University of Minnesota Urban Agenda Task Force Report

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Submitted to President Robert H. Bruininks and Senior Vice President Robert Jones by John R. Finnegan and Geoffrey Maruyama, co-chairs on behalf of the Urban Agenda Task Force

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Executive Summary

Cutting-edge research, exceptional educational programs, and strong and deep connections with stakeholders through communication, outreach/engagement, and dissemination of results are characteristics of great universities. Although most major research universities have the first two characteristics in some quantities, community connections that create enduring images may be an underappreciated aspect of greatness. The highest rated universities possess reputations that brand their products, their people, and their institution. People think of Harvard and Berkeley in particular ways, defined in large part by how the institutions have shaped and promoted their images.

Although the University of Minnesota is a great institution built upon land grant traditions of research, teaching, and engagement that should connect it to its public, it has not created images and mechanisms to connect it positively to all Minnesotans, and particularly those in its urban backyards. Despite noteworthy medical devices and innovative approaches, development of cold-hearty plant varieties, retractable seat belts, an active Extension, and numerous other accomplishments, many Minnesotans are not involved in or aware of the ongoing public engagements and accomplishments of the University. And the University has not effectively enough seized upon its urban location and surroundings as a unique asset worth leveraging in our urban world. But that can change.

We believe that long-term, purposeful engagement manifested through expanded research and outreach/engagement centers in urban/metropolitan areas as well as rural Minnesota should be an important element of the University’s core identity. Such centers would make prominent our engagements while visibly addressing key issues of society and promoting interdisciplinary engaged scholarship. They would increase the ways we partner with and affect our communities and provide them with greater benefits, improve the quality of life for all Minnesotans, and enhance the role of the University as an institution that connects with its communities in caring, constructive ways. Being exemplary in using research and education to fulfill our civic and land grant missions, particularly in the urban area where we are located, is an imperative for Minnesota’s future and a route both to public support and to peer recognition as a top university.

In the report that follows, we articulate an urban agenda for the University of Minnesota that we believe connects it with its populist and land grant roots, fulfilling our commitment to address the needs of Minnesotans while creating a place that attracts engaged scholars and produces graduates ready to roll up their sleeves and address the challenges of our urban, global world. We hope that as well as allowing evolution of ideas and approaches, it will be transformative, including revolutionary change. (See, for example, Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolution.) To illustrate evolution, hiring faculty all across the University who are interested in and committed to engaged urban scholarship would gradually bolster our engaged scholarship in complement with basic research. Revolution, which includes paradigm shifts, envisions a University that creates an identity as engaged through centrally driven, purposeful, and sustainable partnerships that address key community issues. Reallocated and new funding will support multi-disciplinary engaged work in urban and other areas, and infuse engagement throughout the University.
Draft: Urban\textsuperscript{1} Agenda Task Force Report

"The research needed for social practice ...is... comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action. Research that produces nothing but books will not suffice (Lewin, 1948, pp. 202-203)."

Surely, scholarship means engaging in original research. But the work of the scholar also means stepping back from one's investigation, looking for connections, building bridges between theory and practice, and communicating one's knowledge effectively to students. Specifically, we conclude that the work of the professoriate might be thought of as having four separate, yet overlapping, functions. These are: the scholarship of \textit{discovery}; the scholarship of \textit{integration}; the scholarship of \textit{application [engagement]}; and the scholarship of \textit{teaching} (Boyer, 1990, p. 16)

I. Background

Our opportunity. The University of Minnesota’s Twin Cities campus is rare among public research universities with a land grant mission: it sits squarely in the middle of a large, complex, and vibrant metropolitan area at a time when the U.S. and the world are entering an urban age. Our location is in the heart of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, between the downtowns of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, yet suburban and even rural populations are not far away. Ethnic, racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and international diversity of the metropolitan area provides us with ready access to representative populations for addressing topics ranging from educational access and success to healthy lives and health care needs to economic and community development. In effect, our location provides great opportunities, for we are positioned to address urban issues, and successes we achieve in effectively addressing them can provide models for other urban areas in and beyond the United States.

The Twin Cities area is largely vibrant and productive, and the University has played a major role in creating the economic, cultural, and social composition and structure of the Twin Cities. The Twin Cities is home to a number of major international corporations working in areas including food and grains, health care devices and products, adhesives, and transportation, and is a major world financial center whose history and successes have been tied to the University of Minnesota and their location in Minnesota. The central cities of Minneapolis-Saint Paul are major centers of employment and house significant numbers of residents, including many with middle and upper incomes. The Twin Cities metropolitan area contains the majority of the state’s population, and continues to grow in both size and diversity. It is Minnesota’s center of economic power, social, cultural and artistic energy, and innovation. It influences the quality of life for all Minnesotans, and creates a rich environment that helps prepare Minnesotans to compete in the global world of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

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\textsuperscript{1} We concluded that despite differentiation between the terms “urban” and “metropolitan” in some contexts, current demographic definitions view them as interchangeable. We will use ‘urban’, consistent with our charge. Further, a recent Brookings Institution report found that more poor people live in the suburbs than in urban areas, and that half of Latinos and Asian Americans, and about 40\% of African Americans live in suburbs.
Even though metropolitan Minneapolis-Saint Paul and the University’s Twin Cities Campus are among Minnesota’s greatest assets, they are also the location of many of its greatest challenges. Like most major urban areas, Metropolitan Minneapolis-Saint Paul experiences stresses arising from issues including poverty, crime, and health disparities, and struggles with inequalities in opportunity and lack of capacity-building activities that engage, shape and empower individuals, groups and communities-within-communities. Addressing problems is made complex by the 456 units of local government existing in the 11-county Twin Cities metropolitan area, including counties, cities, townships, school districts, and special purpose districts. On a per capita basis the Twin Cities ranks in the top five or six nationally for its large number of local governments, yet it also has a unique metropolitan-wide council that oversees metropolitan efforts. Local challenges have been identified by many individuals and groups, including the Itasca project, a group of 40+ organizational leaders brought together to provide leadership for long-term regional development, and the report *Mind the Gap*. The Itasca Project has proposed strengthening University-business partnerships; addressing issues like transportation at a metropolitan level; strengthening educational development of children, starting with preschool programs; addressing socioeconomic disparities; and supporting creation of small businesses. *Mind the Gap*, produced by the Brookings Institution, describes disparities that underlie our relatively strong regional economy and that are potentially threatening to long term success. Disparities are tied to race, class, and locations (place), and include concentrated poverty and diversity in particular locations. Prominent domains where disparities were noted include education, healthcare, and public safety. Regardless of specific recommendations, a message from the work of these groups and others is that what we are currently doing socially, educationally, and economically is not working as well as it needs to work, so it is time to go beyond “business as usual” if we are to address current challenges. From another perspective, the issues just described are those faced by most urban areas in the U.S. and many urban areas around the world; if we can address the issues effectively, we can provide models that will be widely applicable and that will position us as a premier university for and in an urban age.

Further exacerbating current circumstances, we are facing dramatic demographic changes that will substantially increase numbers of young people from groups that historically have been less successful educationally, coupled with declining numbers of young people from groups that traditionally have provided most of our population. Ethnic, racial, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity is reaching all across the state, including into areas where diversity has not been present and where communities have not prepared themselves to deal with diversity. In some cases, their response seems to be to “shoehorn” new groups into existing structures and cultures, with limited success. In effect, challenges formerly concentrated in the central cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul have followed the spread of urban growth throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area and into smaller metropolitan areas across Minnesota. As a result, solutions to urban problems will have Minnesota impacts far beyond the largest and most urban areas.

Regardless of their conditions, even the most challenged urban areas offer opportunities and possess competitive advantages—including strategic location, local market demand, and human resources that make them important locations for engagement activities and investment (see, e.g., Porter, 1999). Yet tapping those advantages can be difficult, requiring
coordination of public and private assets including those tied to education, human services, public safety, transportation, land use, and economic and community development. Few organizations have a combination of breadth and depth of expertise, credibility, and public trust that would allow them to organize and lead efforts that can offer a promise of success. The University of Minnesota not only has such credibility among Minnesotans and nationally, it also is among a very small number of land grant research universities physically located where it needs to engage. We have at or near our doorstep challenged urban neighborhoods where there are opportunities to build sustainable partnerships that will help revitalize those communities. A number of nearby neighborhoods face challenges of large numbers of low income residents with high mobility, high unemployment and crime rates, low achieving schools, and large amounts of substandard and deteriorating housing.

