated a city charter provision making it illegal for the city to enter into a contract which would result in the loss of a job for a city staff person. Lexington-Hamline would have substituted some of its own people for city workers under the plan, and therefore, violated the charter.

### BLOCK NURSE PROGRAM

Using the professional and volunteer resources of local residents in the St. Anthony Park neighborhood, an area in the northwest corner of Saint Paul, the block nurse program is able to provide nursing, companionship, and chore services to elderly residents who otherwise would likely be forced to enter nursing homes.

The Block Nurse Program provides in-home nursing care, transportation, bathing, errands and chores, physical therapy, and other services—under the supervision of a professional nurse—to residents who need the services. In February 1983, the program provided services to 18 people with an average age of 81. The program is designed to supplement the caregiving ability of families and offer an alternative to institutional care.

When someone needs assistance, the primary block nurse meets with the individual and family to find out what help is needed and determine a care plan. The primary block nurse who is a neighborhood resident employed by the county Public Health Nursing Service, arranges and supervises the services, and assigns a nurse to teach and support the family in meeting as many needs as possible.

Nurses are available through a contract arrangement with the Ramsey County Public Health Department Division of Nursing. Block companions and volunteer residents from the neighborhood, are tapped to provide home chores, transportation, and other support services.

A board of directors and an advisory board plan and direct the program. Neighborhood residents and representatives of the Ramsey County Public Health Nursing Service sit on the board. The local Saint Paul District Council serves as fiscal agent for the program.

Roughly half of the costs of the program are reimbursed by Medicare. Additional costs are covered by Medicaid or insurance. Fees that are not reimbursed through these or other public programs are charged to the user on a sliding scale determined by the person's ability to pay. When users cannot pay the fee, philanthropic contributions—including a grant from the H.B. Fuller Company—cover the difference.

Margaret Jamieson, a nurse and St. Anthony Park resident who helped set up the program, said it can save money by keeping people out of nursing homes where costs are much higher than home care. She said at least four of the current 18 users would otherwise be in nursing homes at a cost of \$30,000. The Block Nurse Program has spent only \$6,000 on them, so the program is already saving money. The Block Nurse Program has an arrangement with the University of Minnesota to monitor costs for the first two years to document actual cost savings achieved.

A second main advantage, according to Jamieson, is that people like to stay home. Home care is usually more satisfying and conducive to recovery than long-term institutional care. Without the kinds of services the program provides, there are often no alternatives to institutional care.

Jamieson said the neighborhood scale is a good one for the service. The nurses and volunteers from the neighborhood know the service users well. They are familiar with the particular needs of the area's elderly and their families. The caregivers offer a high level of emotional commitment which is irreplaceable, she said.

## **TOWERS CONDOMINIUM**

The Towers Condominium—located on the block bounded by Marquette, Hennepin, and Washington Avenues, and First Street South in downtown Minneapolis—is a two-building complex of roughly 500 units. The buildings are arranged in an L-shape along the west and north portions of the city block, with the rest of the block consisting of a courtyard, including a swimming pool and two tennis courts owned by the complex. It was built in 1967 as rental property and converted to condominiums in 1973.

The apartments range in size from 500 to 1,300 square feet; from studios to 3-bedroom units. There are 355 indoor parking spaces and 60 parking spaces outdoors. The buildings have six elevators, fire stairs, a meeting room, two laundry rooms, and other common spaces. There are 12 commercial spaces, including a grocery store, a restaurant, a real estate agent, a travel agent, a dry cleaner, an investment counseling service. The commercial units are condominium members, with voting rights like the apartment units.

The Towers is run by a five-member board, elected annually by the owners of building units. Board members are elected to three-year, staggered terms.

At the time the Towers went condominium, proportional voting shares were set up as part of the by-laws and those voting shares—in which larger and more expensive units have a greater share of the votes—remain in existence. All shareholders can vote. In addition to the annual board elections, shareholders vote on an annual budget submitted by the board.

The board can create subcommittees, and currently has four: management, information, courtyard, and signage. Board members may also have special areas of responsibility. There is currently one board member in charge of the building and operations and another in charge of communications. Board meetings are held monthly. The Towers' newsletter, "The Towering," keeps residents informed of board actions and other topics of interest to residents.

Membership in the Towers Condominium Association is required of all property owners as part of the deed. Members pay fees of \$80 to \$150 per month which includes heat, air conditioning, waste disposal, water, and the other association costs, but does not include electricity or property taxes. The Association's annual budget in 1983 was \$1.2 million.

The Association board contracts for services which the building residents receive. There is 24-hour security through a staff of 12 full- and part-time guards. An engineering and maintenance staff runs the cooling and heating systems and other elements of the physical plant. A cleaning service cleans the halls and common areas, a job which takes about 200 hours a week. This year, the board voted to spend \$62,000 for a new roof. Extensive renovation of the courtyard area is also being undertaken this year, another example of a capital spending decision which the board must administer.

The board makes rules about the use of common facilities. Board president Allan Shilepsky said the decision to restrict the number of hours children could use the pool and the number of guests allowed was controversial. Shilepsky said the board recently decided to replace the water shutoff

valves in each unit because they are getting old and need replacement. The board could have assessed individual units for the work done, but instead decided to take money out of the operating fund for the work.

The biggest management decision which the board has made recently, according to Shilepsky, is the decision to hire a new management company. The management company subcontracts for services like security and cleaning, and reports to the board. The management company fields resident complaints, keeps the books, contacts city hall when there is a need to do so, and generally oversees the services delivered within the building. The choice of management company is, therefore, important, and when their contract came up, the board decided to see if a better deal could be struck with a different firm. Shilepsky said Towers residents were not necessarily unhappy with services, but did want to see if they could do better.

A subcommittee was set up to look into the issue and interviewed alternative companies and met with boards and other representatives of other condominium associations. In the end, after much study, the subcommittee recommended and the board decided to switch to a different management company, one with more experience in maintaining the capital facilities, a subject the board felt was becoming more important as the buildings age.

Another important decision recently undertaken by the Towers board was a choice to contract for a master satellite antenna, allowing Towers residents to purchase extra TV signals. A contractor paid \$91,000 for the right to put a satellite dish on the roof of one of the buildings to pick up movie channels, cable news networks, weather channels and superstations. The contractor offers the service to the building residents who can choose to take the service or refuse it, just as an individual homeowner can take or not take cable service offered by a municipally-franchised cable operator. Shilepsky said Towers residents will have supplemental TV service years in advance of other Minneapolis residents.

Shilepsky said that because the Towers is relatively large, it does not have the problem of burning out key volunteers in leadership positions, a problem he knows other condominium associations have. Although Shilepsky said there are many highly trained managers and other professionals living in the Towers available to run the association, no special expertise or background is crucial to manage things well.

## STEVENS COURT

Roughly 700 apartment units make up the complex of buildings owned and managed by Stevens Court. Services

received include general care and maintenance, heating and lighting, snow clearance, waste removal, yard work, landscaping and security.

As such Stevens Court is an impressive service organization, organized as a general partnership with an annual maintenance budget of about \$400,000. About 15 people are employed full-time in maintenance, cleaning, marketing, accounting, and security sales. There are 30 caretakers for the buildings, and 20 other part-time workers doing a variety of tasks. Subcontractors for carpet cleaning, plumbing, and electric work employ another 15 people.

