



Education and Housing Equity Project Records.

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The Minneapolis Foundation
A200 Foshay Tower
821 Marquette Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55402

September 15, 1999

Dear Friends:

The Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP) shares all of The Minneapolis Foundation's operating principles as intended outcomes of our work, immediately or long-term. Our request for major operating support is contained in the proposal enclosed. Beyond the proposal, however, we would appreciate an opportunity to meet and explore a deeper partnership in addressing these goals.

EHEP facilitates community collaborations and discussions throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area to strengthen awareness, understanding and commitment to education equity and accessibility of affordable housing, with specific attention to breaking down barriers based on race and economics. Our primary strategy has been the metro-wide Community Circles Collaborative.

Improving the lives - and, in particular, the education and housing opportunities - of *children, youth and their families* - is central to our mission. *Public policy* initiatives comprise a leading strategic outcome. In the 1999 Legislature, EHEP's work was influential in enactment of the Inclusionary Housing Act. We encourage *building economically healthy neighborhoods and communities throughout the metro area* rather than in isolated pockets.

Finally, our primary function is to *build and maintain community capacity to resolve important issues through neighborhood based leadership development and conversation*. We work with existing regional and community organizations which share these goals throughout the metro area.

The Minneapolis Foundation provided funding in 1997 for a Citizens Summit, in the context of the work of the Community Circle Collaborative. It became necessary to postpone it at that time and permission was secured to extend the grant. We now are planning to conduct the Summit in December, 1999. We look forward to the opportunity for further discussions of ways in which The Minneapolis Foundation might be further involved in this work.

Sincerely yours,



Dick Little, Executive Director

GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Please provide the following information, which may be word processed;
however, use no more space than the form provides. Complete all information

Applicant/Collaborative Organization: The Education and Housing Equity Project

Mailing Address: (include city, state, and zip code) Augsburg College, CB 185
2211 Riverside Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55454

Contact Person: Dick Little **Title:** Executive Director
Phone: (612) 330-1505 **Fax:** (612) 330-1507
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Date of Submission: September 14, 1999

Total Organizational Budget: \$150,000 for fiscal year ending December 31, 2000 (mo/day/yr.)

Geographic Area Served: Twin Cities Metropolitan Area

Type of Organization 501(c)(s) Other IRS 501 or 509 category _____
 Religious organization Emerging/start-up/informal
 Governmental organization Collaborative Organization

Does your organization currently have an active grant from TMF? Yes No

If yes, grant number(s): UF963361 - \$5,000 (Grant requested to fund "Metro. Citizens Summit,"
deferred in 1997 but now scheduled for December, 1999)

Request #1

Type of Request: Program/project Operating Capital

Amount Requested: \$50,000

Budget total for activities for this request: \$150,000

Brief Statement of purpose for this request: The Minneapolis Foundation is asked to provide one-third of the operating support for the Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP) in 2000, as EHEP expands its organizing and educational components (1) to strengthen neighborhood leadership and community social infrastructure through collaborative outreach, education and advocacy by groups working for educational and housing equity in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and (2) to extend EHEP's outreach for involvement of families - to include youth and children - in story telling and analysis of these issues, in the context of community circle discussions.

Request #2

Type of Request: Program/project Operating Capital

Amount Requested:

Budget total for activities for this request:

Brief statement of purpose for this request:

Signature of Board Chair or Authorized Designee

Date

Application to The Minneapolis Foundation

Proposal Narrative

A. Organizational Information

1. Brief History

The Education & Housing Equity Project was created in 1995 to link the issue of school desegregation/integration with the broader issues of segregated housing and neighborhoods, and to build an informed citizenry to advance public understanding and action on these issues. In 1996, it partnered with some 20 other organizations to create the Community Circle Collaborative, a multi-sector initiative to promote inter-community dialogue on the critical issues of education, housing, race and segregation in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. A developmental process followed, involving expansion of the partnerships, utilization and training of skilled facilitators, revision and enhancement of the study guide, and collaboration in major derivative or closely related projects.

By the Spring of 1999, more than 1,000 citizens had participated in more than 60 community circles and forums convened in nearly 50 different communities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Each of these groups has focused on the challenges of affordable housing, the achievement gap in our schools, the location mismatch between employees who need jobs and employers who need workers, and the role that race and segregation play in exacerbating these challenges. Each circle was supplied by the collaborative with a trained facilitator and a specially prepared discussion guide.. The collaborative also has provided information and action forums, a 1998 published report on results, and a State legislative initiative that facilitated enactment of the 1999 Inclusionary Housing Act..

Based on evaluation of 1997 conversations, the discussion guide was revised and new partnerships developed with professional facilitator and mediator organizations, to strengthen leadership of the conversations. Facilitators learned an introductory analysis of systemic racism in a special workshop conducted by the Minnesota Churches' Anti-Racism Initiative. In the fall of 1998, Minneapolis Community Circles were co-sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Schools, the Minneapolis Urban League, the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, the Park and Library Boards (providing meeting spaces), the Jefferson Center (providing scribes) and the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution (facilitators). A metropolitan-wide round of community circles followed in late winter and spring of 1999. EHEP also entered into a major partnership with the Wilder Foundation and other St. Paul area partners to inaugurate "Cities at Work" community circle conversations in St. Paul. Wilder also has aided development of evaluation mechanisms.

At the end of 1998, the Community Circles dialogue project was selected by The President's Initiative on Race as a "Promising Practice" for advancing race relations and making progress on issues of race in the United States. In May 1999, it was one of four such projects nationally, selected to make a presentation at the Brookings Institution's National Symposium on innovative approaches to our nation's racial problems.

