

Windom Community Council Phase I Review

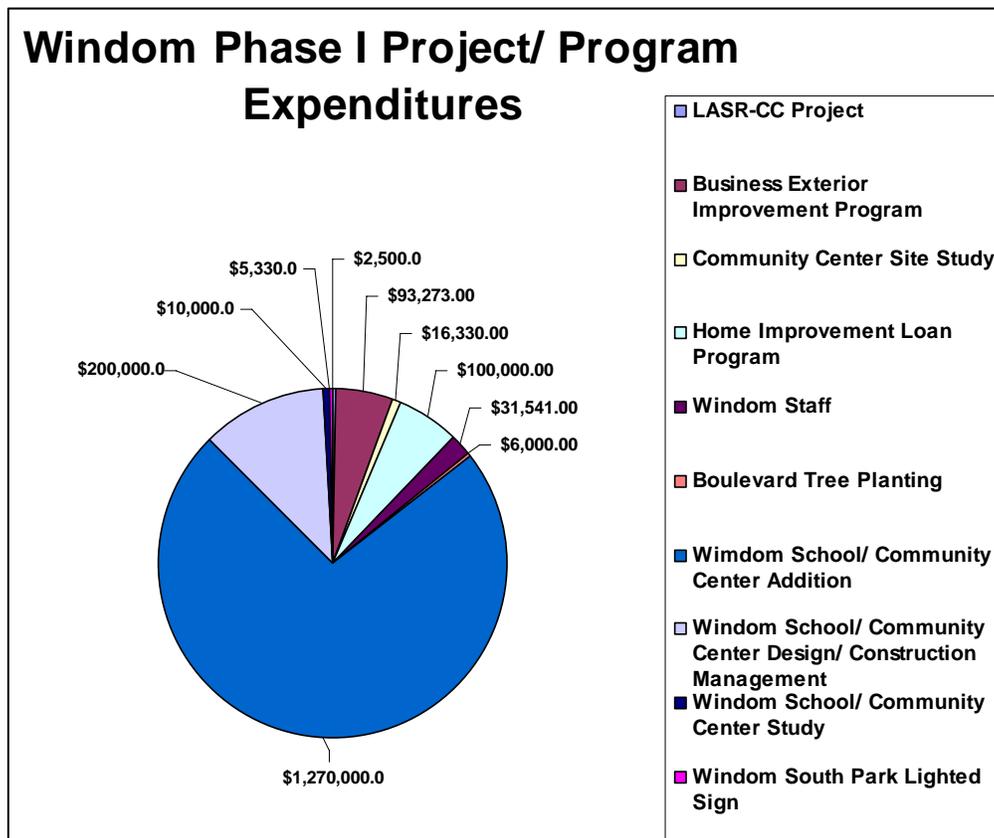
Overview

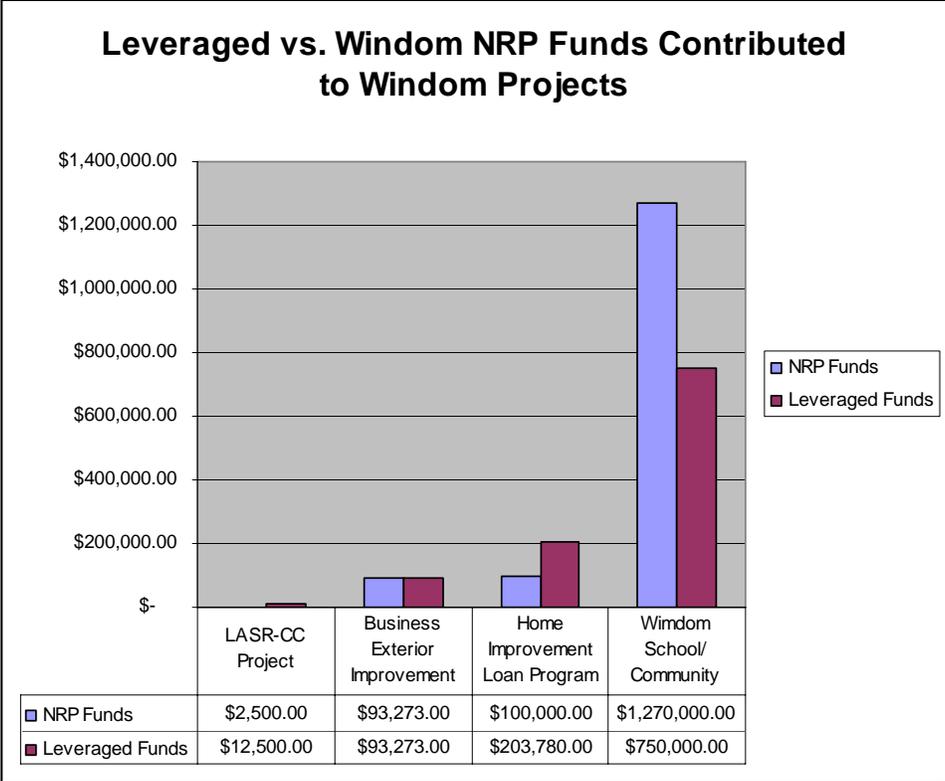
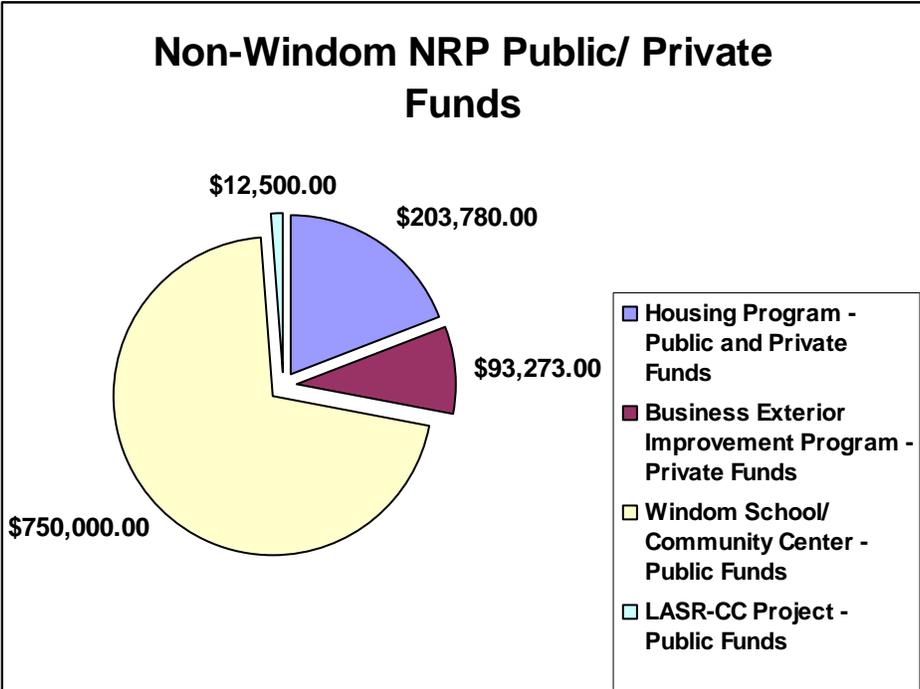
The Windom Community Council (WCC) was one of the first neighborhoods in Minneapolis to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). In 1991, WCC entered into a Participation Agreement with NRP, and began planning for the Windom Community Council Phase I Plan. The first step in the Windom Phase I Action Plan creation was to prepare for the distribution of surveys throughout the neighborhood. Thus, volunteers and staff went door to door throughout the neighborhood to recruit block contacts. As a result of this outreach, 65% of all Windom blocks were organized with block contacts to help hand deliver and collect Phase I planning surveys. A separate business survey was similarly distributed and collected.