Stevens Court was formed by Jim Larson in 1968. Larson began to buy and renovate low-rise apartment buildings of World War One vintage, located in the Stevens Square area, between Stevens, Franklin and Third avenues and 18th Street in Minneapolis, near downtown. In 1974, General Mills invested about \$8 million to renovate close to 700 apartments, with Jim Larson as project manager. By 1981, a majority of the renovation was complete and General Mills pulled out of the company, with Larson and others putting more money in. Larson continues to have units rehabilitated, with new walls, wiring, and amenities added. The quality of the housing is high and the firm places a high premium on cleanliness, flowers, shrubbery, and other aesthetic features. Units are priced in the moderate range.

In addition to providing services to the people who live in the units, Stevens Court helps clean city streets and alleys, plows snow, and has been known to help property owners on adjacent parcels keep their grounds clean and attractive, often landscaping grounds not owned by Stevens Court at no charge to upgrade the general appearance of the area.

As a private company, Stevens Court does not have any formal ties to government, beyond that of taxpayer. The firm must get permits and approval for building and renovation. Stevens Court receives no public reimbursement for maintaining public streets and boulevards, picking up trash, or plowing alleys and sidewalks. In some ways, much of what the firm does could be compared to the value added to a neighborhood by an interested homeowner who establishes an active role in the livability of the neighborhood.

Stevens Court has engendered some animosity from area residents, according to people familiar with the situation. One activist said she would have reservations about letting Stevens Court operate city services on a contract basis because Larson would do things the way he wanted, not involving area residents. But many of the area's residents have stayed in the neighborhood or moved into it expressly because of the active role Stevens Court has taken in redeveloping housing and providing a broad range of related neighborhood management services.

## **WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES, INC.**

Saint Paul's West Side Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., (WSNHS) is a private, nonprofit partnership of volunteers from local institutions, local residents, the insurance industry, and local government. WSNHS provides home improvement services to neighborhood residents, such as rehabilitation loans, code inspection, home improvement, energy inspections, and counseling people on how to get first-time home mortgages and fixup loans.

WSNHS is one of four NHSs in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. A similar organization exists in the Dayton's Bluff area of Saint Paul, and there are two NHSs in Minneapolis, one in the north side and one in the south side.

In the 20 months from May 1981 to December 1982, the organization helped provide \$880,421 in direct investment in the area through 24 Minnesota Housing Finance Agency loans, 22 conventional loans, 22 homeowner cash and sweat equity loans, 41 loans financed by itself, and a variety of other loans and grants. A total of 103 new households were helped in 1982, with an average family income of \$12,537. Of the households helped, 35 percent were hispanic and 32 percent headed by females.

The WSNHS process begins when someone contacts the agency which will service anyone living on the West Side, the area of Saint Paul across the Mississippi from downtown. Those who have the financial ability to finance housing investments themselves are referred to conventional lenders and those who cannot are referred to an appropriate public program. The WSNHS has its own revolving loan fund of \$375,000 which can be tapped for persons who do not qualify for other public home loans. WSNHS inspects homes, along with city inspectors, as part of its initial application process. It will also do energy reviews of houses. It maintains a list of approved contractors to do work and will oversee construction and mediate disputes between contractor and homeowner, should they arise.

Through its counseling, the WSNHS will help first-time buyers find appropriate home loans and help refinance homes. It has held a series of workshops and other public information efforts on the topic of home finance and insurance. It has also begun a program to get vacant houses rehabilitated and has so far succeeded in getting 11 vacant houses inspected, three under rehabilitation, three rehabilitated by owners, gotten two more improved by owners, and three undergoing purchase negotiations.

WSNHS was formed in 1981, after a similar NHS closed up in Merriam Park, also in Saint Paul. The West Side was chosen because it is an area of the city with high ownership, relatively low income levels, and was in danger of becoming severely deteriorated. According to WSNHS, of the 3,893

structures on the West Side, 2,841 need work. There are 5,328 residents in the area, with a population of 15,600. About 57 percent of the houses are owner occupied, and 57 percent were built before 1940, according to WSNHS.

"WSNHS exists in order to provide home improvement services to neighborhood residents," its literature says. "These services, it is felt, will improve the housing stock and stabilize homeownership, thereby creating a stronger, more vital neighborhood. WSNHS is also working towards the development of the neighborhood capacity to act self-sufficiently, so that one day an NHS will no longer be needed on the West Side."

The Merriam Park NHS closed up when it was felt its efforts were no longer needed, according to acting WSNHS director Sue Johnson, and the idea is to do the same thing on the West Side.

The organization is run by a board of 15 people, Johnson said, with eight residents, three from lending institutions, one from the insurance industry, and two locally elected officials. Board members are elected at the annual meeting of the NHS corporate members.

There are five standing committees:

- A Business Committee which oversees the business operations of the organization.
- A Community Relations Committee responsible for creating community awareness through publicity, door-knocking, and neighborhood meetings.
- A Loan Committee which reviews loan applications.
- A Program Services Committee which assesses housing needs and develops plans to meet those needs.
- A Executive Committee which functions on behalf of the board of directors on emergency matters and also handles personnel matters.

Any firm can become a corporate member of WSNHS and become eligible to vote at the annual meeting. There are currently between 75 and 100 corporate members.

Of the total public support and revenues of \$127,544 in 1981, \$80,574 came from private donations from firms and foundations. Additional money was received from federal Community Development Block Grants and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. Another \$19,080 was earned from bank interest, grant income, interest on loans, and other sources.

WSNHS has a staff of four; an executive director, an assistant director, a program coordinator, and a secretary.

WSNHS had a newsletter but abandoned the tactic in favor of door knocking and other direct outreach programs, according to Johnson. Potential clients are referred from social service agencies, word of mouth, advertisements in the local community newspaper, and from direct solicitation of people who own dilapidated buildings. WSNHS literature is bilingual, making it accessible for the many Mexican-American residents of the West Side.

### **PHILLIPS NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION**

The Phillips Neighborhood Improvement Association (PNIA) is a 22-year old nonprofit organization which has been involved in a variety of neighborhood based initiatives in the south Minneapolis neighborhood bounded by Lake Street, Hiawatha Avenue, I-35W on the west, and I-94/I-35W on the north.

PNIA is run by a volunteer board of 41, with 21 board slots filled by elections to staggered three-year terms in November and the balance to one-year terms in the spring. Board elections take place at annual and general meetings. Anyone who works, lives, or owns property in the neighborhood may vote for board members. There are no dues to be a PNIA member, with financial support coming from government and foundation grants.

PNIA has an \$80,000 budget for 1983. The city's Community Development Agency (MCDA) had been a major financial supporter for PNIA, channeling federal money designated for use for citizen participation in housing and economic development. The MCDA financial support has declined from \$56,000 to \$2,000 per year over the last three years.

PNIA is a citizen participation organization. When PNIA gets involved in service delivery, it tends to do so through some sort of spin-off entity. In addition to advising the city and MCDA, PNIA used to be the Planning District Citizen Advisory Committee. However, the city has recently abolished the Planning District System.

Two major areas of activity for PNIA in recent years have been job creation and housing. In the summer of 1982, the Phillips Community Development Corporation (PCDC), Honeywell, and the MCDA entered into an agreement to rehabilitate 18 vacant housing units in Phillips. The MCDA had acquired the blighted properties but had been unable to rehabilitate them. PNIA wanted the properties occupied as soon as possible, and approached the MCDA, saying that they asked PCDC to take on this project.