2. Mission & goals

The mission of the Education & Housing Equity Project is to be a catalyst for building broad-based partnerships that engage citizens and communities in public discussion, analysis and advocacy that enhances the prospects for realizing racially and economically inclusive institutions and communities that give families of all incomes, races, and cultural backgrounds access to quality schools, and affordable housing choices throughout the metropolitan area.

liveable wage jobs

EHEP pursues its mission through a three-part strategy:

- Ø Coalition and partnership building and advocacy;
- Ø Community education and informed public conversation; and
- Ø Assistance to communities in becoming more inclusive and integrated

3 Description of current programs, activities, service statistics, and strengths/accomplishments

Coalition Building and Advocacy to Inform Public Decision Making

A major share of EHEP's energy, from its inception, has been committed to coalition building and collaboration with other organizations and community groups. These have contributed importantly to shaping EHEP's focus but also led to several jointly sponsored projects, a major, successful public policy initiative.

A crucial emphasis has been building the consensus and leadership needed to move the metropolitan community forward on the issues related to education and housing equity, especially in relation to systematized segregation of residential areas by race and income. The developmental phase of the program was marked by extensive research, one-on-one interviews and multi-participant focus group meetings with a broad range of community leaders and experts in the fields of housing, education, anti-racism and metropolitan stability.

What emerged from this work was a broad-based coalition and a flexible range of partnerships supporting and building upon EHEP's two-pronged focus: (1) to encourage the linkage of housing and school issues in the work of existing organizations and connecting this work to issues of race and (2) to promote civil, informed dialogue across economic, racial and political lines as one important way to make progress on these issues.

Major accomplishments have included:

- Ø Continue to work with the Institute on Race and Poverty to "popularize" its research by making it broadly available in commonly used language to various publics in the Twin Cities area.
- Ø Coalesced with housing and education organizations to focus on re-drafting the State Board of Education desegregation rule and to link school desegregation with the broader issues of housing segregation and metropolitan stability (1996 and 1998).
- Ø Encouraged a coalition working with the newly formed Minnesota Fair Housing Center on a fair housing testing campaign in suburban Hennepin County to frame the issue of housing discrimination in the context of schools, educational achievement and access to broader life opportunities (begun in 1996).
- Ø Engaged the Minneapolis Public Schools and the Mayor of Minneapolis to support and assist in the development of the community circles project and, following a presentation sponsored by the Family Housing Fund, encouraged a study of the linkage between housing/household stability and educational achievement in Minneapolis. This action led to The Kids Mobility Project (1997).
- Ø Collaborated with and supported MICAH's (Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing) fair housing initiative proposal to HUD to jointly develop, with the Illusion Theater, a series of theater events that highlighted the need for metro-wide fair and affordable housing for people of all backgrounds and to deal forthrightly with community resistance, discriminatory practices, stereotypes and fears that impede the development of affordable housing. EHEP was represented at each of the theater events and co-sponsored the Minneapolis and Saint Paul performances (1997 - 1999). The first round of community circle discussions in 1997 provided the genesis for the theatre project.
- Ø Participated by invitation as an advisor to the consulting teams working with interested parties to mediate the pending educational adequacy and educational equity lawsuits (NAACP v. State of Minnesota and St. Paul School District v. State of Minnesota). In early 1998, EHEP's director testified in support of the mediation process before the Minneapolis School Board, which subsequently endorsed the same position. EHEP has been asked to continue to be a resource to the mediation process and is participating in mediation workshops in 1999. Many of the ideas that came out of the first round of community circle conversations have been used to contribute to settlement proposals for mediation of the lawsuits.
- Ø Worked with the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability and the Right to Housing Campaign to develop a policy and legislative action proposal which led to enactment by the 1999 Minnesota Legislature of the Inclusionary Housing Act. It offers a new approach to expanding affordable housing choices and mixed income housing development. The inclusionary housing and zoning concept was one of the major ideas generated by the 1997 community circle conversations.
- Ø Jointly sponsored, with the Urban Coalition and the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (MMEP), a series of issue forums on the State's proposed new Desegregation Rule, the Inclusionary Education Rule (revision of the originally proposed Diversity Rule), and multicultural competency requirements for teacher licensure. The EHEP board also contributed substantive written testimony to the State Board of Education on the proposed changes to the Profiles of Learning (1998) and the revised desegregation rule (1999).

- Ø Assisted the Minneapolis League of Women Voters with the Minneapolis Middle School Project (1998).
- Ø Contributing to the work of the Minneapolis Affordable Housing Task Force through EHEP's Director who serves on the Task Force (1998 - 1999). Our message has been that: (1) recommendations should focus not only on providing needed housing but also on expanding people's locational choices and access to economic, social and educational opportunities; (2) recommendations should focus on barriers related to race, not only income, and (3) recommendations should focus on metropolitan as well as municipal remedies. Our message to reverse, or at least avoid, further concentrating poverty has also been heeded.

EHEP is a partner with the Minnesota Housing Partnership and the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless in the public relations campaign, funded by The Minneapolis Foundation/Thorpe Fund, to break down barriers of public resistance to affordable housing in the Twin Cities area. This campaign is expected to further spur interest and participation in the community circle discussions which focus deeper awareness and understanding of the issues.