Throughout 1991 and 1992, several planning meetings convened to provide additional input from residents for the final Windom Phase I Action Plan. Feedback from the Windom residents and business owners conveyed that priorities for the Phase I plan should be: schools, parks, housing, commercial development, environment, crime prevention, and building community. Programs and activities were carried out for these priorities over the next thirteen years until 2005. The bulk of this document will review the results of the WCC Phase I Action Plan activities. None of these activities of the Phase I plan would be possible without the insight, dedication and tenacity of Windom residents and businesses, and the project partners who worked with the Windom Community to develop and complete these activities.

Method

The Windom Phase I Review data was collected through input from the Windom Community Council Board of Directors, committee volunteers, and through review of historical WCC documents. Additional data was compiled from WCC's program administrators. The WCC Phase II coordinator compiled this data and placed this information into the WCC Phase I Review document.





WINDOM PHASE 1 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

PUBLIC SAFETY/SERVICES

Promote Block Clubs



The Windom Community Council developed educational brochures to promote apartment and block clubs throughout Windom. Outreach for block contacts occurred at the neighborhood festivals, community – wide meetings, and the hardware give-away program. Additionally, Windom volunteers and staff door-knocked throughout the community to obtain block contacts. As a result of organizing efforts, 65% of all blocks in the Windom neighborhood have apartment or block clubs. The CCP/SAFE program continues to be promoted at all neighborhood events, through Welcome Wagon packets, and newsletters.

These activities were low-cost, therefore no NRP dollars were used to organize block contacts in Windom.

PLAN SECTION NAME: HOUSING

Establish Housing Fund

NRP \$ spent: \$100,000
Non NRP /private \$ contributed: \$203,000
Total # NRP loans/ grants awarded: 40



In 1994, WCC worked with the Center for Energy & Environment to establish a special housing fund to provide low-interest loans for exterior improvements on residential properties in Windom. Through this program, the Windom Home Improvement Program offered loans between \$2,000 and \$5,000 to Windom residents. More than one loan per household was allowed, based upon availability, but the combined total of loans could not exceed \$5,000. Properties eligible for the program included owner occupied

1 to 4 unit properties, as well as non-owner occupied single family dwellings located in the Windom neighborhood. Owners of multiple properties were eligible to borrow up to \$5,000 per property.

Forty loans and grants were allocated for improvements to Windom residential properties. \$204,000 non-Windom public and private funds were contributed to Windom property owners in addition to the \$100,000 NRP funds. Partners with the WCC housing program were the MCDA, Center for Energy and Environment, and program partners of that organization.

Plant Trees in Open Spaces

Plant trees in all open spaces on boulevards according to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board guidelines.



NRP \$ spent: \$6,000
Total # trees planted: 143

In an effort to maintain the urban forest it was determined that the Park Board should plant trees in all open spaces on boulevards according to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Standards in 1994. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board was the partner for this Windom project.

PLAN SECTION NAME: 07 BUSINESSES

Commercial Exterior Improvement Fund

NRP \$ spent: \$93,217
Total matching grants received: 23
Non NRP Private \$ Contributed: \$93,217

WCC created a Business Exterior Improvement Revolving Loan Fund for Windom Businesses. Businesses were encouraged to apply for MCDA's 2% Business Rehabilitation Funds for NEDF grants in addition to the funds offered through Windom Community Council.

In 1996, the WCC commercial exterior improvement program provided grant programs for businesses located in the Windom neighborhood. The minimum grant was \$1,000 and the maximum was \$5,000. A 1:1 dollar match was required. As of November, 2005, 23 grants have been issued. The Center for Energy and Environment is the administrator for this program.

Neighborhood History Book

Increase community awareness of Windom's history and unique place in Minneapolis' development.