PCDC is a spin-off of PNIA. Both share a common membership and PNIA elects two-thirds of the PCDC Board. However, PCDC is a separate nonprofit corporation.

The PCDC knew it needed a partner with resources and experience if it was to convince the city that it could handle the project and the CDA wanted to work with an organization with a track record, so Honeywell was asked to become involved. Honeywell and PNIA had a several year history of housing rehabilitation working and have developed a good deal of trust in one another. Honeywell at first declined to become involved, but later agreed to join.

Honeywell, which has a continuing program of housing rehabilitation in the neighborhood, agreed to be a partner in the neighborhood based effort. Honeywell and the MCDA also agreed to provide the construction financing. Once the deal was set in August 1982, work began using Honeywell construction funds to rehabilitate the first two properties. These units were completed and on the market by the time the MCDA's part of the construction funds were in hand in late December. This caused construction delays and jeopardized the permanent mortgage financing. The PCDC and the MCDA also ended up getting into some contract disputes, according to PCDC Board Member Ray Peterson. Peterson said that the people from the MCDA and PCDC were not working together cooperatively. Honeywell and PCDC are marketing the units which were rehabilitated. The MCDA Board has passed a resolution shelving further work on the project. Peterson said that PCDC is still interested in continuing efforts to rehabilitate MCDA owned property, but is concentrating on getting the ten units now in the program sold. The PCDC is planning to submit a proposal to develop the former Phillips Junior High School into housing.

PCDC now operates a job bank. This was set up at the request of PNIA. The goal is to help neighborhood residents get jobs. A full-time staff person has been hired using federal Community Development Block Grant money. The job bank is being integrated with existing city manpower and job training and placement efforts. The City of Minneapolis has adopted a decentralized system of helping the hard-to-employ get jobs, linking employers in the neighborhood through a community facilitator to those residents who need jobs.

Besides Honeywell, other neighborhood employers, including Sears, Mount Sinai Hospital, Abbott-Northwestern Hospital, Fairview-Deaconess Hospital, Ebenezer Society, etc. are using the job bank. The PCDC staff person in charge keeps files on residents looking for work and works with employers when openings occur. A steering committee, including personnel directors from area employers and neighborhood residents, helps oversee the operation of the job bank and meets regularly to implement the jobs program.

A related job creation effort is PCDC's Salvage Company, set up to do salvage work on houses being torn down. The company is run by a half-time employee. When jobs

open up, the salvage company uses the job bank to recruit workers. Right now, the salvage company is concentrating on finding contracting opportunities and selling salvage materials already corrected.

PNIA is involved in another jobs creation effort, Phillips Works Inc., a bindery set up as a separate nonprofit entity. Phillips Works was founded in August 1982 and employs four full-time people. Honeywell assisted with a start up grant and agreed to contract with it for a certain volume of business. Phillips Works is actively marketing its bindery services and also contracts for light industrial piece work and recycling.

As of this writing, PNIA is working on setting up another neighborhood level service, a recreation program at the Phillips Pool and Gym. Phillips Junior High School was closed by the Minneapolis School Board as part of its facilities reorganization and PNIA is seeking to use the relatively new pool and gym (1972) to maintain community recreational programming. The main objective is to develop the social fabric of the community and to offer teenagers from the neighborhood recreational activities. A teen council has been organized to operate the gym on Friday evenings to provide positive activities for neighborhood youth. PNIA has leased the facilities from the School Board, and is in the process of setting up recreation programs. PNIA is selling memberships in much the same way the YWCA or YMCA does, except at rates affordable to neighborhood residents. PNIA will also sell time to group homes, hospitals, and businesses who would like to use the facility.

PNIA has also been involved in an effort to create affordable community owned rental housing as a response to the problem of poorly managed, delapidated, high rent absentee-owned property. A separate nonprofit spin-off was created, the Phillips Neighborhood Housing Trust (PNHT). Currently, seven board members are elected by the PNIA Board and three are elected by residents of PNHT property. Resident membership on the board increases as the number of units increases. To date, PNHT has rehabilitated and manages 36 units and has commitments to develop another 45 units in 1983-84.

#### **McKNIGHT NEIGHBORHOOD SELF-HELP INITIATIVES PROGRAM**

Neighborhood self-help efforts in the Twin Cities are being helped by the McKnight Neighborhood Self-Help Initiatives Program (MNSHIP), run by the Minneapolis Foundation using a grant from the McKnight Foundation. Unlike many foundation programs, the MNSHIP program relies on neighborhood initiatives directed to the foundation. According to program officer Ron McKinley, the foundations wanted to set up a system to help emerging neighborhood

groups and not just to channel money to existing organizations which were already operating successfully.

MNSHIP grants have gone for a variety of initiatives, including alternatives to nursing home care, neighborhood mediation programs, managing recreation programs, and other programs. A total of 24 grants were made in the first cycle of giving.

Allowing neighborhoods to come forward with proposals is a good idea, McKinley said, because there is such a tremendous variety in neighborhoods in the Twin Cities. Some are organized, but many others are not. Some are rich and others poor. No one arrangement can reach all of them, so MNSHIP leaves the initiation of action up to the neighborhood.

MNSHIP has set up an advisory committee to help make choices about distributing money. Before making any grants, MNSHIP met with about 350 people representing 75 groups. A set of guidelines were developed to help aid in grantmaking.

Important goals for MNSHIP are to encourage neighborhood initiative and make sure things are carried out under neighborhood control.

Although MNSHIP does not expect to become long-term donors to any of the groups, as sometimes turns out with donors like the United Way, MNSHIP is following up on grants by monitoring and evaluating the work of grantees and reporting to the McKnight Foundation on the results of the program.

#### **ACORN**

ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) is a nationally-based nonprofit corporative with local offices which help neighborhood residents organize to influence public decision making at city hall and on the school board, but which is not very interested in the administration of public services at the neighborhood level.

ACORN organizes mostly in low-and moderate-income areas with the goals of empowerment of the area residents in much the same way that a labor union empowers workers, according to Jim Fleischmann, a local ACORN organizer. The group is active in seven metropolitan area neighborhoods, five in Saint Paul and two in Minneapolis. There are four full-time staff organizers and about 1,500 families active in the area.

Each neighborhood organizes some sort of governing board, and the top two people from each neighborhood sit on a statewide ACORN board which runs the group locally. The boards can hire and fire staff organizers. A small

portion of the local dues, of \$16.00 per family annually goes to support an ACORN office in Washington, DC, a national ACORN newsletter, research, accounting, and other functions of the national organization. Anyone can join ACORN.

ACORN does not take government money, and, Fleischmann said, it takes the position that neighborhood groups which become dependent on city government for money become too tied to existing power structures to adequately represent the people in neighborhoods.

ACORN organizes in neighborhoods of roughly 1,000-2,000 people. This size is small enough to maintain communication and a sense of community, according to Fleischmann, and large enough to make collective action useful. A neighborhood of 1,000-2,000 can be canvassed on a door-to-door basis as well. ACORN organizers and volunteers doorknock and hold community meetings to get people interested. The meetings are used to discuss local issues and decide on goals for the local groups. ACORN uses existing community facilities, like churches, to hold meetings. It also has a newsletter for all ACORN groups in the state.

Fleischmann said the main issues for ACORN in the Twin Cities area are jobs, education and housing. These issues were determined to be important by neighborhood residents, he said. Different neighborhoods are interested in different issues and set their own priorities, according to Fleischmann.