Civic Engagement and Community Conversation

The most significant and distinctive work of EHEP is the "Choices for Community" Community Circle Project, 'Conversations at the Crossroads.' Launched in 1997 by the Community Circle Collaborative, this project brings citizens together, 5 to 15 at a time, in community circle dialogues throughout the metropolitan area to discuss the future of the Twin Cities area with a focus on two central questions:

- Ø "What are the impacts of existing patterns of residential, economic and racial segregation on the educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin Cities area children and families?" and
- Ø "What can or should we do, as individuals and as a community, to enhance educational success, and housing and economic opportunities for all children and adults in the Twin Cities metropolitan area?"

Community Circles of citizens from thirty-five localities were convened/hosted by a variety of local sponsoring organizations. All participants were provided with discussion guides prepared by the Collaborative, and facilitators, recruited and trained by the Collaborative, moderated each circle. The conversations culminated in a Metropolitan Citizens Forum at Macalester College, moderated by Saint Paul's George Latimer and Minneapolis' Vivian Jenkins Nelsen. A report synthesized the findings, conclusions and action recommendations of the community circles and has been shared with project partners and various decision makers in the metropolitan area.

Based on the first round of conversations in 1997-98, EHEP and its partners identified promising practices that advance educational success and expand affordable housing choices, shared the results with various stakeholders (e.g., the West Metro Education Program), revised the study guide and enhanced the process for the second round of conversations in 1998-99. A round of Minneapolis Circles in Fall, 1998, co-sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Schools Office of Family and Community Services and five other partner organizations, became a prototype for the metropolitan-wide conversations that began in February 1999. Now, further refinements are under way including development of an optional discussion segment on economic issues.

During 1997 and 1998 EHEP also helped launch other civic engagement projects with similar objectives ~~but working with previously defined coalitions extending the reach of the information EHEP organized.~~ Among these groups were Minneapolis Interfaith Action and the Saint Paul Ecumenical Action Council (interfaith dialogue and action forums on poverty, segregation and sprawl), the National Conference of Community and Justice town hall meetings on education and race (EHEP co-sponsored two forums in Minneapolis and St. Paul), the National Days of Dialogue on Race Relations (EHEP sponsored three dialogues in the Twin Cities), and the Saint Paul Pioneer Press civic journalism project "Poverty Among Us." In 1999, EHEP is collaborating with the Minnesota League of Women Voters in developing its statewide study circle program on immigration.

In April 1998, EHEP co-sponsored a Study Circles training workshop for prospective sponsors and facilitators with the national Study Circles Resource Center. This event greatly increased local capacity for spawning additional civic engagement projects. The workshop also attracted new partners interested in launching the second round of community circles conversations on education, housing and race. One of these new partners is the Wilder Foundation, with whom EHEP is co-sponsoring the 1999 "Cities at Work" Forums on "Race,

Connections and Commitment.” As part of the forum project, local St. Paul organizations are or will be co-sponsoring community circle dialogues on education, housing and race.

The 1999 Community Circle Dialogues incorporated groups not represented in earlier discussions, such as the business community, labor unions, outer suburban residents and employers, significantly more residents and leadership groups in Saint Paul and East Metro, and a wider range of participants from communities of color. These conversations were more clearly focused on systemic barriers and changes needed to better integrate our metropolitan community and residential living patterns across barriers of race and class, and, in the process, bring children from different backgrounds to more integrated and diverse learning environments. Added to the discussions is a focus on making our institutions, such as schools, more multiculturally inclusive and equitable. Further development of this expansion of participation is planned for the 1999-2000 round of dialogues. Also in preparation, for use in the '99-'00 cycle, is a new optional component of the discussion guide focusing on economic development and job access in relation to issues of racial and economic segregation and education and housing equity.

The discussions include an action component, highlighted^{by} an Action Forum which emphasizes promising practices underway and connects participants to opportunities for involvement in their community. The action component also connects the work of the community circles with policy work at local and state levels. It helps to facilitate energy and human resources for the kind of organizing initiative that resulted in the 1999 Inclusionary Housing Act.

Thirty organizations contributed to the development of the 1999 discussion guide. A faith compendium has been prepared by MICAHA for use in community circles sponsored by congregations (churches, mosques, and synagogues). We are also developing an optional session on race and economic development, especially to be encouraged for use in conversations sponsored by chambers of commerce and business associations. To assure better reports on the conversation results, we have developed reporting forms for use by the scribe assigned in each circle. A partnership with the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution and Minnesota Facilitators Network has resulted in a facilitator's guide, a more user-friendly discussion guide and a facilitator's version of the guide. These two groups have agreed to be partners in the project, recruiting and training the experienced facilitators for this particular focus. They also were provided an introductory analysis of racism by the Minnesota Churches Anti-Racism Initiative, and a workshop on cross-cultural communications by Intercultural Communications Workshops, Inc. - both community circle partners. (These opportunities serve as volunteer compensation for the facilitators as well as useful tools for deepening and enhancing the conversations.) Information also is provided for facilitators and community circles from the Urban Coalition, the Family Housing Fund, the Center for School Change, the Institute on Race and Poverty and other sources.

EHEP and the Community Circle Collaborative will co-sponsor a Citizens Summit in December 1999 with the Minnesota Meeting and Minnesota Public Radio. The Summit, funded by a prior Minneapolis Foundation grant, will bring together participants from the community circles, and use electronic response technology to discover areas of consensus and to prioritize action steps. Many local policy makers will be invited to attend.