In summary, despite the considerable assets of the University and the Twin Cities, there are challenges looking forward in creating successes in populations that historically have been less successful, in developing a more diverse work force, in sustaining productivity of that work force, and in addressing competitive challenges of our global world. We need to address those challenges while developing future generations of educated Minnesotans who will sustain our core values of opportunity, fairness, and justice, and who will carry our democratic society into the 22nd century. It is time to take full advantage of our unique urban location while shaping our future. And it is time for us to develop strong and enduring partnerships with corporations, governments, and philanthropic organizations so we can work together and plan for our collective future, identifying and addressing root causes of the challenges that face us. We need to assure that Minnesota’s future is as productive as our past has been. We are investing financial and human capital, but we are not likely to succeed if we have to do it alone. A fully developed collaborative urban agenda will sustain prominence and impact of the University, improve the quality of life for all Minnesotans, create new partnerships, and anticipate and plan for needs and concerns of the urban and global future. It will transform the University and provide a model of an engaged university of the 21st century.

Our history and tradition. The University of Minnesota, founded in the Twin Cities in 1851, has been from its beginning linked to the state’s and cities’ futures as the key public institution of higher learning and research. Its impact expanded following the “land grant” mission endowed on the University by the federal Morrill Act of 1862. Historically, this land grant mission formalized a unique role for the University as a partner with the state in generating, applying, and teaching new knowledge and discoveries. The act promoted integration of knowledge generation, teaching, and application. While once relegated primarily to the “agricultural” and “mechanical” arts and sciences, the role is now understood as more broadly applicable to the generation of new knowledge and discoveries in the arts, sciences and humanities that profoundly shape and influence Minnesota’s future on every level. The stakes in this role are human progress, achievement and the quality of life for all living in Minnesota and particularly in the Twin Cities.
When land grant universities were envisioned in 1862\textsuperscript{2}, most of the population of states like Minnesota was rural, and the economy was heavily agricultural. Land grant-related funding supported the University as a driver of engaged scholarship, but focused primarily on rural areas and involved limited disciplines within the University. The Minnesota Extension Service (now University of Minnesota Extension) and the Agricultural Experiment Stations (now University of Minnesota Research and Outreach Centers) coupled community education with research and outreach that addressed major needs of Minnesotans ranging from farms and crops to those of families and youth. Now, in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, 60-70\% of the population of Minnesota lives in metropolitan areas, and “urban” concerns that historically were viewed as limited to Minneapolis and Saint Paul have become issues that reach all across Minnesota. We are part of national trends of suburbanization, de-population of rural areas, and people leaving “rust-belt” and Eastern areas for the West and South.

Our land grant challenge. In the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century, a primary challenge for the community and the University is how to form, shape and engage a new “urban” land grant mission to leverage joint strengths and mitigate mutual weaknesses in pushing forward human progress, achievement and an equitable quality of life. It is a challenge that invites and requires institutional transformation from a 20\textsuperscript{th} century research university to a 21\textsuperscript{st} century engaged multi-disciplinary research university. Part of what is required is redefining what we are as an engaged university, for without successful broad-based engagement that crosses disciplinary boundaries, we cannot drive an effective urban agenda. Much of our focus in this report is on proposing changes in how we engage, so we can effectively support urban and other partnership efforts addressing issues including learning, health, and economic opportunity. Such efforts not only benefit our research and teaching, but help us meet our responsibilities to serve the needs of the people of Minnesota. As our urban agenda is developed, we will through our collaborations become more specific in defining what Minnesotans should and should not expect from us. Regardless of what we do, no one should expect the University to be a service provider for all unmet needs; that is not consistent with our core missions of research and teaching. However, there have been instances when both the community and the University have wanted to collaborate on particular issues, but timing mismatches, divergent views of needs and solutions, poorly specified roles, and/or funding limitations have precluded or limited actual partnerships. As we move forward, we need to turn such instances into effective collaborations. In general, we need to commit ourselves to work with others to address urban challenges and opportunities in ways consistent with our land grant mission.

Although we believe that this is the first time a University of Minnesota president has charged a working group to develop an urban agenda for the University, in many ways our

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\textsuperscript{2} The history and intent of the legislation creating land grant institutions demonstrates the need to serve all residents. The Morrill Act of 1862 emphasized providing liberal education in a variety of fields, including but not limited to agriculture and engineering, to the mass population. The ‘land grants’ were donations of land that facilitated creating the colleges and universities. The Hatch Act of 1887 specifically authorized the creation of agricultural experiment stations for each land grant institution. Finally, the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 authorized extension services to extend the reach of land grants. States provided matching funding and partnered with land grant colleges in the development of the extension services. Together, these acts integrated education, research and outreach into the land grant mission. Land grant institutions are truly about the broad vision of investing in human capital, promoting economic growth and assuring a positive quality of life for all residents.
(report builds upon a 1993 report from the Outreach Council charged by President Hasselmo. In the words of President Hasselmo,

“A strategic plan for outreach will clarify and direct our internal operations and increase awareness external to the University. …The council’s work will provide a foundation for visionary thinking and planning for our future in outreach. It will guide strategic decisions about investment and reorganization, identify potential connections between units and approaches, and identify what can be done centrally and within academic units to organize and support outreach efforts.”

That report mentioned many of the issues we discuss, and included as key elements: addressing complex societal issues, being accessible to a diversity of people, developing a focused approach, being unbounded geographically, maintaining high quality in all efforts, creating inter-disciplinary collaboration, and receiving adequate funding through public and private sources. It noted the importance of linking outreach goals with other major University goals, of collaboration, of globalization, and of using the outreach mission in concert with research and teaching. Its focus was not limited to urban issues, but it was similar to this report in its vision. Overall, it reflects forward thinking about issues of engagement, and touched on most of the issues central to our report. Sadly, it also had little sustained impact; we now find ourselves revisiting many of the same issues.

Is there reason to believe that this report will be more successful in creating sustained impact? We believe so, for there has been evolution in the ways universities think about their work in communities. Change is captured by comparing language used in the 1993 report with language used today. The word “outreach” conveys a view of university-community relationships prevalent in the 1990s, namely, outreach to and for Minnesotans. Our task force today focuses on engagement, on developing partnership with communities and individuals. For us, the shift is one from viewing the University as holder of knowledge that it may choose to share with communities, to viewing the University as holding critical and useful knowledge about theory, research, and practice that complements knowledge existing in communities about theory, research, practices, and local conditions. The difference between the reports reflects a difference between helping communities as part of our land grant mission and civic responsibilities, as opposed to recognizing that our interdependence with our communities represents both needs and opportunities for us and for our communities, is almost certainly mandatory, and is a route for leveraging comparative advantages to reach our aspirations to be one of the top public research universities in the world. What the University needs to do today is to build respectful, enduring partnerships with communities that transform the way the University does its engaged work and that reshape the institution as a leading university addressing the public good through research, teaching, and engagement. Concretely, this means moving beyond faculty-initiated engagement that by its nature tends to be driven by faculty interests rather than community ones, and that is more episodic and disconnected. In contrast, we propose engagement that is university-initiated, developing partnerships that are not only more systematic, but that are coordinated, multi-disciplinary, sustainable and enduring, supported by core funding, and that address key issues of communities and society. It is important not to underestimate this “sea shift,” for as long as individual faculty projects characterize our urban engagement, those will never develop an institutional identity, but identities tied to the engaged faculty members—who in some instances are viewed independently of the University. And the
connections will be highly variable in their effectiveness and episodic—persisting only as long as the faculty members continue to engage in the activities.

Our optimism in anticipating change is supported by developments that have occurred within the University since our task force began its work in October 2006. Senior Vice President Jones led a group presenting to the Board of Regents on work in North Minneapolis. The Board endorsed the work, and later approved purchasing a building in North Minneapolis that will become our first Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC). Collaborative work has begun in areas including education, health, and economic development, and that work will expand in scope as other initiatives become more fully developed. Initiatives in other Twin Cities areas, including our local University communities (see Appendix B) and in Saint Paul (Appendix C), illustrate the breadth of our ongoing and expanding urban agenda.