ACORN has been active in representing the interest of members during budget cuts, and has sought such changes as retaining street lights in Saint Paul which the city wanted to eliminate. It lobbies public officials to do things like put up stop signs, Fleischmann said.

Fleischmann said ACORN is not so interested in administering neighborhood self-help and service programs as it is in advocating neighborhood concerns in public decision-making. People feel they pay taxes to the city to get services and expect the city to provide them. So far, ACORN's members have been skeptical about self-help and neighborhood service delivery, but are willing to be persuaded that devolution of city services to neighborhood residents is not just a scheme to cut services, Fleischmann said.

## Appendix B

### SITUATION ANALYSIS

During the course of the Neighborhood Services Committee's study, we tried to discern the relevant questions which a neighborhood group might ask itself about providing services. The result of that effort is in Section 1. The situation analysis approaches the topic of neighborhood service delivery systematically and allows screening of a service under consideration. By asking the questions in the situation analysis possible problems relating to neighborhood delivery of a specific service can be identified. It helps identify where efforts must be focused to make a neighborhood initiative work. If many or insurmountable problems come out, it becomes clear the service ought not be delivered at the neighborhood level.

The second section of this appendix shows how this approach can be used with a particular set of services, in this case, fire protection. The component elements of fire protection are identified and various options for fire department organizations discussed. The service is then unbundled—that is, broken down into its component parts—and the situation analysis applied, showing which portions of the service fit well at the neighborhood level and which do not.

#### Section 1—SITUATION ANALYSIS

Under consideration for delivery at neighborhood level:

##### QUESTIONS

**1. What is the *goal* of organizing to deliver the service at the neighborhood level?**

Some possibilities include:

- To meet an *unmet need* within the neighborhood. (Typically a goal of initiatives coming from within a neighborhood.)
- To make an existing service *more effective or efficient* by reorganizing it at the neighborhood level. (Typically a goal of local government.)
- To provide the neighborhood *heightened capacity to meet its own needs*. (Typically a goal of professional neighborhood organizers.)
- To make a *profit*. (This is a goal of private service vendors who perceive the neighborhood as an underserved market.)

**2. What is the *community need or opportunity* that the service is intended to meet?**

Is it an *unmet need* for which an entirely new service must be organized?

##### ANSWERS (fill in responses here)



Is it a *poorly met need* for which an existing service must be reorganized or replaced?

Is the need *common to all residents* of the neighborhood or experienced by only some of the residents? Is it common to all neighborhoods or unique to part of the city?

Is the need *perceived* by those who have it?

Is meeting the need the *responsibility* of some level of government?

Can the need or opportunity be *documented* (by a needs assessment, market analysis, etc.)?

### 3. What is the *service* that meets the need?

What *specific service* or kinds of services will meet the identified need?

Is the service *already being produced at another level*?

If so:

- Will the primary effort involve:

– *restructuring* the way the existing service is delivered, or  
– *introducing an alternative*, competing service focused at the neighborhood level?

If not:

- Will the primary focus be to design and develop a service delivery capability from scratch?

Does meeting the need involve redesigning or “*unbundling*” an existing service?

Does the optimum service involve *combining public as well as private responsibility*?

### 4. Who are the *consumers* who use the service?

*Who* will use the service? Does *demand* exist for the service? Will an effort be required to create more demand before neighborhood-based delivery is *feasible*?

Will changing the way the service is organized, produced, and paid for *jeopardize the ability of some persons to receive it*. (For example, will a turn to user fees make the service inaccessible to poor people?)

Can the service accommodate *varying levels of demand*?

**5. Is the neighborhood scale a feasible market?**

Will a *neighborhood-sized market* support such a service? What must be done to ensure sufficient demand exists for efficient delivery at the neighborhood level?

Will achieving a feasible market require *mandatory participation* by neighborhood residents? Is mandatory participation possible? Who has the required authority?

Will *impacts* spill beyond the neighborhood concerned?

Can the city tolerate *varying levels* of the service from one neighborhood to another?

Will reorganization of the service at the neighborhood level be practical only if it is accomplished *city wide*?

*Must the city shed responsibility for producing the entire service* in order to achieve economies to taxpayers, or can it mix city delivery with neighborhood delivery? (Disaggregate the service: part of it is delivered by the city and part by neighborhoods; or disaggregate the market: some neighborhoods take responsibility for the service while others leave the service up to city hall.)

**6. Who are the producers who deliver the service?**

Where does the *capacity* exist to deliver the envisioned service? Are existing producers, public or private, available? Must they be persuaded to serve the neighborhood?

Will the capability to produce the service have to be *created from scratch*? Will the new producer be *competing* with existing producers (city agencies, for example), which may result in *political resistance* to the new arrangement?

Will reorganization of the service at the neighborhood level *inhibit choice* for consumers? (For example, the service is only feasible at the neighborhood level if the producer can be *assured of serving the entire market*—becoming a monopoly.) What can be done to avoid this?

Will substantial *voluntary action* be required to produce the service or meet the goals of efficiency? If so, *what incentives or supports* will be required to sustain the volunteerism?

**7. What is the role and capacity of the neighborhood?**

**A. Neighborhood as PRODUCER.**

Will reorganizing the service at the neighborhood level involve the neighborhood in becoming a *producer* of the service?

If so:

- Does the neighborhood have *existing organizations* within it with the *capacity* to produce the service, or will a *new* organization have to be created to produce the service?
- Will achieving the benefits of neighborhood delivery require some form of *voluntarism* or *self-help* among neighborhood residents in producing the service? How will they be recruited, trained, managed, and rewarded?

#### B. Neighborhood as *BUYER*.

Will reorganizing the service for delivery at the neighborhood level involve the neighborhood becoming the *buyer* of service?

If so:

- Will the service be purchased *collectively* through a neighborhood organization, or will it be purchased *separately* by individual consumers within the neighborhood?
- If the service is to be purchased collectively by a neighborhood organization, does the neighborhood have an established organization with the *capacity to fulfill the purchasing function* (including such tasks as drafting specifications and negotiating with potential producers)?

#### 8. Who pays for the service?

How will the service be *paid for*? Is a system already in place for *charging* for the service and *collecting payment*? Will that same system work after the service has been reorganized at the neighborhood level?

Do only the consumers or beneficiaries of the service pay for its use? Is it *practical* to identify and charge individual consumers?

Will reorganizing of the service to the neighborhood level involve a turn to *user fees* to pay for it?

If so:

- Must the service be *available to persons who cannot afford to pay*? How will the fees for services to those individuals be paid?

What existing *alternative revenue sources* could be used to pay for the service?

Is there an opportunity for *differential tax reduction* (e.g., reducing taxes in neighborhoods where the costs of service are reduced)?

Can the service be paid for under a *contract between the neighborhood and city hall*?

Can city hall *turn over to the neighborhood* the money it has budgeted to pay for the service, leaving it up to the neighborhood to arrange to buy the service from the producer of its choice?

#### 9. Who identified the need?

Where is the initiative coming from to organize this service at the neighborhood level? Is the service a *public responsibility* and, if so, is some form of *public representation* required in order to make a change?

Does somebody else, like city hall, have *legal authority* over how this service is organized and delivered?

Does the party identifying the need for change have the *capacity to organize and/or produce the service*?

Does the party who identified the need *represent (or know) the desires* of the people who will consume or pay for the service?

Who has the *authority to select the producer of the service*? Individual consumers? City hall? Neighborhood?