Assisting Communities in Becoming More Inclusive and Integrated

This strategy grows out of EHEP's work with community conversations, coalition building, civic engagement and policy advocacy and, for the most part, is one implemented through direct initiatives by other coalition partners. However, EHEP also has been directly engaged in such work, as the following examples illustrate:

- After the first round of community circles, EHEP was invited by the Minnesota Fair Housing Center to assist in planning and implementing a Hennepin County/Metropolitan Council-funded workshop for suburban housing and planning officials and human rights commissioners on best practices for achieving fair and affordable housing. In September 1998 over 100 city officials and developers attended the "Building Inclusive Communities" Conference in Bloomington. EHEP worked with the Fair Housing Center and the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability to sponsor programs that highlighted promising practices used in other cities. EHEP helped to bring the Vice President of Chicago's Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities to the Twin Cities to discuss the experience of Oak Park, Illinois, one of the most successful racially integrated cities in the United States.

- EHEP was invited by the St. Paul Office of Interdistrict Initiatives to participate in planning a multi-school district governance structure to expand inter-district and integrated education initiatives involving St. Paul and suburban East Metro school districts. Planning workshops were held in late 1998 early 1999. Future inter-district initiatives will be dependent on continuing availability of state funding. Multi- and inter-district initiatives were the subject of considerable discussion in the 1997 Community Circles.

Following the second round of Community Circle conversations, additional opportunities are expected to emerge in 1999-2000 to collaborate with, broker and provide assistance to communities and school districts attempting to become more multiculturally, racially and economically inclusive.

4. The organization's relationship with other organizations working to meet the same needs or providing similar services; how we differ from these other agencies.

No other organization in the Twin Cities area is currently engaged in this kind of sustained, collaborative, grassroots dialogue and education/consensus-building and mobilizing effort that specifically links housing, education and race. The Community Circles Collaborative grows out of the diversity of organizations, varying in membership base or dimensions of purpose, which share common goals to increase education equity, much wider availability of safe, affordable housing, and racial justice. The unique role of EHEP has been to facilitate collaboration among these groups, draw upon them in resourcing community conversations and, in turn, provide them with information, ideas and committed volunteers generated by the community circles

EHEP's success rests largely on these strong partnerships and an active, committed board of directors which itself represents several groups in the Community Circle Collaborative. (Past and present Collaborative partners are identified in attachments.) A major function of the Collaborative has been to help (1) assure racial, cultural, ethnic, generational, political and geographic diversity of voices in the conversations, (2) fulfill the various tasks, objectives and leadership requirements of the project, and (3) assure wide dissemination of and policy-level attention to results.

The Community Circle partners include:

- Ø *Organizing partners*, who help to design the process, frame the discussion issues, prepare the discussion guide, recruit and train/orient sponsors, facilitators, scribes, and resource partners, publicize the project and work with the media, and assist with reporting and evaluation and the details of project follow-through.
- Ø *Resource associates*, who supply background research and expertise on the issues, written and audio-visual materials to inform the discussions and provoke spirited but thoughtful conversation, media coverage, project documentation, and/or financial and in-kind backing of project activities.
- Ø *Sponsors* (typically organizations) that supply meeting places (may include child care, transportation, translators, hospitality and other services as needed) for the conversations, schedule the conversations, publicize the circles, recruit circle participants, convene or host the circle dialogues, and secure scribes who will capture in written record the highlights and results of each conversation.
- Ø *Facilitators*, who have professional experience in mediation and facilitation, who moderate the community circle conversations (organizations such as the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution and the Minnesota Facilitator Network are partnering with EHEP and the Wilder Foundation to provide facilitators and co-facilitators for each circle conversation). The facilitator organizations also participate in delivering facilitator training to all participating facilitators and in convening the facilitators for assessment and evaluation.
- Ø *Participants* from many diverse backgrounds who commit to at least 5 sessions of 2 hours each and participate with 8 to 15 other citizens in informed and deliberative dialogue. The participants are the "heart and soul" of the Community Circles initiative. These are the citizens who create the "public voice."

In-kind support from the organizing partners alone in the 1997 circles amounted to more than \$15,000 in documented resources. A greater contribution was seen, although not measured, during the 1998-99 circles.

Diversity of Participation: It is vital that groups in the Collaborative reflect the diversity of the metropolitan community. Nine of the twenty organizing partners represent primarily interests of communities of color. Many of the new groups recruited for the current round of conversations are culture-specific and multicultural organizations. Partner and sponsor organizations include congregations, non-profits, human rights commissions, neighborhood associations and community councils, youth groups, schools, family and

community councils, university and college groups, a union local, a chamber of commerce, voter organizations, and city governments. We are striving to increase representation of the outer suburbs, the business community, recent immigrants and students, and participation by public officials.

5. Number of board members, paid staff (full & part-time, volunteers).

Board of Directors: The board of directors has been expanded each year and now includes 16 members - all key leaders in fields and institutions related to the mission of EHEP. The board is responsible for setting policy direction and plays an active role in advancing the community circle project and bringing new partners into the Collaborative. Board members come from business, civic, legislative, community service, housing advocacy, civil rights, media, education and law backgrounds. Seven, including the president, are African Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, or Latino/a Americans. Four additional African Americans and Asian Americans have previously served on the board. A list and brief description board members is attached.

Staff and Volunteers: A full-time executive director and part-time administrative assistant currently staff EHEP. Augsburg College, office of business and financial accounting provides payroll and fiscal services, and EHEP has made extensive and creative use of interns, volunteers and consultants (paid and in-kind) in the past and will continue to do so in 2000 (writers, graphic designers, training professionals, speakers, etc.). Student interns and research assistants have been secured through the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, the University of St. Thomas, the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs, and Augsburg College. A research assistant is expected again in 1999-2000.