Recapitulation. As we turn to our recommendations, we summarize points from the preceding discussion that guide our thinking about our urban agenda. Those are:

- We live in an urban age.
- Challenges we face are global in nature.
- Changing demographics within Minnesota will amplify the challenges that we face.
- Engagement with communities is a key element of our history and future, but engagement with urban communities has not been on par with engagement with rural communities.
- Our urban agenda has to be an institutional commitment rather than commitment of individuals within the University.
- Successfully addressing urban issues through engagement is a route to greatness as a university.
- Commitment is manifested through investment of resources, human and financial.
- New, broader partnerships with external stakeholders are needed.
- The urban agenda is part of a transformative process that is changing the University for the 21st century.
- Core American values tied to fairness, opportunity, and an educated electorate are manifested in our urban agenda. Those values are aligned with economic and political self-interest, for the future of Minnesota relies on an educated and productive workforce.

II. Charge

President Robert Bruininks and Senior Vice President Robert Jones charged an Urban Agenda Task Force in October 2006 with defining an urban agenda for the University of Minnesota. They asked the task force to “create an overarching framework to ensure the proper coordination and alignment of targeted urban research initiatives and activities.” A primary goal of the task force “is to identify an overarching mission and vision as well as four to six primary focus areas where opportunities exist.” A draft report was submitted in May, 2007, followed by limited review and further discussions, with this revision submitted for broader comment in December, 2007.
III. Recommendations and Rationale

"[W]e will have to watch out that theory never breaks loose from its proper place as a servant, as a tool for human beings (Lewin, 1943, p. 118)."

Somewhat ironically, our work can be viewed as recovering a century-old tradition when much of the focus of universities was more explicitly outward toward the problems and issues of society. For a variety of reasons, during the 20th century universities became increasingly disengaged from activities that translated “knowledge generation” into impact on community social issues and problems. As we move into the 21st century, a number of factors have caused the pendulum to swing back toward focusing on research that addresses issues and concerns in partnership with communities. Such research can be basic research conducted in field settings, applied research translating theory to practice, or problem-driven research applying academic tools and approaches to better understand complex social issues. This changing focus is good for achieving the aspiration of the University of Minnesota to be a top public research university, for our land grant mission and history positions us to be a leader in engagement if we commit to that purpose. We believe that through engagement, we can both re-task our land grant mission to meet 21st century needs while creating excellence that builds upon our location in a large metropolitan area.

We frame our recommendations by first proposing a mission and vision for the University of Minnesota’s urban agenda:

Mission: To fulfill the University’s land grant and civic missions through addressing issues of urban communities in collaboration with those communities, in order to improve the quality of life for all Minnesotans.

Vision: The University’s Urban Agenda will be:
(1) Intentional and strategic across the institution,
(2) Grounded in the creation of multi-disciplinary teams and sustained, respectful partnerships,
(3) Drawing upon the basic teaching and research resources of the University, blending Boyer’s scholarships of discovery, integration, application/engagement, and teaching,
(4) Anchored where possible by a physical presence in communities where the issues to be resolved are most prevalent,
(5) Focused on work leading to measurable outcomes with significant impact,
(6) Broad in scope, addressing needs of the increasingly diverse populations of Minnesotans, and
(7) Inclusive, drawing expertise from all across our comprehensive university as well as from the communities with whom we work.

As task force members began to discuss the scope of our activities, a number of inter-related issues emerged. They included issues of definition—to clarify the scope of activities falling under an urban umbrella; of internal coordination and coherence of efforts; of institutional support for engaged work; of creating an overarching framework for engaged work; of
relationships with external partners and communities; and of current and potential University investment in engaged work and projects. We have tried to weave these issues together throughout the recommendations and comments that follow them.

As an urban agenda is developed, issues to consider include:

- Engaged research typically is linked to, if not driven by, problems and issues which need to be addressed by drawing from multiple perspectives and disciplines. As examples, we could consider issues of urban economies, social relations within diverse communities, labor force availability, crime and violence, etc. Each crosses multiple disciplines.

- We need to be “straightforward and upfront” about what is in the partnership for different partners. Particular partners to consider include community, scholars, department leaders, and college and central administrators. Networks can enhance interest in engaged work. For faculty, even modest amounts of money can drive engagement, for example, several years ago grants known as “just in time” research projects created substantial interest.

- At a macro level, urban work can look broadly at entire metropolitan regions, creating topographies that include housing, schooling, infrastructure, transportation systems, health care, etc., and at micro levels focus in on “local issues” in partnership with communities. It can take a perspective that most private and governmental groups cannot take, for few have the necessary array of skills and broad perspective that characterizes a large, comprehensive university. The macro focus can be led by the University Metropolitan Consortium and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, while micro level issues can be led by new urban research and outreach/engagement centers (UROCs), along with existing ROCs and Extension.

- At their core, engaged activities are about partnerships and relationships that build trust and commitment, and about transparency of goals and processes. Relationships and communication need to operate effectively within the University as well as being directed to others outside the University so understanding of goals and purposes is widespread. Work on engagement needs to emphasize that the major assets of universities are the faculty, staff, and students, and that the human capital that universities can apply to issues is our greatest strength.

- If our urban agenda looks like public relations, it will not work. We need to develop relationships to engage community leaders in trust and participation. There are a number of models we could consider, including conceptually driven ones such as Kurt Lewin’s action research—which talks about collaboration among experts in theory and experts in practice, and a spin-off of action research called participatory action research—which through partnerships with researchers creates local capacity to investigate questions of importance to communities. And there also are regional models with history that can help us think about how effectively to relate to communities (“lessons learned”), including the Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service research and outreach model, and the Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships model.
• We need much better communication about what is going on within the University, so we all know more about things that are happening. We need to inform colleagues about how and why they should want to be involved. And we need to provide opportunities for researchers new to urban work, to community engagement and/or to culturally diverse community work to learn about effective and respectful ways of interacting in community.

• We need to match University and community priorities. We need to be clear about our principles of engagement. We are not the place to find solutions for all problems, not a service provider, nor a source of funds for programs. Being big does not mean that we have capacity or funds to support all ideas. We are a place that should be able to translate research findings to practice, and that can help people think about and attempt to solve problems. To be able to help, we need to continue to draw from and explain the importance of theory, research, and scientific methods, for those are our tools. When we find solutions, it may not be our role to be sure that everyone gets to experience those solutions even if we do have some role in diffusion of approaches and dissemination of information about effective practices. Said differently, in some instances it may be our role to help solve problems, but in others our role may be to help frame problems so they are amenable to local solutions driven by practitioners.

Because the scope of the work is so broad and the issues fluid, we decided against making very specific recommendations about areas of focus—we believe that those should “well up” from dialogues within and outside the University as we develop our partnerships and redefine the way we work. Instead, we lay out a framework and guidelines for developing a more comprehensive and integrated program of engagement. Recommendations focus largely on internal University changes, for those are the changes that we need to make and those that we can control. At the same time, most of them are dependent on us having strong relationships with external partners, and on complementary actions being taken by those partners.

"This and similar experiences have convinced me that we should consider action, research, and training as a triangle that should be kept together for the sake of any of its corners. It is seldom possible to improve the action pattern without training personnel.... The training of large numbers of ... scientists who can handle scientific problems but are also equipped for the delicate task of building productive, hard-hitting teams with practitioners is a prerequisite for progress...(Lewin, 1948, p. 211)."

Recommendation 1. The University should strive to position itself as the Research I university that best exemplifies how a land grant institution in the diverse, global, and urban world of the 21st century manifests commitment to engaged research and education. Engagement can be an avenue to excellence. It is inherently interdisciplinary, addresses important issues, helps us as well as our community partners to develop and apply critical thinking and analysis skills, prepares our professional students for the range of settings in which they will need to work, and creates social awareness and public service experiences for our undergraduates. It creates two-way linkages moving from theory to its application and back to theory. It capitalizes on our urban location and diverse metropolitan population. It fits nicely with accountability
pressures on post-secondary education, with national movements to create urban versions of land-grant acts, and with calls for universities to be more engaged in addressing and helping solve important social issues and problems. It shares elements with yet extends programs like the James Martin 21st Century School at the University of Oxford, which intends to give their scholars “the resources and space to think imaginatively about the problems and the opportunities that the future will bring. The work must meet the best Oxford scholarly standards, must be original and additional to work done elsewhere, and is expected to have a global impact.”