#### 10. How will the producers be held accountable? How will the interests of the payers and consumers be protected?

What *incentives and accountability* arrangements are needed to ensure that the performance of the service is satisfactory?

What *risks* are present (to consumers, taxpayers, city hall) in case the producer fails or individual consumers are neglected, and what *contingency arrangements* will be needed to cover these risks?

## Section 2—FIRE PROTECTION

### Fire Protection as Neighborhood Service I—Profiles and History

Since, in many cases, fire protection service was the first (or one of the first) local government “services” to be provided in most Minnesota municipalities, it is worth looking at how the service was established and how it is offered today. These notes begin with organization “profiles” of fire protection services in the metropolitan area today, and finish with a brief history of fire protection service development.

#### A. FIRE PROTECTION PROFILES

##### Profile 1. Cities Provide Own Service.

a. Full-time departments: All personnel are full-time em-

ployees of the municipalities they protect (Minneapolis, Saint Paul).

b. Volunteer departments: virtually all personnel perform firefighting and some related duties on a “part-time” basis, with little or no compensation (Roseville, Bloomington).

c. “Combination” departments: Some personnel are full-time firefighters, and some are volunteer.

1. “Upward”-transition departments: Departments that are moving away from fully-volunteer service because of growth in need for service, decline of available volunteers, etc. (Burnsville).

2. “Downward”-transition departments: Departments that are moving toward some volunteer employees in response to fiscal pressures (Edina, Faribault).

3. "Static" departments: Departments that are no longer in "upward" or "downward" transition cycles, where mix of full-time and volunteer personnel is more or less static (Cottage Grove).

## Profile 2. Cities Purchase Service.

a. **Purchase from "citywide" nonprofit corporation:** A city "purchases" fire protection from a private nonprofit corporation whose service area is bounded by the purchaser's boundaries (Vadnais Heights, Woodbury). At this time, all such corporations are volunteer.

b. **Contract with other nonprofit corporation:** A community contracts for fire protection with a private nonprofit corporation operating in another area (Landfall).

c. **Share nonprofit corporation service among purchasers:** Several local governments share the services of one private nonprofit corporation by contracting with it (Lake Johanna, Blaine, Spring Lake Park, Mounds View).

d. **Purchase service from one or more neighboring jurisdictions:** One local government enters into an agreement with a neighboring local government for purchase of fire service (Lauderdale).

## Profile 3. Cities Join Efforts for Fire Service.

a. Cities enter into a Joint Powers Agreement and jointly operate one fire department serving all parties (Lower St. Croix Fire Protection District).

## Profile 4. Profiles that exist in other jurisdictions, but not in Minnesota:

- a. Fire protection provided by a *county* (Los Angeles County, CA).
- b. Fire protection provided by a *private for-profit corporation* (Scottsdale, AZ).
- c. Fire protection provided by a *multi-county regional jurisdiction* (Jacksonville, FL).

## B. FIRE PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

Since Minnesota's statutes themselves have never mandated provision of fire protection services by local government (other than a requirement for a "fire marshal" position in cities of the first class), those services were generally initiated by interested and concerned residents of a jurisdiction (or portion thereof). This initiation generally followed one of two patterns.

### 1. Fire protection was established by interested individuals

**in the form of an independent group or corporation.** The genesis of the Saint Paul Fire Department, for example, was Pioneer Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1, a group of volunteers, who quickly drew municipal support. As Saint Paul grew, more quasi-independent fire companies—most often, neighborhood-based—came to life. It was by joint agreement (encouraged by both sides) by the city and the volunteers that these quasi-independent city-supported fire companies were combined to form the Saint Paul Fire Department, a municipal fire department.

In other jurisdictions, however, the quasi-independent characteristics of these original fire protection entities were preserved. Maplewood, for example, is still protected by three private nonprofit corporations (Parkside, Gladstone and East County Line) via contracts between the city and each corporation. Vadnais Heights Fire Department, a fairly recently-organized department, was begun as a private nonprofit corporation, and remains so today. There are approximately 30 such private nonprofit fire departments in existence in Minnesota today. All are primarily volunteer fire departments.

2. **Fire protection was established by a combination of interested individuals and municipal officials in the form of a municipal fire department.** This pattern seems to be most common in more recently-formed fire departments. Roseville (then Rose Township), for example, contracted with Saint Paul for fire protection until 1944, when town fathers established a municipal (township) fire department.

Regardless of the particular organizational pattern, almost without exception, every fire department in Minnesota began as a volunteer fire department. Fire departments (or independent fire companies) organized in the horse-drawn apparatus days tended to be organized along neighborhood lines—primarily because response of these companies was limited to relatively small geographic areas by the endurance of their horses.

Why did some communities move from volunteer to full-time fire departments?

1. Firefighting technology advanced to a point where ten or twenty people were no longer required to get a piece of fire apparatus to a fire, or to operate it at a fire (horses, steam, gasoline power, etc.).
2. The "manpower" base of a particular area declined to a point where volunteers were no longer available in sufficient numbers (downtown areas, industrial zones).
3. Volunteer response time and/or capability was perceived as unacceptable by municipal decision-makers.

4. The level of fire risk exceeded the capabilities of volunteer forces.
5. The "benefits" of a full-time force (in the form of reduced insurance rates, etc.) exceeded the "costs" of a volunteer force.

## Fire Protection as Neighborhood Service II— "Neighborhood" Potential

In the course of Citizens League Neighborhood Services Committee meetings, the possibilities of providing many now-centralized services on a "neighborhood" basis were extensively discussed. Out of these discussions came two concepts that are of particular value in assessing the applicability of the "neighborhood service" framework to fire protection: "Situation analysis" and "unbundling."

"Situation analysis" is the analysis described in section one of this appendix as a method designed to identify critical questions, the answers to which help determine whether a particular service could be a neighborhood-based service. "Unbundling" acknowledges the fact that no municipal service is monolithic, that a traditional municipal "service" is actually *several* services.

This paper will use "unbundling" and "situation analysis" to examine the possibilities of fire protection *services* as neighborhood services.

### A. UNBUNDLING

Fire protection services vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but what follows is an unbundling of what the public perceives as a fire department in most jurisdictions:

1. Fire suppression (the actual fighting of fires).
2. Emergency medical services response (the actual handling of medical emergencies).
3. Fire investigation (determination of causes of fires and gathering of related data).
4. Fire code enforcement (self-explanatory; does not apply to non-rental single family occupancies).
5. "Home Fire Safety Surveys" ("surveys" of single-family homes for fire hazards; analagous to fire code enforcement at the single-family occupancy level).
6. Public fire safety education (education to public at large, and to special interest groups).
7. Emergency communications (taking emergency information from callers; sending appropriate help).
8. Arson prevention (a variation of public fire safety education).
9. Emergency medical care education (CPR, basic first aid, blood pressure tests, etc.).
10. Firefighter training.
11. Emergency preparedness.
12. Fire department administration.
13. Firefighter physical fitness.
14. Fire station maintenance.
15. Fire apparatus maintenance.
16. Other activities (fire hydrant maintenance, house number maintenance, etc.).

### B. SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Citizens League Neighborhood Services Committee identified seven "key characteristics for services which are best accomplished at the neighborhood level".