B. Purpose of Grant

1. Situation

• Opportunity, problem, issue, need & community addressed:

As the Twin Cities have become increasingly diverse in the 1990's, there has been growing public concern that economic and racial segregation in housing and among our communities is having a profound impact on the overall health and well being of the metropolitan region, and on education and employment opportunities in particular. At the same time, our institutions, especially our schools, have been "tested" by this diversity and have been found wanting: over half of the students, mostly students of color, in core city schools are failing to pass the graduation standards tests. While the overall economy has steadily improved, the unemployment rate among communities of color in the central cities and the lack of affordable housing metro-wide are at crisis levels.

A study by Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton in their publication *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* revealed that the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area is among the ten most segregated in the country. Studies have also shown that the Twin Cities ranks third highest among all U.S. urban areas in persons of color living in poverty. The work of State Representative Myron Orfield in his book *Metropolitics: A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability*, and of Dr. John Powell of the Institute on Race and Poverty at the University of Minnesota in his study *Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education and Persistent Segregation* has also given testimony to the depth and breadth of issues of segregation, racial and economic isolation and growing disparities between inner and outer communities in the Twin Cities, and their importance in "unlocking the doors" to addressing other significant issues facing the region.

Public actions to grapple with these issues have been growing in number. Examples include:

- ≥ education and housing lawsuits (NAACP v. State of Minnesota, Saint. Paul School District v. State of Minnesota, and Holman v. Cisneros)
- ≥ legislation (the Metropolitan Livable Communities Act)
- ≥ the creation and expansion of civic and advocacy groups (e.g., Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, Interfaith Action and St. Paul Ecumenical Action Council, the Minnesota Right to Housing Campaign, the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing and the Minnesota Fair Housing Center)
- ≥ formation of new compacts of school districts and inter-district school initiatives (West Metro Education Program and the East Metro Office of Interdistrict Initiatives), and

- ≥ new State Rules addressing graduation standards, school desegregation, educational diversity (criteria for inclusive schools and teaching practices), and standards for multicultural competency in teacher licensure requirements.
- ≥ Most recently, the Minnesota Legislature's Inclusionary Housing Act of 1999, offering promising incentives for development of mixed income neighborhoods, but yet to be tested in its effectiveness.

These actions, and the frequently divisive debates some of them have generated, underscore both the opportunity and the need for developing a common understanding and basis of action for moving forward on the issues of education, housing and race in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Public conversation about the possibilities for inclusive and integrated communities has been rare, usually divisive and poorly informed, not conducted on a sustained or systematic basis and with too few groups or individuals involved, and virtually no broad public consensus or support. We began our project in the belief that such adverse conditions imperil the chances of building more inclusive communities and integrated institutions in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The principal danger has been that public discourse about these issues fast settles into simplistic, distorted polarities – neighborhood schools versus forced busing, quality education versus school desegregation, deconcentration of poverty versus preservation of existing affordable housing, cultural identity versus assimilation, individual choice versus collective responsibility, core cities versus suburbs, rich versus poor, and of course, whites versus communities of color (especially African Americans). A climate of public opinion poisoned by these divisions inevitably limits what policy makers (and, as we have found in our initial discussions, advocates and community leaders as well) feel they are able to do. It seems likely that this climate even limits what judges feel they are able to do. In this kind of environment, the issues are too often captured by the most extreme and negative voices, which are then amplified by the media. The public at large is immobilized by ignorance and fear. Those who do act typically, unless they represent communities of color, call for reforms without touching on the vital questions of race and segregation.

The first round of community circle conversations revealed that we do not know how to talk constructively as a community about race, although we are learning. The community circle project and the actions of the Collaborative and its member organizations are beginning to make a positive impact on this issue.

There is a need to involve many groups and the broader public in civil, informed conversations about the possibilities for and benefits of integrated and inclusive communities. There is a need to expand serious discussion of these issues beyond the courtrooms, the academic halls, emotional public hearings and partisan legislative debates. As many people as possible, from many different stations in life should be participating in the conversation about this issue. The discourse should not be limited to the invectives of "talk radio," the well-intentioned opinions of newspaper editorials, the sociological jargon of academia or the legal technicalities of the courts.

The issue is developing rapidly. The question is who will be involved in the public discourse, and how will that discourse be framed. Preliminary conversations have made some progress against the dangers of polarization. This work must continue. Expanding the discussion to include entire families is a major potential area for development.

• **How focus was determined:**

EHEP's response - to implement informed community conversations about the challenges of racial, economic and residential segregation and unequal opportunity and achievement in our schools - has evolved in and from its wide ranging collaboration with other concerned community organizations. The collaboration defined the focus that was needed and shaped the conversations that emerged. Finally, as feedback was received from the community circles, the dialogue has been reshaped and enhanced, and partners in the Collaborative, in turn, have been able to enhance their own separate initiatives for greater effectiveness.

The Choices for Community/Conversations at the Crossroads Community Circle Project is the product of a partnership of groups representing diverse segments of the community. The Collaborative developed the

“Community Circles” approach to community dialogue, drawing upon elements of four different, nationally and locally recognized models for civic engagement and discussion:

- Ø “Study circles” promoted by the Study Circles Resource Center in Pomfret, Connecticut;
- Ø The National Issues Forums public deliberation project begun by the Kettering Foundation in Dayton, Ohio;
- Ø The Communities of Color Empowerment Model (COCEM) of the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership in Minneapolis, and
- Ø The ORID (Objective-Reflective-Interpretative-Decisional) discussion model developed by the Minnesota Facilitators Network and the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution.