WINDOM BECOMES A NEIGHBORHOOD OF MINNEAPOLIS

Minnesota became a state and Minneapolis was declared as a city. On the same day, Township 28 held a town meeting and adopted the name 'Richfield.' Just later, in 1875, Windom was incorporated, then later in 1884, as a village. For the next five years Windom was considered a village in the city of Minneapolis and the names of its churches and businesses reflected its status. However, this all changed when an annexation vote was taken to expand the southern limits of Minneapolis from 54th Street to 62nd Street. Minneapolis voters voted to put annexation of the area on the city ballot on October 3, 1926, and it passed for both city and state. The final vote of the City of Minneapolis came on June 24, 1927, with 1658 votes for and 575 against. According to records, some Windom residents were none too sure of the outcome. For instance, Henry Bachman, the son of Bachman's, a nationally known floral business located in Windom [see *Bachman's story*, p. 15, *Section*], noted, "We're in Minneapolis, whether we wanted to be or not." Apparently the annexation of the area of Windom was supported chiefly by residents of the east village, who at that time outnumbered voters from the west side. According to Richfield Methodist records, once Windom officially became a part of Minneapolis, "residents in the area were discouraged by higher taxes and assessments."

Prohibitive taxes, the Depression followed shortly thereafter, and increasing financial hardship. But Windom neighbors came together to help out those in need. The local family (whose heritage was African American and Native American), were very generous during the years of the Depression, sharing their garden and their resources with neighbors who were less fortunate.

The boundaries of Windom are Diamond Lake Road to the north, Lyndale Avenue South and 21st Street to the west, Crosstown Freeway 62 on the west, and the 5W Interstate Freeway on the east. The 1927 annexation of Windom which removed it from Richfield included other areas as well—the Armatage and Kenny neighborhoods, and the Richfield Yards area (the industrial area between 59th Street). The benefits of paying city taxes



William Windom (1827-1891)
Courtesy Windom School archives.

THE HISTORY OF WINDOM'S NAME

The village of Windom was named after William Windom, an esteemed citizen of Minnesota. Windom was born May 10, 1827 in Ohio. As a boy, he was apprenticed to a tailor but found that the vocation did not suit him. Shortly thereafter, he attended law school and upon its completion, was admitted to the bar in 1850. He practiced law in Ohio until 1857, when he moved to Winona, Minnesota. In 1859, he was elected to Congress and served as a Congressman for ten years. In 1870, Windom was appointed to the United States Senate, and served until 1881, when he resigned to become Secretary of the Treasury under President Garfield. Upon the death of Garfield he resigned and thereupon was reelected United States Senator to fill out his unexpired term—ending in 1883. He then moved to the city of New York, where he became a leading financier. Eventually, President Harrison appointed him Secretary of the Treasury under his administration, a position he held until his death, which occurred very suddenly and unexpectedly following his delivery of a speech before the New York Chamber of Commerce. [Source: Windom School archives.]

NRP \$ spent: \$1,341

WINDOM: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES



In 1994, an effort to increase community awareness of Windom's history and unique place in Minneapolis' development, it was determined that a Windom History Book would be created and distributed in the community. With the assistance of a CURA intern from the University of Minnesota, Gen Joubert a long-time resident began work on the history book. The completed volume consists of information on Windom's namesake, prominent citizens, architecture, anecdotal stories and photos of people and places in the Windom neighborhood. Books have been sold at Windom Community meetings, festivals, and advertised in the Windom Newsletter. Revenues received from sales of the Windom History Books since 1994 have covered the cost of its production.

EARLY HISTORY OF MINNESOTA AND MINNEAPOLIS



The European history of the area now known as Minnesota began when Father Hennepin, one of the first European missionaries, came up the Mississippi River. He named them after the largest falls he had seen on his travels at the mouth of the river. He named them after his patron saint, Saint Anthony. In 1681 Father Hennepin was captured by Indians at Mendota, "the meeting of the waters," and carried inland so that he would not find out about the name of the sacred river, the Menesotor. It was not until 1689 that LeSueur claimed the lands along what he called the "Riviere Ste. Pierre." St. Pierre, or St. Peter's River, was its name until the territory was admitted to the Union, at which time it reverted to a form of its original name, being called the Minnesota River.

Native Americans who lived in this land included the Mdewakanton Dakota, as well as the Ojibway. The white names for these two tribes of Minnesota are the Mdewakanton and the Ojibway.