1. Market size—the relationship between the market for a service and the size of a neighborhood (one way of expressing market size is neighborhood versus city-wide).
2. Tolerance of varying levels of service—is need for a service uniform across a city, or does it vary from neighborhood to neighborhood?
3. "Spillover" effect—if one neighborhood chooses to provide less of a service (or not provide it at all), will there be effects in other neighborhoods?
4. Participation required—must every neighbor participate (via purchase or otherwise), or can levels of participation (or non-participation) be tolerated?
5. Production or contracting capability—are there alternative providers of a service with which a neighborhood itself possess the resources (time, expertise, etc.) to provide the service?
6. Financial ability—does a neighborhood possess the financial capacity (capital and operating) to provide a service?
7. Equity in delivery—if fees, service charges or other financial participation is required of neighbors using the service, could they all afford it?

**What follows is an attempt to quantify (for the purpose of brevity, and in admittedly simplified form) the applications of unbundling and situation analysis.**

**A. SAMPLE SITUATION ANALYSIS SCORING (Other options for scoring may be considered.)**

1. Market size: citywide—0; several neighborhoods—1; one neighborhood—2.
2. Levels of service: uniformity required—0; some variations tolerable—1; most variations tolerable—2.
3. “Spillover”: will affect other neighborhoods—0; will not affect other neighborhoods—1.
4. Participation: all must participate—0; some must participate—1.
5. Production capability: much time/expertise required—0; some time/expertise required—1; little time/expertise required—2.
- 5a. Purchase capability: no private providers—0; some private providers—1; many private providers—2.
6. Financial ability: high capital/operating costs—0; moderate capital/operating costs—1; low capital/operating costs—2.

7. Equity in delivery: equity a major issue—0; equity a minor issue—1.

(Note that no attempt has been made to weight these "scores".)

## B. UNBUNDLING AND SITUATION ANALYSIS SCORING

According to the simple scoring presented here, the lower the total score, the less potential an unbundled fire protection service has for consideration as a neighborhood service. See the “unbundled fire protection services” situation analysis tally sheet below.

### C. COMMENTS

Based on this simple analysis, the following fire protection services appear likely candidates for consideration as neighborhood services:

- Fire hydrant maintenance
- House/building number maintenance
- Exterior fire station maintenance (yard work, etc.)
- Emergency care public education
- Arson prevention programs
- Public fire safety education
- Residential fire safety surveys

## Characteristics

[illegible]

## Appendix C

### SURVEY OF SUBURBAN MUNICIPALITIES

On May 4, 1983, the Citizens League sent questionnaires to 95 metropolitan area suburban municipalities, requesting information on neighborhood service organizations and their activities. A total of 42 responses were received. The information received in the survey is summarized below. Following the summary are the actual questions asked and the responses given.

A total of 21 cities were able to identify neighborhood groups or neighborhood based organizations in their communities. Nine cities sent in printed booklets or lists of active organizations.

We received a large number of positive responses to the questions about fraternal or church groups activities, with 25 and 22 responses, respectively. Many of those responses cited more than one fraternal or church group supplying services. More churches and fraternal groups were identified than condominium/townhouse associations, with only 13 cities replying "yes" to the question on condominium/townhouse associations.

In terms of the functions being performed, park and recreation categories are clearly ahead, with 16 responses to that question and high response to a question about fraternal groups' involvement in recreation and sports activities. Twelve responses were received to the question on solid waste removal/recycling, with the majority citing recycling.

The church groups which were cited generally were involved in human services, including things like foodshelves, emergency shelters, and Meals on Wheels. Often, these entries overlapped, with Meals on Wheels being cited as a general response and also under the church category.

Given the nature of the comments which were received, it seems there is a great deal of bewilderment about the word "neighborhood." Clearly, some of the respondents think of neighborhood groups as antagonists—real or imagined; folks who only show up when they have a problem with what the city is doing. Others see them as helpful partners, and construe the term broadly, to include the Lions, Kiwanis, and church groups. Some think of neighborhoods as something fairly small in size and parochial in nature, and others think of them as something quite large, or held together by common interests, not just geography.

Because of the confusion surrounding the term, the survey probably did not bring out as much information as it might have. Someone using a very narrow definition of the term would be less likely to identify many services with which they are involved. Using a broader definition, a lot more services are picked up.

One thing about the survey which is troubling is the relatively low incidence of responses to the condominium/townhouse question. In some cases, the responses from relatively large cities contained a "no" answer to that question which is puzzling and throws the veracity of the respondent into question.

#### TEXT OF SUBURBAN MUNICIPALITIES SURVEY

**Question #1: Please tell us the names of any neighborhood groups active in your city. We are interested in groups involved in service delivery, and not strictly social groups. Please include names and phone numbers of contact persons, if available.**

Twenty-one cities responded that there are neighborhood groups active, as noted, with a variety of definitions about what a neighborhood group is. Comments included in response to this question are listed below.

"Dakota Helpline, a directory by the Community Action Council, lists 418 phone numbers as resource contacts. If it



isn't in there, you don't need it! Consists of the big neighborhood—namely Dakota County.”

“Eastside Neighborhood group, very active in park planning and facility installation in 1981-82. Currently inactive. Will resume work now that city has completed park acquisition. Lots of volunteer planning, installation hours donated.”

“If there are such groups, they would be serving themselves and not delivering any city services.”

“There really are none, outside of the Planning Commission. Many of the services you list are dealt with through the Community Services Departments of the school districts.”

“(This city), because of its size, has no organized neighborhood groups. Thus we can't provide any names, etc.”

“We have no neighborhood groups providing services that I am aware of. Several organizations in the . . . area provide services to special groups, such as the elderly, juveniles, etc.”

**Question #2A: Are any of the groups active in delivering any of the following services? Advocacy in city hall?**

Eight responses were received. Local League of Women Voters were frequently identified as an advocacy group, as well as city-sanctioned planning groups. One comment was “What is this?” Another was “All groups.” Periodically each group, depending on whether issue will affect them,” was another reply.

**Question #2B: Transportation?**

Seven responses were received, ranging from paratransit committees, committees to study MTC opt-out, three senior transportation networks, ridesharing to churches, and a city road advisory committee.

**Question #2C: Block nurse/community health care?**

Four responses were received, including one citing Jaycee Women, one for a Meals on Wheels program, one for a contract arrangement, and one for visiting nurses.

**Question #2D: Solid waste removal/recycling?**

A dozen positive responses were recorded for this question, including a volunteer energy committee set up by one city. Several scout groups were listed as collecting recyclables, as well as one Lions group. One church and one League of Women Voters chapter were identified as operating recycling centers, and several examples of neighborhood cleanup programs run by condominium/townhouse or fraternal groups were identified.

**Question #2E: Park and recreation activities?**

As has been mentioned, this question drew a strong positive response, with 17 positive answers. Many fraternal and ad hoc recreation programs were identified, ranging from Jaycees and Lions maintaining parks to American Legion and other sports leagues. Many cities identified more than one group involved in recreation programs. Only one city specifically cited the city's role of coordinating recreation activities, but it was clear from the pattern of response and the printed lists of sports leagues and other activities that cities are involved in the coordination of these services.

**Question #3: Are there additional services which neighborhood groups are involved in?**

Three cities listed crime watch or other anti-crime activities, two listed social events, and another listed arts activities, community activities, Meals on Wheels, consolidated garage sales, road task forces, spring cleanup, volunteer fire department, and services for the retarded.