*Our tripartite mission of research, teaching, and outreach should be viewed as an interlocking triangle that is applied to our engaged work in general and our urban work in particular.* We need to emphasize terms that explicitly make the connections, like **Bench to Bedside to Community** and **Discovery to Impact**. Work needs to build upon our traditions, particularly the successful models of engagement that have been developed. We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge all the good work that already is being and has been done, and build on it. Some of the work has been collectively developed, but other work has been initiated and developed by individuals. And we need to be sure that our engaged research is linked to our teaching. Courses and degree programs should prepare students for urban work. Unless colleges and departments want to and do hire faculty with interests in urban work, such work will remain on the intellectual margins.

If we are to attain excellence as an engaged university, we need to create institutional investment rather than relying upon individual investigator investment. Such investment can come from a number of sources, including fund raising and infusion of new dollars. It can come also from leveraging existing dollars, either by reallocation or by redirecting and from more effectively coordinating existing efforts. For example, there are many relatively small “pots” of money supporting individual faculty initiatives. One possibility would be to combine some of those and/or focus them on supporting larger scale urban-related projects, particularly those with an interdisciplinary perspective. Regardless of the strategies chosen, a key point is that sustained institutional investment is needed.

In addition to financial commitment, it is important to recognize that engaged work tends to be difficult and time consuming, and is less controllable than laboratory work. It requires finding an appropriate field setting, developing relationships with people in the applied setting, putting in place agreements to conduct studies and collect data, and determining study timing and research design collaboratively or at least in consultation with practitioners. Although these elements of the research make the research challenging and time consuming, such work has strengths beyond its practical benefits. For example, for social interventions, one does not have to worry about whether or not what is found will be transferable to the “real world,” for that already is known—the work has been done there.

Much needs to change internally if we really want to be an institution that promotes engaged research (e.g., reward systems, hiring practices, institutional support for engaged research, better matching of faculty with community people sharing their interests). For example, many faculty members who do engaged work currently do so despite little encouragement from colleagues, and most were not hired specifically to do engaged research. They do the
work based upon their own professional interests. The reward system should examine the feasibility of alternative and more flexible models of hiring and evaluation of performance, (including promotion and tenure --e.g., setting timelines and expectations at the point of hire or through annual reviews, possibly including in some instances negotiating extensions of the probationary tenure period for faculty doing engaged work). Examples of changes include the College of Education and Human Development’s M3 Initiative model being developed to increase engagement, work being done by the office of the Vice President for Research to simplify approval policies that reduce burdens facing those doing applied research, and ongoing changes in promotion and tenure policies making them more sensitive to and supportive of engaged research.

"[P]roblems grow out of the community life. [The researcher] must learn to sense, not merely the objective problems, but also how the community evaluates its problems; and he must play a role in helping to articulate its problems....[Further, t]he problem must first be so defined that it becomes amenable to investigation in an existing social setting (Chein, Cook, and Harding, 1948, p. 44)."

We believe that the University can put mechanisms in place to support urban and other engaged work in a range of ways. For example, we can offer professional development opportunities to help faculty frame their urban and other engaged work so it addresses issues of research as well as practice, increasing its interest to professional peers. We can develop a stronger “customer” orientation to our engaged work so it addresses issues of greatest concern to practitioners. We can develop areas of focus to coordinate work, and blend broad scale with finely focused efforts. Specifically:

**Recommendation 2: University stakeholders need to be identified, informed, and convened.** A modern University urban agenda will depend on: 1) developing and maintaining information for awareness and connections among all of the faculty, staff, students, centers, schools, colleges, offices, and other units within the University that are doing urban work; 2) identifying those University organizations that lie close to the “core” of building and sustaining a modern urban agenda focused on education, economic development and health; and 3) identifying and making operational the leadership and governance group primarily responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating an urban strategy. In the second and third areas, especially, the University has become a large, complex and multi-layered organization that requires coordination, collaboration and communication across colleges, schools and centers to move the urban agenda forward.

The figure below illustrates the kinds of involvement units could have with a functioning urban agenda. It is not intended to be comprehensive, for all parts of the University are involved in engaged work. One college (CEHD) and one department (Applied Economics) are included as illustrative of involvements of most colleges and of many departments in specific urban agenda work. The other units in the diagram are samples of those that conduct urban agenda work. The overlap of circles with the urban agenda is intended to illustrate the degree to which the units focus on urban work.
Recommendation 3: In order to scale up our urban work, the University needs to create a platform that supports and promotes engaged research and outreach. We have chosen the word “platform” not because we are suggesting that a new structure needs to be put in place, but because much more can be done with existing units, particularly if they can be supported so that their work can be done in more collaborative and synergistic ways. Ongoing efforts need to be coordinated and focused so that institutional commitment facilitating engaged urban work is created, for there are particular areas where support is needed if we aspire to be effective and exemplary. The platform ideally will link and engage faculty and staff, build institutional relationships with communities that will endure across time and beyond individual faculty involvement, provide effective communication about our urban efforts, provide support for faculty working in urban settings, and provide clarity to community
members who want to work with us about what they should expect from us, and what kinds of things we will and won’t be doing. *The platform needs to operate at both micro- and macro-levels, support inter- and multi-disciplinary work, provide incentives to seed and support research efforts, develop and sustain long-term relationships and partnerships, and provide a vehicle for developing trust and commitment.* It would help faculty and staff to work in and with communities. It would develop stable community relationships, and offer training opportunities that prepare faculty to work effectively in community settings. It could help with procedural issues, like Institutional Review Board (“IRB”) approval, contractual relationships, and indirect cost recovery. For example, a partnership with the IRB building upon changes currently being developed by the IRB on how to review and approve community-based research can facilitate development of an engaged agenda. Of particular importance are collaborative situations where work develops in partnership with community members, and is not totally under the control of the researcher. Even the best planned engaged research study may need to change as community circumstances change. One consequence of changing circumstances is that researchers are not able at inception of a project to describe how it will unfold. Another issue is that effective partnerships are likely to have multiple partners. If all are involved in a grant proposal and money goes to each partner, current procedures require a number of subcontracts to the partners and letters of commitment from each. The process is cumbersome, particularly when the amounts are small or the likelihood of funding of a proposal is relatively low.

At a practical level, one immediate strategy could be to bring together many of the interdisciplinary programs that already are doing engaged work and whose missions include responsibility for advancing urban interests. The new University Metropolitan Consortium, for example, already convenes many of these units and programs and could become a body for developing specific strategies for reviewing this report and developing strategies for pursuing the University’s new Urban Agenda.

**Recommendation 4: Our partnerships need to be sensitive to and to work across cultural, social, and political differences. Urban work needs to address challenges and disparities.** Disparities exist across the state in many aspects of our quality of life, yet they are often greater in urban settings, and harsher because of factors like population density and clustering of disparities in particular places and groups. One way to facilitate connections is for the University faculty and staff who participate in engaged work to be racially, ethnically and in other identities diverse—to look like the communities with which they are working. Another important step is to provide opportunities for researchers new to community engagement and/or culturally diverse community work to learn about ways of interacting and respectful inclusion.

**Recommendation 5: We should work to develop improved methodologies for studying urban issues and locations.** At present, although much is being examined with respect to urban and metropolitan areas, there is little work looking at those areas from a macro level, or for evaluating community successes at such a broad level. Key areas (education, transportation, families, housing, etc.) are examined piecemeal, and judged similarly. It is time to have diagnostic ratings of quality of life in urban areas that
could drive actions and organize community efforts. As we work to develop methodologies, the work will help education and prepare our students for their future work with communities. Within this work, a role for the University to consider would be to take the lead in examining and evaluating current ratings and rankings for publicly engaged universities and, if appropriate, develop a new system for evaluating engagement. Ultimately, we want ratings that align with our aspirations as an engaged university and that are effective markers of our success in becoming better at engagement.