Neighborhood Implementation

Support the expanded roles and responsibilities of the neighborhood association

NRP \$ spent: \$30,200

In order to support the expanded roles and responsibilities of the neighborhood association during the implementation of Windom's Phase I NRP plan, it was determined that the Windom Community Council would hire 1/2 time staff for two years. The staff person would manage NRP generated programs.

Community Center Alternate Site Study

Appraise the Southview Seventh Day Adventist Church. 58th & Wentworth Avenue and conduct a feasibility study to convert the church into a community center.

NRP \$ spent: \$16,329

After the plan to construct the community center in 1995 at Windom School was voted down by the Windom school community, the neighborhood was informed that the Southview Church may be for sale. The Windom's NRP Community Center Task Force began looking to the church as an alternate site. The Windom Community Council's NRP Community Center Task Force worked with the Park Board, Community Education, NRP staff and Public Works to determine if the site would be appropriate as a community center/gymnasium for the neighborhood. It was determined by the Park Board and Community Education staff that the site did not meet their requirements for a park/community education center. Therefore, the Windom Community Council once again began negotiations with the Windom School community. Public Works implemented the alternative site study

Windom School/Community Center Study

NRP \$ spent: \$10,000

In 1996, a feasibility study was conducted to determine if a community center/gymnasium could be built at Windom Open School. The Minneapolis School Board was the implementation organization for this study.

Windom School/Community Center Sign

NRP \$ spent: \$5,329

The Windom Community Council requested that the Park Board install a lighted sign to identify the Windom Community Center. The sign was installed on the SW corner of 58th St & Wentworth Avenue. The lighted sign was installed and enabled Park Board staff to highlight and advertise their programs to the neighborhood. The Minneapolis Park Board was the implementing organization for the sign install.

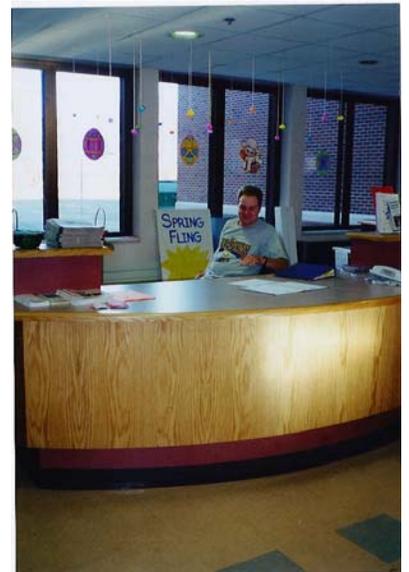
Windom School/Community Center Addition

Build a public facility with appropriate open space at the Windom School site to serve the social and recreational needs of the neighborhood.

NRP \$ spent: \$1,270,000
Non-NRP Public \$ Contributed: \$750,000



Residents in the Windom neighborhood committed \$1.7 million of their NRP funds for the \$3 million Windom Community Center. The community center is a bricks and mortar dream come true for the residents of the Windom neighborhood. The project came about due to the diligent efforts of the Windom Community Council and Task Force, the Minneapolis Public School Board, the Windom Open School Site Based Management Team, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and the Volunteers of America. The design and final construction produced a beautiful addition to the Windom Open School, which is architecturally compatible with the historic school and is functionally efficient for use by the School, Park Board, and the Windom Community Council. The new construction contains a gymnasium, a multi-purpose room, a kitchen, a community meeting room, a pre-school/kindergarten room, a school/community shared work/copy center room, and an office for the neighborhood. The existing gym was redeveloped into a media-technology center with an additional conference room. The facility brought for the first time in Windom's history; Park Board recreational opportunities for neighborhood children, senior activities, congregate dining and continuing education for residents of the area.



Windom School/Community Center Design/Construction Management.



NRP \$ spent: \$200,000

A team made up of Public Works staff, Park Board, the construction company and architect met on a weekly basis to oversee the construction phase of the Community Center project.