**Question #4: Are there any organized city efforts to involve neighborhood groups in city decisions, beyond the normal practices of public hearings and similar meetings?**

Thirteen responses were received on this question, including many cities which cited planning commissions or other citizen advisory structures. One respondent said, “Jaycees meet with city council to discuss volunteer programs, i.e. they built a park shelter building at the park, want to promote neighborhood crime watch programs. City established task forces to study animal control and to assist in selecting police officer and study fire protection needs, etc.”

Another said, “The city was recently divided into 15 neighborhoods to help generate more community input.”

“Plan to encourage neighborhood crime watch through future meetings—have recently organized a citizen committee to study police service,” said another.

“Regular mailings of all agendas, minutes, etc. Questions involving housekeeping items (requests for parking restrictions, stop signs, etc.) are routinely referred to neighborhood groups for comment.”

“Yes, mayor to meet with community groups to solicit more participation in defining city objectives and priorities,” another said.

“Developers are advised as a matter of practice to meet with neighborhood groups prior to Planning Commission or City Council consideration. The Commission and Council strongly reinforce such contacts by continuing their consideration of a proposal until such meetings are held,” was another comment.

"If a new city building is deemed necessary a 'citizens group' will be appointed to push the project. The group will inform the community through coffee meetings, literature drops, newspaper articles, hearings, phone calls, etc." One city said public safety and economic development advisory task forces had been set up.

**Question #5: Are there any fraternal groups (e.g. Lions, Kiwanis, etc.) or business groups which are active in providing services such as sports leagues or park activities?**

Track meets, baseball, soccer, tennis, basketball, softball, donated park scoreboards, hockey, snowmobiling clubs, volunteer labor to clean and maintain parks, park concerts, landscaping, park equipment, trees and other plantings, garden clubs, and an athletic scholarship fund were all mentioned in response to this question. A total of 25 replies were listed, most of them with multiple entries.

**Question #6: Are there any church groups active in providing social services or other services?**

Twenty-two cities identified churches supplying services. Services included: Meals on Wheels, home visits, food-shelves, daycare, elderly housing, clothing for the poor, senior citizen parties, counseling, recreation, blood banks, volunteer nurses, medical training, social groups, tree donations to parks, temporary shelters, emergency assistance, and supplying rooms for other groups to supply services.

Six cities responded by saying churches were providing services but they didn't know which ones.

**Question #7: Are there any condominium/townhouse organizations which provide street, water, or similar services?**

A total of 13 cities listed condominium/townhouse associations, with several cities identifying more than one. Some cities drew a sharp distinction between public services and private services, with one respondent writing, "No—Cimarron Park—a private corporation, provides all services to residents in Cimarron Park Mobile Home Court."

"Some developments maintain their own streets, but sewer and water are part of the city system," another said.

"There are a number of condominium/townhouse projects which have private streets and privately constructed and maintained utility lines connected to the public systems."

"Yes, providing limited maintenance on their driveways, yards, pools, etc."

"Yes—Some streets in (the city) are private, therefore, homeowners associations are responsible for winter and summer maintenance."

"Yes, to the extent of assuming on-site responsibility for their own facilities.

"Some of the townhouse developments are built with private roads which are maintained by an association."

"Yes. One or two are active now."

"Yes. Several townhouse/condominium developments in the city have their own associations which plow and maintain their own private streets and parking lots. They also provide maintenance of the water system within their property although water is delivered to the property through the city system and all billing is done through the city."

**Question #8: Please use the space below to give us any general comments about the activities of neighborhood groups in your city.**

This open ended question was the last one on the survey. The responses are listed below.

"We do not have any neighborhood groups that are publicly active. The city's fraternal groups do all the activities and special events."

"I would highly recommend that you contact Karen Baker of the Johnathan Association is very active in many areas of recreation, as well as neighborhood organization for things, such as City Clean Up Day and various Johnathan area activities."

"Facts are that the new federalism hasn't shifted down responsibilities so far that residents are ready to assume what local government can't provide."

"A number (8-10) organizations that work together for the betterment of the area: provide funds for Police Reserve, fire department, bicycle safety, operation ID."

"I believe we have an active group of residents interested in a wide diversity of issues and very willing to become involved in initiating change and influencing municipal decisions. This trend is likely to increase."

"There are numerous services available that are administered/coordinated at the county level."

"I have included groups from the big neighborhood, namely from Dakota County. Our neighborhoods' of 250 to 300 units are not big enough or cohesive enough to provide any on-going service."

"Good ideas provide for a more informed public—better government."

"Neighborhood associations generally are concerned with care and maintenance of their immediate neighborhood. If development is proposed for an adjacent land parcel the neighborhood association will actively participate in public hearings on the development proposal: they are usually formed when residents are against whatever is planned."

"Neighborhood groups tend to develop around specific issues and then disband; if they exist beyond that, they are social in nature or present to protect property values."

"Conservation Club sponsors gun safety training, swimming lessons, lake clean up, environmental control, etc."

"BCAL (former Jaycee Women) Annual Art Fair proceeds used for community—as they feel directly impacts them, such as a new development."

"Activity varies with 'threats' perceived from outside influences (crime, highway construction, etc.). We have had some active neighborhood groups since the 1920s."

"Several multi-city social services boards provide human services: West Hennepin Community Services, Suburban Community Services."

"Neighborhood groups generally are active in reaction to activities and not participatory. Enclosed is a listing or organized groups."

"Our groups are not especially aggressive or active. But they do react to things in their neighborhood. Jaycees are very active in parks—have done much of the development in some parks."

## Appendix D

### SERVICES WITH HIGH POTENTIAL FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DELIVERY

Part of our committee's work was to decide upon a list of services which had high potential for neighborhood delivery. This task is inherently difficult because the range of services which might be considered is so broad. In the text of the report, we explain a proposal for implementing some targeted opportunities for neighborhood service delivery along with some general principles to apply when approaching the topic. In this appendix, we list several other specific opportunities which we evaluated and found to offer potential.

We chose to make the specific recommendations listed because we felt they offer timely opportunities with high return. The services evaluated in this matrix offer additional opportunities neighborhoods and local units of government may want to explore.

The coding is as follows: P = Primary Benefit; Y = Yes; M = Mixed; and N = No.

Service	Existing Examples	Can Nbd. Production Capacity Exist?			Benefits			Other	Comments
		Inside Nbd.	Outside Nbd.	Cost Less	Effectiveness, User Satisfaction	Sense of Community	Building Block Entrepreneurship		
Health & Human Services									
Block nurse	St. Anthony	M	M	Y	P	Y			
Child care	Many	Y	Y	P	Y	Y			
Teenage centers		Y	Y		P	Y			
Senior citizen centers		Y	Y						
Block parents	St. Anthony Park	Y	N					P	Unmet need
Tutoring (such as English as 2nd language)	West Side	Y	Y	P					
Health education/CPR		Y	Y					P	Unmet need
Self-help support groups (AA)		Y	Y		P	Y			
Neighborhood health clinic	West Side	Y	Y	Y	P			Y	Unmet need
Employment/job referral	Camden	M	M		P			Y	Unmet need
Food coops	Many	Y	N	P	P	Y			
Food shelves	Step	Y	Y		Y			P	Unmet need
Peer counseling		Y	N						
Public Works									
Composting	District 12	Y	Y	P			Y		
Recycling	Many	M	M	P		Y	Y		
Neighborhood cleanup	Neat	M	M	P	Y	Y		Y	Unmet need