**Procedural recommendations**

**Recommendation A:** We need to set benchmarks for our urban involvement, and work from baselines so we can judge successes of our involvement and engagement. For all our engaged work, we need to keep strong ties between research and outreach, for example by building evaluation models for outreach activities and focusing on linkages. Dissemination of the findings of our engaged research out to the participating communities should be planned as part of our work. And benchmarks should be able to document benefits of our engaged work that extend beyond the community where the engaged work is done. To create a tradition of accountability as part of our urban agenda, support could be provided for program evaluations and programming improvements to keep costs low and to keep programming tied to research opportunities.

**Recommendation B:** It is important for the University to have a comprehensive, up to date inventory of engaged research. An inventory will help not only by providing opportunities for collaboration within the University and for linking practitioners to researchers and vice versa, it also should identify gaps in our work as well as places where funding is not available—which might redirect both work and support for engaged scholarship. Work on such an inventory has begun. We expect the work to be maintained by University Relations, but, regardless of where it is maintained, it is important to clearly designate responsibility for keeping up to date inventories. This may be a place where different offices are replicating one another’s efforts; if so, integrating and coordinating efforts while making the inventory available for a range of uses would be important for monitoring and documenting our efforts.

**Recommendation C:** We should inventory our seed grant programs as a prerequisite for assessing ways to increase their coordination and impact. These efforts will not necessarily capture existing money, but would attempt to use the existing money more effectively by integrating how the seed grant programs do their funding. Once University resources are aligned with our urban agenda efforts, we should be able to more effectively seek external partners to help support our efforts.

**Recommendation D:** Finally, a caution. We should set attainable initial goals and move thoughtfully toward greater engagement and impact following a pre-defined timeline, for we do not want to over-promise and then frustrate communities by our lack of meeting their expectations.
IV. Initial Areas of Focus

There is a growing national dialogue about areas of focus. NASULGC and its Commission on the Urban Agenda, along with the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities, held an inaugural meeting in July 2006, yielding preliminary recommendations and strategic initiatives defining a national urban agenda for all urban universities to follow. Three strategic priorities were identified. We believe that they can be recast as follows to better fit the University of Minnesota:

- **Developing Human Talent (from Human Capital):** including PreK-20 education and access, STEM workforces, constructive and productive engagement of youth, including effective use of out-of-school time, changing workforce needs and demographics, workforce professional development, and School/University redesign and renewal
- **Vibrant Communities (from Strengthening Communities):** including urban economies in a global marketplace; neighborhood revitalization; urban space use, design and engineering; lived environment issues (safety, housing, transportation, diversity); social relationships; aids to small businesses and non-profits; and relevant community engagement.
- **Urban Wellness (from Urban Health):** including uncompensated care; urban health disparities; environmental health threats, stressors, wellness, and other issues; innovative models of health care provision; and community partnerships and participation in health.

From our perspective, the three categories need to be viewed as broad and inclusive, for it is not our intent to exclude topics of importance to either researchers or communities. The particular categories seemed in our discussions to subsume most issues of urban, suburban, and exurban areas, and readily align with needs recently articulated by one local community where we have been developing engagement. Community listening sessions in North Minneapolis recently found that respondents identified key issues consistent with priorities articulated above: (1) education (broadly defined), (2) economic and community development, and (3) health. Other issues mentioned, like community violence, actually cross-cut the three areas, yet clearly can be addressed within the framework, for they tie to constructive engagement of youth, wellness, and community vitality. In urban communities, the priorities are closely connected if not inextricably bound together. For example, children who are not healthy will have a difficult time learning in school, and if their parents are not employed or able to provide adequate housing and nutrition, the children’s health will suffer.

Although we want our overall urban agenda to be inclusive, work within that agenda needs to be characterized by prioritizing and developing specific areas of focus. A shortcoming of our current urban agenda is that our efforts are widely scattered and fail to establish priorities that would give our work identity and visibility. Without diminishing the value of all engaged work, creating priorities for focus is an important way to keep efforts manageable and resources adequate for creating visible impacts. For example, the issues identified by the North Minneapolis listening sessions are ones where the university has strengths that can be applied to urban community needs and interests. Therefore, we believe that education, support for economic development, and health/health disparities are productive areas of
initial focus for our urban agenda, and that within those areas we would hope to see a limited number of specific topics emerge for initial agenda efforts.

Returning to the issue of inclusion, we recognized that, for a university as comprehensive as ours, a full array of disciplines and areas are not readily subsumed under three umbrella categories. If it turns out that we have overlooked important issues or that over time additional categories emerge as important, those categories and issues should be added to our urban agenda. In addition, even if most of our urban work can be organized within the three categories above, the focus on those areas needs to be complemented by a focus that cross-cuts the areas by looking broadly at the prominent needs of the entire metropolitan area. Further, going back to recommendation #2 above, our urban agenda needs to include taking a macro level view of the array of urban issues, addressing governance, planning, funding including taxation, politics, relations of governmental agencies with the private and non-profit sectors, blending of diverse communities, and regulatory issues. That is, as well as taking a strong focus on specific critical issues and themes, the work needs to “roll up” the issues to create cross-cutting and over-arching policies and practices that affect and benefit Minnesotans. We also need to innovate, for example, introducing and applying new methods and tools (e.g., GIS technology) to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

We believe that we can quickly identify a limited number of content areas for initial focus3, including aspects asked of us, namely: desired outcomes of focus in each area; suggested leadership to advance the agenda; potential external partners; recommended course of action, including needed resources, to achieve outcomes; and recommended timeline. We have not done it in this initial report because, in the spirit of partnership and collaboration, we believe that the areas should be identified by those University and community people engaged in the work and because, before we proceed further, we would like to see a focus on refining the structure that is in place to support engaged work. In addition, we believe that proposing details would be more effectively done once more information is available, namely, (1) fuller results from surveys of engaged work so more complete groups of faculty and programs with expertise and experience can be convened for early efforts, and (2) detailed feedback from our engagement partners that identifies areas where they most would like help from us and capacity present in community-based assets. We would like to see issues, outcomes, partners, and timelines be determined collaboratively with community partners. Potential partners are many – neighborhoods, community organizations, governmental entities, non-profits and businesses.

Developing areas of initial focus provides a great opportunity to model effective engagement. We know, for example, that we have a “critical mass” of researchers doing work on (a) children’s health, including diet/obesity, exercise, and healthy foods; (b) community redevelopment and design, including land use; (c) entrepreneurship, including support for

3 A recent grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education (FIPSE) is supporting some initial work in North Minneapolis in the areas of human talent, vibrant communities, and wellness, specifically focusing on out-of-school time, youth entrepreneurship and internship opportunities, and healthy foods and nutrition. These areas were selected based on university and community partners with expertise and experience working in North Minneapolis. We have clearly articulated the range of desired outcomes described above for those particular projects.
small businesses and non-profits; and (d) preK-12 education, from early childhood through college access. Further, in each of these areas we have researchers plus other staff working with urban communities, providing support and technical assistance. And, as a beginning, over the past year and a half work has been done both internally and with the community in North Minneapolis beginning to develop partnerships. So in education, health, and economic development areas and others, we propose a process for moving forward. In each area, we need to identify: teams of University people and external partners that will develop long-term plans with immediate as well as long-term action steps and deliverables; appropriate and reasonable agendas in the areas of research, service/internships, and education; realistic as well as aspirational goals; likely sources of financial and other support; and methods for welcoming faculty, staff, students, and partners who would like to be involved. Even though the initial focus has been North Minneapolis, we are not proposing a specific geographic focus, for we believe that appropriate locations may vary—some projects may want multiple locations for design purpose. At the same time, we provide in appendices three examples of areas where we have current urban initiatives.