The Community Circle conversation/dialogues combine the unique elements from each of these approaches to bringing people together from diverse backgrounds for deliberative discussion, providing educational and technical resources that inform their conversations, facilitating development of action agendas and connecting citizens to action opportunities and promising practices to address the issues they have been discussing.

• **Who was involved in that decision-making process?**

The EHEP staff, and board of directors have been the ultimate decision makers as EHEP's work has taken shape; however, all partners in the Collaborative and, indeed, community circle participants have had a hand in shaping these decisions.

2. Specific Activities

• **Specific activities for which funding is sought:**

As feedback is received from community circles using the new component being developed for use in discussing the linkage between economic development/job access and equity in housing and education, EHEP will need to make decisions about the structure of discussion guides in 2000. Partners in the Collaborative will need to be heard in the process.

The intent to lead participants to consider follow-up action also calls for collaborative organizing. Many of the partners in the Collaborative constitute opportunity contexts for this work. This list also is growing through nurturance of informal relationships. As the community circle movement grows, there will be increasing demand for coordinating action-motivated participants with opportunities to see results. Energy which emerged from the 1998-99 community circles will be focused during a “Call to Action” Forum in November, co-sponsored by EHEP with the Wilder Foundation, and a Metropolitan Citizens Summit in December, organized by EHEP in collaboration with the Minnesota Meeting and Minnesota Public Radio (the latter supported by a March, 1997 grant from the Minneapolis Foundation and another from the Saint Paul Foundation). These events also will serve to bring the larger public into the dialogue, and continuing to move the dialogue from discussion toward informed public action and civic commitment will require additional coordination.

EHEP identifies the following areas needing concentrated development in support of its vision in 2000:

- Expanded community circle discussions, with special emphasis on:
 - Increased participation in suburban communities
 - Increased racial diversity of study circles, facilitating pairings between secular and faith community groups between predominantly low-income neighborhoods and those of privilege, and inner city-suburban pairings..
 - Increased participation of youth in the study circles.
 - Potential development of “play and talk circles” for children, to augment involvement of families.
 - Improved action formation to motivate participants to identify the groups which are doing the work that best addresses the community's needs and that offer them hope and growth.
 - Building of stronger media, public official and business partnerships.
- Expanded community collaborations, both to support community circle expansion and to increase the base for future public action - providing the organizing “glue” to reinforce collaborative visions for community change.

• **Who will carry out these activities**

To accomplish these aims, EHEP needs to fulfill its plan to extend its staff by two positions. The first will be a full-time Community Circle Coordinator whose immediate priority will be to focus on expanding racial diversity and broadening community outreach. The second will be a civic engagement youth-and-family-engagement coordinator whose role will be to strengthen youth participation and to explore effective ways to involve children in community circles and partnerships that address their immediate as well as long-term needs and growth potential, and that strengthen overall family participation in the community circles.

To pursue these goals, EHEP envisions an annual budget of approximately \$150,000. Funding by The Minneapolis Foundation of a major share of this budget (e.g., \$50,000 in 2000) would facilitate this expansion while, working with the Collaborative and funding partners, EHEP builds an extended-term plan.

• **Overall goals/objectives/actions/time frame**

NOTE: In some respects, objectives for 2000 remain dependent on 1999 decisions of EHEP's partners. The Wilder Foundation, in particular, has been handling a major share of administrative functions in support of the community circle discussions during the past ~~two~~ years, but it is re-examining its priorities. Wilder's departure would limit the Collaborative's outreach capacity. Goals and objectives would remain unchanged but the timeline for implementing them would be shifted. This would be addressed in the planning process proposed in goal #2.

- 1) Expansion of community circle discussions on issues related to education, housing, race and economics, to engage the public and private sectors throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area, to fully inform the agendas of partnering communities and institutions, and to create the "common ground" essential to building a metropolitan consensus on needed public actions.. This effort would establish a framework for systemic change of major benefit to all children and families in our communities.

Objectives/Actions:

1. Secure sufficient funding to engage a full-time coordinator for the Community Circles Collaborative, to work with partners in organizing continuing discussions.
 2. Engage a family/youth coordinator to strengthen overall family participation in community circles.
 3. Work closely with the Minnesota Housing Partnership public relations campaign to facilitate expanded community interest in and demand for community circle dialogues *that address public perceptions of affordable housing.*
 4. Build an expanded range of partnerships to facilitate participation by a wider range of communities, as noted above.
 5. Organize recruitment of sponsors, trained facilitators and scribes to meet the growing demand.
 6. Increase the number of participating community circles that successfully complete a dialogue in 2000 from the 25-35 range experienced in prior years to over 50 circles.
 7. Work to continue to assure representation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, Latino/Chicanos/Mexican Americans and African Americans in the circles in numbers reflecting their percentage of the population of the metropolitan area.
 8. Strive through pairing of circles, cross-culturally competent recruiting and outreach practices, and partnerships with organizations reflecting diverse populations, to achieve richly diverse community circle discussions.
 9. Engage citizens from outer ring suburbs who have not seen these issues as their issues.
- 2) Develop a collaborative planning process to better define the future direction of EHEP and criteria for measuring continued success.

Objectives/Actions:

1. Draw together a planning team to include members of EHEP's board of directors and representatives from some of the partners in the Collaborative, to better define extended term goals and objectives, and funding needs.
2. Work with past and potential funders to secure the financial base for 2001 and beyond, to the extent defined by planners as appropriate.