SITE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE HARRIET AVENUE PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY

It was determined by neighboring residents that the appearance of the Harriet Avenue Public Works facility was unsightly. The unpaved areas create dust and the absence of a sidewalk along W. 61st Street creates a hazard for pedestrians. The Windom Community Council asked that Public Works put this project in their future Capital Improvement Project requests. The project was completed in August, 2004, with the Windom Garden Club providing the plants & labor for the large planter located at 61st and Harriet Avenue. Minneapolis Public Works was the Implementation organization coordinating the improvements to the public works facility.

NRP \$ spent: \$0
Strategy Funds Contributed: \$158,000

Windom NRP \$ spent: \$2,500
Partner Neighborhood NRP Funds Leveraged: \$12,500

LASR-CC

Lyndale Avenue South Creek to Crosstown - Master Plan

Windom Community Council, Kenny, Lynhurst, and Tangletown Neighborhood Organizations formed a coalition to plan for future of Lyndale Avenue South Corridor developments. Lyndale Avenue South exists as a corridor for housing, commercial goods and services, and is a major transportation passage in Minneapolis. It runs through each of the four aforementioned neighborhoods, giving the coalition a unique working opportunity. South Lyndale Avenue business representatives participated in planning efforts with neighborhood representatives.

The LASR-CC team met for over three years during which they formed their coalition, reviewed the history of previous Lyndale Avenue planning efforts, and facilitated a community process that developed a vision for Lyndale Avenue. This vision statement is as follows: "We envision a Lyndale Avenue South that:

1) Blends the area's natural beauty, existing resources, and future development to create attractive, well-maintained spaces with a distinct sense of place. 2) Encourages a neighborhood-friendly transportation environment that emphasizes pedestrian activities while accommodating vehicles. 3) Fosters neighborhood-focused businesses and a development climate that meets the needs of the residents." Over three years of meetings resulted in the final version of Lyndale Avenue South Corridor Master Plan, which was approved by the City Council in January 2006.

Other Windom Community Council Projects



Annual Windom Fall Festival



Community Gardening



Windom Newsletter

Conclusion

A number of changes have occurred in the Windom Community since initial planning for the Windom Phase I plan in 1991. The number of housing units is down due to homes removed for the construction of Mead Lake, located at 60th Street and Nicollet Avenue. The values of homes in the Windom Neighborhood increased in value by 63% between 1999 and 2000. These increases are similar to those seen across Minneapolis, although values in Windom were approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000 greater.

There have been many changes in the business districts of Windom and adjacent neighborhoods. Since the initial Windom plan in 1991, Cub Foods, Bachman's, Peter's Billiards, Prima Restaurant, Hollywood Video, Subway, Diamond Lake Hardware Kowalski's Market, Uncommon Gardens, and Starbucks have all been newly developed or expanded. Bobby & Steve's Auto World, a convenience store/gas station/ car wash is being developed at 58th & Nicollet. Diamond Lake & Lyndale, 58th & Nicollet, and 54th & Nicollet business centers have all gone through redevelopment and exterior improvements.

The Museum of Russian Art, which has been named the crowned jewel of the neighborhood, went through major restoration and expansion in 2004. The Walker Nursing Home at 61st & Lyndale was reconstructed and now contains 48 units of affordable housing for seniors, and Mount Olivet Senior Services expanded. Windom neighborhood now has park programming through the Windom Community Center built with Windom Phase I funds.

It is foreseeable that 90% of the projects and programs highlighted in this Phase I Review document will likely continue in some fashion in Windom's Phase II Plan. The capital improvement projects will not move forward to Phase II. These projects were the Windom Community School and Center planning efforts and expansion and the Harriet Avenue Public Works Facility. The remaining programs in this document, such as organizing block clubs, crime prevention efforts, the Windom Newsletter, Fall Festival, tree plantings/ inoculation (focused on Dutch Elm Disease), business and home improvement programs are likely to remain in Phase II due to successes throughout the Phase I Plan. The Windom Phase II surveys are currently in the mailing process, thus more insight into which programs will be created and move forward to Phase II will be determined after survey results have been compiled and community meetings have been held.