In concluding this section, we provide an illustration of how our partnerships could develop, drawn from preK-12 education, where prior efforts have identified a number of approaches likely to improve educational achievements and attainments and where the needs of educational practitioners have been articulated. In the area of education, low income urban areas are characterized by lower educational achievement and attainment—children from low income families have less than 1/8th the chance of graduating from a four-year college by age 24 than do their high income peers. One University goal could be to provide students from groups that have been under-represented in higher education with knowledge and skills they will need to earn a credential or a degree at a postsecondary institution after high school graduation. This focus addresses an urgent concern for both Minneapolis and Saint Paul Schools, building human capital in low-income communities and communities of color. It also is closely aligned with the University’s institutional interest in increasing the number of students from those groups who are prepared to succeed on its campuses at other institutions of higher education throughout the state. To advance this component of the University’s urban agenda, research and outreach activities could be supported across the preK-12 years in areas like the following, each of which is a priority for the two urban school districts:

- early childhood programs that prepare low-income students and others facing educational barriers to succeed in kindergarten and beyond;
- elementary grade programs to enhance reading and math skills so students can perform at grade level by the end of their third grade year;
- parent engagement programs to involve parents more actively in their children’s academic success;
- supplemental educational programs, particularly working outside the regular school day, during breaks in the school year, and during summers, that are educationally enriching and that bring learning to life and promote critical thinking, effective decision making, and collaboration skills;
- college awareness and access programs targeted toward students whose parents have not attended post-secondary education;
- college-level course programs (e.g., College in the Schools) that expose high school students to rigorous college courses before they finish high school;
expanded tutoring and service learning by U of M students and staff; and
leadership development and professional development programs to enhance the skills of educational administrators

Concluding Comments

"Action research is, "(1) a cyclical process of planning, action, and evaluation; (2) a continuous feedback of the research results to all parties involved, including clients; (3) cooperation between researchers, practitioners, and clients from the start and throughout the entire process; (4) application of the principles that govern social life and group decision making; (5) taking into account differences in value systems and power structures of all the parties involved in the research; and (6) using action research concurrently to solve a problem and to generate new knowledge (Bargal, Gold, & Lewin, 1992, p.8)."

We hope that readers share our enthusiasm for creating a university that models engagement and involvement. We believe that because of our location and our history, the University is well positioned to be the leader nationally and internationally in developing engaged multi-disciplinary research that addresses problems while advancing theory and informing teaching. In Scholarship Reconsidered, Ernest Boyer asked questions about how knowledge can responsibly be applied to consequential problems, and whether or not social problems can themselves provide an agenda for scholarly work. We believe that those questions are key, and that we can address those issues as well or better than any other university. An integral component of our engaged efforts must be to create visibility for University efforts. When Minnesotans are asked about what the University is doing about engagement, particularly in urban areas, we want there to be answers that are consistent across respondents and that reflect a pride in our accomplishments similar to pride about our work in areas of health and agriculture. Although we hope that accomplishments will stretch across the University, we note the dangers inherent in allowing our enthusiasm to lead to expectations far greater than what we can deliver. The next stage of urban agenda work, which should follow directly from our recommendations, requires creating priorities, and focusing on a limited number of areas for our initial efforts. We stand ready to quickly do that work after the ideas presented here are discussed and we know more about support for our ideas, for we believe that institutional support is needed for engagement efforts to succeed, and that success is critical to our credibility as an engaged university. We look forward to developing detailed plans for our initial set of engagement activities.

Appended to this report are summaries of three efforts that reflect a combination of early and ongoing engagement efforts, and that illustrate variability in the approaches and types of work that lead to development of partnerships. Alternatively, we could have pointed to work by offices like the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), which has for almost 40 years worked with communities to address urban issues. Consistent with the idea of place-based urban centers, however, we illustrate by describing locations where there is ongoing and developing university presence. First is a developing urban research and outreach model in Minneapolis’ Northside, the University Northside Partnership, driven by collaboration with the city of Minneapolis and Hennepin County and led centrally within the University.
Second is recent work on our own geographic community, legislatively driven by a mandated report on neighborhood impact of the University and its community on local neighborhoods, done in collaboration with the City of Minneapolis and the local merchants and neighborhood organizations. Third is our well-developed and sustained presence in the West Side of Saint Paul. That work was developed by a small group of individual faculty who have sustained their presence (e.g., the Jane Addams School of Democracy) in partnership with Neighborhood House; their work now extends beyond the West Side neighborhood to other parts of Saint Paul. These appendices are intended primarily to illustrate ongoing engagement efforts, not to limit in any way the scope of urban engagement of the University. We expect that lessons learned from work begun in one urban region typically will be useful for other areas across the state.

References


**List of Appendices**

_A. North Minneapolis—neighborhoods known as “Near North” and Camden._

_B. University Neighborhood—an area that includes the neighborhoods of Cedar-Riverside, Marcy-Holmes, South East Como, University neighborhood, and Prospect Park East River Road._

_C. West Side Saint Paul—a geographic area of the city of Saint Paul south of the Mississippi River._

**Appendix**
Appendix A: The University Northside Partnership

In 2005, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak asked President Bruininks about creating a city–University partnership to address some of the complex issues facing the Northside. President Bruininks designated Senior Vice President Robert Jones to represent the University as a resource partner in the Mayor’s newly created Northside Partnership, and to coordinate the many community service, research, and training programs offered by the University through offices including the University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Early Education and Development (CEED), the Academic Health Center, and the Business and Community Economic Development Office (BCED). Leaders from CEED and BCED recommended bringing faculty and groups working in the Northside together to leverage University resources and provide easier access to the University for members of the community.

The University Northside Partnership is making concerted efforts to gather and listen to community interests. A substantial number of public meetings have been held, along with several meetings with Northside partners, organizations that operate on Minneapolis’ Northside. In addition, a Community Involvement Task Force, consisting of University people with a history of involvement on the Northside and community leaders, has been meeting monthly. The appointment of a UNP Community Liaison created a fulltime presence on the Northside, and considerably increased the opportunity for community input. Most recently, and Executive Director has been hired to coordinate work tied to our developing UROC.

Areas of need identified by the community through a community listening project organized by NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center include economic development, education, and health. Many University health programs already have affiliations on the Northside, especially with NorthPoint, such as the Dental School, Nursing and Public Health. An area of significant concern to North Minneapolis residents is out-of-home placement of children (foster care). Concurrent with the discussions with Mayor Rybak, the University was in the process of recruiting Dr. Dante Cicchetti, whose groundbreaking interdisciplinary research in developmental psychopathology led him to develop new and highly successful treatment models for mental health issues involving children and families. Dr. Cicchetti developed a program at the University of Rochester (New York) that significantly reduced the number of children placed in foster care. Subsequent conversations with Gary Cunningham, former director of NorthPoint, led to the development of a strategic collaboration with Professor Cicchetti and the vision of creating the University Child and Family Center in North Minneapolis, in close proximity to NorthPoint.

In the area of economic development, the University’s Business and Economic Development office will continue to provide services to non-profits, and to small minority and female owned businesses, including selecting contractors for the construction of the Child and Family Center and remodeling work on “shopping center” space recently purchased by the University. The Law School Multi-Profession Business Clinic has recently agreed to partner with the U of M Business and Community Economic Development office to provide start-up legal services for new Northside businesses.
In order to link faculty and staff engaged with and/or interested in being involved with the Northside community for research and outreach activities, during the 2006-2007 academic year Geoffrey Maruyama and Scott McConnell headed a faculty and staff group to address issues of involvement and partnership. That group grew to about 50 participants. The groups represent functional areas including programming involving undergraduate students (e.g., service learning, pipeline programs, mentoring programs), training programs for professional students (e.g. dental clinic, law clinic, student teaching experiences), technical assistance (e.g., BCED, legal services, professional development for teachers), and engaged research activities (e.g., redesigning neighborhoods, mapping assets and linking them to issues, investigating and addressing health disparities, studying and addressing the achievement gap, developing effective early childhood programs, etc.). This year Dean Darlyne Bailey has taken over leadership of the engaged research piece of the Northside Partnership, and has been holding open meetings on campus designed to expand the engaged group, and meetings in the community to identify additional community partners for engaged research activities. Maruyama and Senior Vice President Robert Jones recently received a three year grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) that will help the university’s efforts to translate its successful rural research and outreach centers in creating an urban research and outreach/engagement center in North Minneapolis. The FIPSE project will fund pilot projects in the three areas identified by the community, namely, education, economic development, and health. FIPSE efforts are being coordinated with the efforts of Dean Bailey as well as with outreach efforts headed by Dean Bev Durgin from Extension and Andrew Furco, Associate Vice President for Public Engagement.