Time frame: Each of the above actions is planned in 2000, with a priority on developing community circle discussion groups in the Winter/Spring and Autumn seasons, and follow-up with at least one Action Forum.

3. Impact of activities

The proposed activities will benefit the communities we are serving by advancing the agenda and prospects for integrated and equitable education in Twin Cities area public schools, and for integrated and inclusive communities that are open and affordable to all Twin Citians. They will also benefit our communities by harnessing the potential of our region's rich diversity of citizens in creating communities that work for all citizens.

The first round of conversations informed the areas for mediation of the education lawsuits between the NAACP, Saint Paul Schools and the State of Minnesota. *and led to MICAH creation of theatre events promoting affordable housing*
first round
The second round led to enactment by the 1999 Minnesota Legislature of new incentives for inclusive affordable housing development. The conversations helped build greater public awareness, support and commitment to fair, affordable housing throughout the metropolitan region. Barriers to affordable housing created by exclusionary zoning, other regulatory practices, and lack of public resources were identified by over two-third of the circles as a major factor influencing economic and racial segregation in the Twin Cities. Fair housing violations were identified as more prevalent than the public generally acknowledges. NIMBYism frequently displayed at public hearings and planning commission meetings in suburban communities was also highlighted.

As in the past, more community conversations should evoke specific commitments to action. Twelve of the organizations that sponsored a community circle are or have become members of the Metropolitan Interfaith Council for Affordable Housing (MICAH) and have joined its Housing Advocate Network. In addition, several of the first round sponsors and participants were members of Interfaith Action or Saint Paul Ecumenical Action Council, who went on to model our discussion process among their member congregations and organize a metro-wide social justice and action initiative to move the legislature to address city-suburban segregation and racial-economic disparities.

Since we began the community circle project in late 1996, reversing segregation (like curbing urban sprawl) has become an accepted part of the nomenclature of at least six major organizations working with issues of housing, education, and growth management in the Twin Cities: the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, the Metropolitan Interfaith Council for Affordable Housing, the Saint Paul Ecumenical Action Council and Interfaith Action, and the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches.

C. Evaluation

1. How effectiveness will be measured

We measure success in tangible ways. We have been and will continue to track specific data about the process and results. We have used surveys and focus groups to evaluate the discussions and to track civic actions by citizens following their participation in community circles. In 2000, we will be using measurement tools developed for our context by the research division of the Wilder Foundation and the evaluation staff of the Study Circles Resource Center.

2. Criteria for a successful program and the results you expect to have achieved

Measures of success include the breadth and depth of participation in the study circles by citizens. Measures of breadth and depth include diversity of participants in terms of perspectives and viewpoints, race and ethnicity, place of work or residence, age or generation, family status and economic status. It also includes locations and numbers of participants and conversations. Participant comments about what they got out of the circle experience and how they grew or changed as a result of the experience will also be considered *(including increased participation and citizen action/involvement in addressing housing + school initiatives)*

The project's impact will also be measured by the extent that our process and the circle findings, conclusions and recommendations are considered and incorporated by stakeholder and sponsor organizations, by public decision-making bodies such as school boards, planning commissions, city councils, the Metropolitan Council

and the State Legislature, and (although it is less readily measurable) by private decision-makers. Another important measure will be the number of new participants who become more involved in the civic life of their communities. This, too, will be tracked.

If these circle discussions receive public attention, raise the level of public awareness, understanding and engagement in creatively addressing issues at the intersection of race, housing and schools, and if they prompt publicly informed actions and strategies that lead to more successfully inclusive schools and communities, then our project will have been successful. When breaking down barriers to 'one community' becomes a center piece of the agendas of Twin Cities area public bodies and community-based organizations, we will have accomplished our objective and will proudly put ourselves out of business.

3. Who will be involved in the evaluation?

The EHEP board and staff and the partner organizations in the Community Circle project will continue to be involved in evaluating it. The Study Circles Resource Center, one of our national partners, has assisted in the preparation of evaluation measures and criteria. The Wilder Foundation research department prepared an evaluation strategy for the 'Cities at Work' forums and community circle dialogues in Saint Paul. That process also will inform the evaluation process for the metro-wide circle project.

4. How evaluations will be used

The results of each round of community circle conversations have been used primarily as a frame of reference in planning the next round of conversations, to inform the agendas of participating partners, in designing the process for mediation of the educational lawsuits, and - more broadly - to inform public policy and define subsequent strategies for achieving more inclusive, equitable and integrated schools and communities.

Corporations and Foundations Being Solicited for Funding in 2000

<u>Corporation/Foundation</u>	<u>Amount sought</u>
The Study Circle Fund (1999 funding)	\$30,000*
The Saint Paul Companies	\$20,000
The Saint Paul Foundation	\$50,000
The Star Tribune Foundation	\$10,000
The McKnight Foundation	\$50,000#

- Grant requested submitted; others to be submitted by December 1999.
- # Multi-year grant proposal

BIO FOR MAIRE McMAHON

Maire McMahon is the Administrative Assistant of the Education and Housing Equity Project, a non-profit organization working to engage the community in public discussions and advocacy for promoting racially and economically inclusive communities that give all families access to schools and housing throughout the metropolitan area.

Maire has worked as an educator in early childhood, elementary, secondary, and adult basic and continuing education programs with a concentration in history and social studies; she worked on community education and advocacy in inter-racial justice and women's issues for non-profit agencies. For ten years she worked as a gero-social worker for elderly residents in affordable housing, to enhance their learning to serve themselves and to involve in their community, their resident associations, and the owner boards of directors. She guided the human services staff in developing a written framework for multicultural community development and for training effective resident associations.