Service	Existing Examples	Can Nbd. Production Capacity Exist?		Cost Less	Effectiveness, User Satisfaction	Benefits			Other	Comments
		Inside Nbd.	Outside Nbd.			Sense of Community	Building Block Entrepreneurship			
Removal of large appliance & furniture		M	M	P	Y					
Street sweeping		N	N							
Leaf removal		N	N							
Catch basin maintenance		N	N							
Hole patching		N	N							
Curb & gutter repair		N	N							
Street resurfacing		N	N							
Residential street plowing		N	Y							
Alley plowing	St. Paul	N	Y	Y					P	Unmet need
Sidewalk plowing		Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		P	Unmet need
Clear bus stops		Y	Y	Y	Y				P	Unmet need
Clear corners		Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		P	Unmet need
Shade tree inspection	Neat	Y	Y	P	Y	Y	Y			
Tree planting	Neat District 14	Y	Y	P	Y	Y	Y			
Stump removal	Neat District 14	Y	Y		Y	Y			P	Unmet need
Tree limb removal	Neat District 14	Y	Y	P	Y					
Watering young trees	Neat District 14	Y	Y	Y	Y				P	Unmet need
Weed control		Y	Y		P	Y			Y	Unmet need
Public Safety										
Block watch	Many	Y	Y	Y	P	Y			Y	Unmet need
Residential patrols	St. Paul	Y	Y	Y	P	Y				
House security inspection	Many	Y	Y	Y	P	Y				
Home security clinics		Y	Y	Y	P	Y				
Pet/animal control		N	Y							
Befriend a hydrant		Y	Y		Y	Y			P	Unmet need
Fire safety education		Y	Y		Y	Y			P	Unmet need
Home fire safety survey/clinics		Y	Y		Y	Y			P	Unmet need
Emergency care training/CPR		Y	Y		Y	Y			P	Unmet need
Bike safety		Y	Y		Y	Y			P	Liability an issue Unmet need
Water safety		Y	Y		Y	Y			P	Liability an issue Unmet need
Disease reporting		Y	Y		Y	Y			P	

Service	Existing Examples	Can Nbd. Production Capacity Exist?			Benefits			Other	Comments
		Inside Nbd.	Outside Nbd.	Cost Less	Effectiveness, User Satisfaction	Sense of Community	Building Block Entrepreneurship		
Community Education									
Craft classes		Y	Y		Y	P		P	Unmet need
Art classes		Y	Y		Y	P		P	Unmet need
Home repair classes		Y	Y		Y	P		P	Unmet need
Energy conservation classes		Y	Y		Y	P		P	Unmet need
Parks & Recreation									
Neighborhood gardening	Many	Y	Y		Y	P			
Landscaping		Y	Y	P	Y				
Recreation center operation	St. Paul		Y	Y	P	Y	Y		
Recreation program operations	Many	Y	Y	P	Y	Y			
Erosion control		Y	Y	P	Y				
Ground maintenance		Y	Y	P	Y				
General cleanup		Y	Y	Y	P	Y			
Traffic triangle maintenance also public works)	Prospect Park	Y	Y	P	Y	Y			
Transportation									
Carpooling		Y	Y	P		Y			
Parking/traffic planning		N	Y		P				
Other									
Group contracting for housing rehab/home maintenance	Lex-Ham	N	Y	P	Y		Y		
Neighborhood newspaper	Many	Y	Y			P		Y	Unmet need
Neighborhood housing service	Many	M	M		Y	P			
Energy audit	Lex-Ham	Y	Y	P	Y	Y	Y		
Weatherization	Lex-Ham	Y	Y	P	Y		Y		
Garage sales		Y	Y			P			
Cable programming		Y	Y		Y	P	Y		
Land use planning	Many				P	Y			Neighborhoods could plan street furniture, bus stops, & other public areas

Service	Existing Examples	Can Nbd. Production Capacity Exist?			Benefits			Other	Comments
		Inside Nbd.	Outside Nbd.	Cost Less	Effectiveness, User Satisfaction	Sense of Community	Building Block Entrepreneurship		
Noise control	Prospect Park	Y	Y		P				
Inspection of streets & other public areas for refuse, abandoned cars, etc.		Y	Y	P	Y	Y			Allow neighborhood inspectors to issue warning tags for code violations. City would issue fines if no action taken.

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## WHAT THE CITIZENS LEAGUE IS

Formed in 1952, the Citizens League is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational corporation dedicated to understanding and helping to solve complex public problems of our metropolitan area.

Volunteer research committees of the Citizens League develop recommendations for solutions after months of intensive work.

Over the years, the League's research reports have been among the most helpful and reliable sources of information for governmental and civic leaders, and others concerned with the problems of our area.

The League is supported by membership dues of individual members and membership contributions from businesses, foundations and other organizations throughout the metropolitan area.

You are invited to join the League, or, if already a member, invite a friend to join. An application blank is provided for your convenience on the reverse side.

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- Four major studies are in progress regularly.
- Each committee works 2½ hours every other week, normally for 6-10 months.
- Annually over 250 resource persons made presentations to an average of 25 members per session.
- A fulltime professional staff of eight provides direct committee assistance.
- An average in excess of 100 persons follow committee hearings with summary minutes prepared by staff.
- Full reports (normally 40-75 pages) are distributed to 1,000-3,000 persons, in addition to 3,000 summaries provided through the CL NEWS.

### CL NEWS

- Four pages; published every two weeks; mailed to all members.
- Reports activities of the Citizens League, meetings, publications, studies in progress, pending appointments.
- Analysis data and general background information on public affairs issues in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTION PROGRAM

- Members of League study committees have been called on frequently to pursue the work further with governmental or nongovernmental agencies.
- The League routinely follows up on its reports to transfer, out to the larger group of persons involved in public life, an understanding of current community problems and League solutions.

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTORY

- A 40-page directory containing listings of Twin Cities area agencies, organizations and public officials.

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- Minneapolis breakfasts are held each Tuesday from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. at the Lutheran Brotherhood.
- St. Paul luncheons are held every other Thursday from noon to 1 p.m. at the Landmark Center.
- South Suburban breakfasts are held the last Thursday of each month from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. at the Lincoln Del, 494 and France Avenue South, Bloomington.
- An average of 35 persons attend the 64 breakfasts and luncheons each year.
- Each year several Q & A luncheons are held throughout the metropolitan area featuring national or local authorities, who respond to questions from a panel on key public policy issues.
- The programs attract good news coverage in the daily press, television and radio.

### SEMINARS

- At least six single-evening meetings a year.
- Opportunity for individuals to participate in background presentations and discussions on major public policy issues.
- An average of 75 person attend each session.

### INFORMATION ASSISTANCE

- The League responds to many requests for information and provides speakers to community groups on topics studied.
- A clearinghouse for local public affairs information.

**Citizens League** non-partisan public affairs research and education in the St. Paul-Minneapolis metropolitan area. **84 S. 6th St., Minneapolis, Mn. 55402 (612) 338-0791**

## Application for Membership (C.L. Membership Contributions are tax deductible)

Please check one: ☐ Individual (\$25) ☐ Family (\$35) ☐ Contributing (\$45-\$99) ☐ Sustaining (\$100 and up)  
Send mail to: ☐ home ☐ office ☐ Fulltime Student (\$15)

NAME/TELEPHONE

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

EMPLOYER/TELEPHONE

POSITION

CL Membership suggested by

(If family membership, please fill in the following.)

SPOUSE'S NAME

SPOUSE'S EMPLOYER/TELEPHONE

POSITION

**Citizens League** non-partisan public affairs  
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