This year $50,000 is being awarded in a competitive grant process managed by CURA to support community-initiated projects in which community partners work with faculty members and graduate students on a particular project of interest to the community partner. CURA has supported collaborative research and outreach projects in North Minneapolis for over 30 years, and is widely recognized as a part of the University that has been effectively and steadily engaged.

**Illustrative Northside Faculty projects**

**Center for Early Education and Development:** Scott McConnell, Rich Weinberg.  
**500 by 5** Assess 500 Northside preschool students for kindergarten.

**College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences:** Bernadette Longo.  
**Healthy Foods Initiative** Address food access and food security in North Minneapolis as it relates to health disparities and social justice for residents.

**Carlson School of Management:** John W. Dawson.  
**Leadership Access Partnership Program** Provide Patrick Henry High School students from underrepresented communities with business education.
Konopka Institute: Paul Snyder. CDF’s Freedom Schools®. Empower children to embrace their responsibility to make a difference in themselves, their family, their community, their country, and their world

Minnesota Extension: Shelley Sherman. Nutrition Program. Provide interactive, hands-on nutrition education and food resource management classes

American Studies and Institute for Global Studies: David Karjanen. Health Disparities and CBPR (Community Based Participatory Research). Map out the spatial and temporal health disparities in the community in preparation for a broader CBPR effort for programmatic interventions.

Office for Equity and Diversity: Rickey Hall, Tex Ostvig. STEP UP Provide 50 summer jobs for Minneapolis Public School students for summer 2007

College of Design/Center for Urban and Regional Affairs: Christine Miller, Clint Hewitt, Kris Nelson. Neighborhood mapping Project with Juxtaposition Arts to map the Broadway neighborhood and enhance design features of neighborhood

College of Education and Human Development: Jennifer McComas, Frank Symon. Improving student achievement summer program to improve educational outcomes of young children in North Minneapolis.

Appendix B: University Neighborhood

In February, 2007, President Bruininks charged a Neighborhood Revitalization Steering Committee with addressing the revitalization of the neighborhoods adjacent to the Twin Cities campus. The charge is a result of growing concern about the quality of life and safety in the campus-adjacent communities. The issue had first been formally raised in a white paper developed by Vice President Kathleen O’Brien and Community Relations Director Jan Morlock to the President’s Executive Committee in April, 2006, “Housing and Quality of Life in Neighborhoods Near the Twin Cities Campus”. The Committee developed the following principles to guide the University’s neighborhood revitalization efforts:

1. Actions supported or undertaken by the University will serve and advance the core mission of the University; will engage students, faculty, and staff wherever possible; and will be aligned with the strategic direction of the University and its urban agenda.

2. We seek to have a campus and surrounding neighborhood communities that are welcoming, economically vital, safe, sustainable, and attractive, while valuing diversity across ages, cultures, and incomes and the unique character of each community.

3. The University will foster and model civic responsibility in the communities adjacent to campus.
4. The University will act in partnership with other stakeholders to plan and promote neighborhood vitality. Existing local plans and planning processes will be respected. The University will consider neighborhood impacts in its major capital investments and program decisions, and look for ways to create positive community improvement.

5. Desired outcomes will be clearly articulated and measurable. There will be clear and consistent communication with our partners and other stakeholders.

The concern about trends in the neighborhoods, shared acutely by neighborhood residents and business owners, was further brought into focus during the planning for a new 50,000 seat on-campus stadium. The financing bill passed by the Minnesota Legislature in May, 2006 and signed into law by the governor in support of an on-campus University of Minnesota Gopher football stadium included a directive “to assess and prepare a report of the impact of the university on the surrounding community and the relationship of the community to the university.” The resulting report, “Moving Forward Together: U of M Minneapolis Area Neighborhood Impact Report,” was published on February 15, 2007. The report included consensus recommendations from the University, the City of Minneapolis, and the Stadium Area Advisory Group, which includes representation from the neighborhoods adjacent to the University’s Twin Cities Campus.

Shared Purpose

The purpose shared by those who cooperated in preparing the impact report was expressed as follows:

*The University of Minnesota aims to be among the top three public research universities in the world. The University of Minnesota’s Twin Cities campus is a major economic and cultural asset to the metropolitan area. The University in turn benefits from its flagship campus location in the center of a vibrant Minneapolis-Saint Paul metro area.*

*To achieve its goal of being among the top three public research universities, the University must attract and retain creative, accomplished people who will come there to expand and share their knowledge and make discoveries. The University’s success in reaching its goal will be enhanced by being part of healthy, vital, and attractive neighborhoods and commercial districts. The east and west banks of the Twin Cities campus and the adjacent communities form an important economic and cultural anchor in the City of Minneapolis. The success of each reinforces the success of the other.*

**Campus and Adjacent Communities: “A Premier Asset”**

The parties developed a shared vision as a foundation for the report:

*The communities adjacent to campus will be vital, safe, and attractive places where current and future residents will want to invest their time, talents, and resources for the long term. Together, the campus and neighboring communities will be an environment rich in culture,*
creativity, community, and human capital and will be a premier asset to the cities and the region of which they are a part. The University, the City of Minneapolis, and the community organizations will have a partnership to achieve and maintain this vision.

Study Process

The University, the City of Minneapolis, and the Stadium Area Advisory Group appointed an Impact Report Task Group to oversee the consultation process and development of the report. With assistance from a consultant and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, the Impact Report Task Group consulted broadly with stakeholder groups in the neighborhoods, at other area institutions including Augsburg College and Fairview-UMMC; with students, elected officials, City staff, and University administration. Demographic, housing, and crime data were gathered, mapped, and analyzed. Best practices were examined at other urban communities with large university campuses.

Findings

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus is a unique asset to the state, to the City of Minneapolis, and to the University’s adjacent neighborhoods. With its array of classes and degree programs, venues for arts and sports, 50,000+ students, 16,300 employees, hundreds of millions of dollars of employee compensation, the campus provides innumerable educational, cultural, and economic benefits. In fiscal year 2006, the University attracted $576 million for research sponsored by the federal government and the private sector, most of which was carried out at the Twin Cities campus.

Because of its size, however, the campus puts demands on the urban character, systems, and infrastructure of the communities closest to it. There are pressures on the housing market, a growing imbalance in neighborhood demographics, and transportation/traffic/parking issues associated with 85,000 people converging daily to use University facilities.

In times gone by, the neighborhoods near campus were home to a diversity of long-term residents, including a substantial number of University faculty and staff. Today, while 25% of the employees at the Twin Cities campus live in the City of Minneapolis (still a fairly strong number), only 3% live in the five neighborhoods adjacent to campus.

Today, homeowner flight, blighted rental properties, and rising rates of violent crime threaten the University’s campus and its adjacent neighborhoods. These issues have reached a point of crisis. The lesson from other major urban centers with large universities is that without immediate, focused action and investment, the price of addressing these problems will be much higher in the future. The study looked at tools used by other universities to build stronger neighborhoods for students, residents, and customers. In the most successful cases, the institution collaborated with other stakeholders to create partnerships to establish ongoing revitalization programs.

The destiny of the University is linked to the destiny of the adjacent neighborhoods. If the neighborhoods are weak or unlivable, the University’s attractiveness and vitality is weakened.
and its competitive advantage compromised. There is a need to create a new relationship that focuses on mutually beneficial and collaborative action.

**Recommendations**

The report recommendations include:

- Designate a University community partnership district, to be comprised of the Minneapolis campus and the five adjacent neighborhoods, and to be recognized as an area of special interest for the University, the City, and the State legislature.
- Create an alliance among the University, the City, the neighborhoods, and other stakeholders to cooperate in planning and initiating projects to address the shared problems and opportunities.
- Continue key initiatives of the University and the City that are already under way.
- Take immediate action to address the most pressing housing and safety concerns.
- Create an endowment to address the issues long term and to sustain the future strategic initiatives of the alliance.

**Actions since the report**

A bill was passed in the 2007 session of the MN Legislature that appropriated $750,000 for the creation of an alliance and one or more “demonstration” project(s), to be defined. The campus-area legislators are interested in building a case, through a demonstration project, for the creation of an endowment to support further work recommended in the report, with such a proposal to be introduced in the 2009 session.

An Alliance Steering Committee was formed in November, 2007, comprised of three executive level members from the University of Minnesota; two Minneapolis elected officials and the City’s Director of Community Planning and Economic Development; and representatives from campus-area neighborhoods, business associations, and student government. The Steering Committee will guide the development of the demonstration projects and the 2009 report/request to the Legislature, and will establish a plan for further collaboration among the University, the City, the neighborhoods, and other interested stakeholders.

Initiatives already under way include:

1) A City of Minneapolis initiative to inspect every rental housing unit in South East Minneapolis and issue any necessary orders to bring the properties up to a minimum standard.
2) An exploration by the University of Minnesota of potential University-related reuses for the Tuttle School building, a K-8 school closed by Minneapolis Public Schools in 2007.
3) West Bank CHANCE, a student/faculty/staff initiative of the Humphrey Institute, the Carlson School of Management, the Law School, the Office of Public
Engagement, and the University Libraries, to more purposefully engage with the Cedar Riverside neighborhood in areas of potential mutual benefit.

4) **Formation of a Campus-Community Safety and Livability Committee**, convened by the University’s Office of Student Affairs, to engage students, long term neighbors, and the campus and city law enforcement agencies to address the most pressing safety and livability concerns.

There are several other specific areas of immediate potential collaboration for the University, including creating more graduate and professional student housing, a proposed “Greek Village” project led by Greek alumni, and creating a means to provide incentives to faculty and staff to purchase homes and live within walking distance of campus.

**Appendix C: West Side, Saint Paul**

Like many Twin Cities neighborhoods, the West Side of St Paul has a long tradition as home to successive waves of new immigrants and refugees from around the world. They come here now for the same reasons they did a century ago: to escape war, oppression and civil or tribal conflict, failed economies, and gross inequity in class, social mobility and opportunity. Most importantly, they come for a better life for themselves, their families and their descendants.

In 1897, the women of Mount Zion Temple established Neighborhood House on the West Side of St Paul. Founded in the tradition of the settlement house movement of Jane Addams, Neighborhood House sought to provide pathways for immigrants to build new lives in a foreign land. It pursues this mission to this day with today’s immigrant and refugee communities (http://www.neighb.org/). It is devoted to a philosophy and action that immigrant communities’ strength builds where there are opportunities; and that bi-cultural skills are a doorway to stronger, more resilient individuals and communities. Today, Neighborhood House serves the needs of some 50 different ethnic groups predominantly in the East Metro area.

Neighborhood House has over the years also created an extensive web of affiliations with other immigrant-focused organizations, learning and health care services, and advocacy groups. For example, **Chicanos Latinos Unidos En Servicio (CLUES)** is a leading provider of social, health and learning services within the Minnesota Latino community in five areas: Mental Health, Chemical Health, Employment, Education and Elder Wellness. It serves some 30,000 of Minnesota’s Latino community each year. The **Hmong American Partnership (HAP)** serves the bi-cultural needs of one of Minnesota’s newest immigrant groups statewide. St. Paul’s West Side is also home to **West Side Community Health Services (La Clinica)**, founded in 1969, to provide the highest quality medical and culturally competent care to an increasingly diverse population.

**The West Side and the University**

The University of Minnesota has a long history of partnership with the West Side. In the early decades of the 20th century students from the University of Minnesota lived upstairs in
Neighborhood House. Like Jane Addams Hull House in Chicago, immigrants found space at
Neighborhood House to share and take pride in their native cultural heritages and knowledge,
undertake public work projects of community problem solving with native born Americans
and college students, and also learn to be citizens of their new country, the United States.
Central to this philosophy of the earlier settlements was an explicit disavowal of a “charity”
approach which viewed immigrants as needy and deficient. Instead, early settlement
experiences taught University students to respect immigrant cultures, to work collaboratively
with new immigrants, and to immerse themselves in the networks and educational resources
of a neighborhood, many of which were organized by immigrants themselves.

In 1996, Nan Skelton, co-director of the Humphrey Institute’s Center for Democracy and
Citizenship, John Wallace, professor of philosophy in the College of Liberal Arts, and Nan
Kari from the College of St. Catherine joined with immigrant groups from the West Side and
Sandy Fuller, director of programs at Neighborhood House to launch the Jane Addams
School for Democracy. From the outset, the Jane Addams School for Democracy aimed at
reviving the older tradition of a culture of collaborative learning, community based research,
and public work partnerships that many, including some Neighborhood House staff, believed
had severely eroded in recent decades. Originally housed at Neighborhood House, the Jane
Addams School subsequently moved to Humboldt High School. Since 1996, the Jane
Addams School has had striking success in realizing its initial aims. It has involved faculty,
staff and students from the Humphrey Institute, several departments in CLA, the College of
Education, the College of Design, the CARLA, the Academic Health Center, CURA and
many other units. More than 1000 students from the University of Minnesota have
participated in its weekly “learning circles,” as well as students from nine other area colleges.
It has one of the most successful records of citizenship centers in the country in preparing
immigrants to pass the citizenship test, while it has also undertaken a variety of other
learning projects and community problem solving efforts. With this track record, the Jane
Addams School has become a widely cited and recognized local, state, and national model of
collaborative learning and partnership work between institutions of higher education – led by
the University of Minnesota – and new immigrant and neighborhood organizations. The
Citizens League gave JAS a Citizenship Award last year at its annual meeting. One similar
Jane Addams School is now being organized by, and.

The Jane Addams School serves as a model for such collaborations. One is now under
consideration at Miami University in Ohio and a number of communities with large
immigrant populations have visited from the Midwest. The School has been featured in
major studies of the engaged university movement and in the popular press (see citations
below).

Since 2000, led by Nan Skelton, Co-Director of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship,
staff from the UMN and community leaders from the Jane Addams School have organized
the Neighborhood Learning Community coalition on the West Side, which itself has become
a prominent model for reintegration of education and schools with neighborhood learning
resources and networks (e.g. Peter Levine, The Future of Democracy: Developing the Next
Generation of American Citizens, Tufts, 2007; Nicolas Longo, Why Community Matters:
Connecting Education with Civic Life State University of New York, 2007; Harry C. Boyte,
The Citizen Solution Minnesota Historical Society Press 2008, forthcoming). The Neighborhood Learning Community involves four high schools and 17 neighborhood organizations, including the Riverview Library, Neighborhood House, the West Side Citizen Organization, the Youth Farm and Market Project and a number of others in generating community learning opportunities. Its approach is championed by Mayor Chris Coleman, school officials and city agencies such as Parks and Recreation and the city’s Second Shift and Youth Commissions. One of its key policy innovations, a free circulator bus that travels around the community linking different learning sites, has now been expanded to three additional neighborhoods with city and foundation backing, while the College of Design and the Center for Changing Landscapes have become partners in public design of bus stops.

Finally, the collaborative work between West Side partners and the University of Minnesota and has received considerable foundation and governmental support. The Center for Democracy and Citizenship has received a grant of $1.5 million from the DeWitt Wallace Foundation, a federal 21st Century three year grant of $890,000, a Minnesota Department of Education grant of $290,000, all for the Neighborhood Learning Community, as well as grants from the Kellogg Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the St. Paul Foundation, St. Paul Travelers, the Freeman Foundation and a number of others for the Jane Addams School and West Side efforts.

The University of Minnesota’s involvement in the West Side also includes a rich set of other initiatives. Professor Jean King, a College of Education faculty member, has served on the board of Neighborhood House for many years, bringing her skills as a program evaluation expert to assist that organization. She has also connected many college student interns to Neighborhood House.

Recently, discussions have begun between West Side Community Health Services, Neighborhood House and the University, represented mainly by John Finnegan, Dean of the School of Public Health (a West Side resident and Neighborhood House Board member), and Professor King, about developing a more formal alliance to create an Institute for Immigrant and Refugee Health. The intent of the project is to expand research learning and engagement in health with the immigrant and refugee community.

Selected Citations