Maire has a Master of Arts in US history from Marquette University and a Certificate in Gerontology from Portland State University Institute on Aging. Her interest in Community Circles dialogue bases in desire for justice and freedom in a democracy with a vital public life, citizens who demand information and use critical thinking in action. It is apparent that the success of the Circles requires skilled, professional coordinating. This is a work of great value with hope for public life.

Community Circle Dialogues: *Reflection and Action on Education, Housing and Race in the Twin Cities*

by Dick Little, Education and Housing Equity Project

There is growing ethnic and racial diversity within Saint Paul and the entire Twin Cities region. We are becoming increasingly polarized along the lines of race and class. Demographic changes in the central cities, suburban communities, and school districts point to serious issues of equity and access to opportunity in both housing and public education.

Community-wide study circle programs have taken place in many communities across the country, (See sidebar, next page) but the Twin Cities community circle dialogue project is the first attempt at a region-wide program. With the growing national attention to regional policy issues such as urban sprawl, segregation, social equity, and transportation, the regional approach to community circle dialogues is an innovative model. Recently, the community circles on education, housing and race in the Twin Cities was selected by the President's Initiative on Race as a model of a "Promising Practice for Racial Reconciliation" and as an innovative approach to our nation's racial problems.

Metro-wide Community Circle Dialogues

The community circle dialogues on education, housing and race, initially launched by the Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP), encourage civic engagement and multi-

cultural conversations to help build more inclusive communities in the Twin Cities. In 1997, EHEP and partnering organizations, including the Minnesota Minority Education Project, the Metropolitan Interfaith Council, sponsored the first "community conversations" or community circle dialogues on the challenges of segregation in education and housing. In the fall of 1998, a new round of community circles was launched in the Minneapolis Public Schools.

The community circle dialogue project has brought together hundreds of people in dozens of communities throughout the Twin Cities region, who met in "community circles." Suburban moms, city dwellers, recent immigrants, small business people, the

underemployed, people of color, pastors, police officers, teachers and many others have met in small groups to explore the related issues of housing and school segregation. Dialogue participants share personal experiences with prejudice and racism and develop their ideas for building integrated and inclusive communities that work.

In 1999, several major community activities had their genesis in the circle dialogues of 1997 and 1998. The innovative and inclusionary housing legislation sponsored by the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability was recently passed into law by the 1999 State Legislature. MICAHA (Minnesota Interfaith Coalition for Affordable Housing) and the Illusion Theater,



Community circle dialogue participants share experiences at June gathering.

Source: Education and Housing Equity Project

• Work in Progress •

produced and performed the fair housing theater event "Like Waters Rolling Down" in churches and synagogues around the metro area this past year. The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability and MICAH were both partners and sponsors of the 1997 community circle dialogues on housing, education, and race. Another idea that grew out of the community circle dialogues, still in the development stage, is the creation of a property tax check-off as part of mortgage, and utility payments. The funds donated will contribute to a metropolitan affordable housing fund. The small monthly donations will support fair housing initiatives and to reduce up front expenses for households attempting to access better housing.

The community circle dialogues can also lead to new relationships and partnerships that contribute to overcoming racial stereotyping and discriminatory attitudes. A circle convened by Saint Paul's Commonbond Communities, Inc., brought together residents of one of their developments in Oakdale with nearby residents who had initially opposed the introduction of affordable housing in their neighborhood. New understandings, new connections and new commitments by residents who are together working to build a shared community.

Community Circle Dialogues in Saint Paul

In the spring of 1999, the *Cities at Work* public forum series kicked off their fifth season with "Unleashing the Power of Our Community: A Public Dialogue on Race, Connections and Commitments." *Cities at Work* community circle dialogues were convened to complement the citywide forums by engaging Saint Paul residents in dialogue at the grass-roots level.

A new discussion guide was developed. Experienced facilitators were recruited and trained by the Minnesota Facilitators Network and Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution. A training workshop on "Understanding Community and Institutional Racism" was offered by Minnesota Churches Against Racism. In Saint Paul, twelve community circles have met this spring; more are planning to convene in the fall. Each circle is ethnically and racially diverse, consists of 8 to 15 participants, and meets for approximately 10 hours spread over five sessions. Examples of circles meeting this spring are the Frogtown Pluralism Circle, and the SPNN (Saint Paul Neighborhood Network) Circle.

In all, more than 50 community circles have or will be convened in both Saint Paul and the Twin Cities area. *Cities at Work* and EHEP co-sponsored a gathering of the community circle participants in June. In November, *Cities at Work* will hold its final forum, "Beyond Tolerance: A Call to Action." The forum will capture the results of the community circle

Community Circle Dialogues Engage Citizens Across the Country

The *Cities at Work* and EHEP community circles dialogues are modeled after a highly successful study circle program developed by the national Study Circles Resource Center (SCRC), headquartered in Pomfret, Connecticut. Study circles have been used throughout the country to generate reasoned citizen dialogue, decisive policy input, and grass-roots problem solving. SCRC is a national partner in the Twin Cities circle dialogue project.

The community circle, or study circle process is one important way to achieve new levels of citizenship, interaction and civic action on difficult issues affecting the community. Large scale, community-wide and metro-wide community circle programs can have a significant, cumulative impact. These impacts range from new friendships, to neighborhood projects, to city-wide action plans, to new legislation. Citizens who participate in community circles often become more involved in the civic life of their community.

Examples of other community study circle programs that SCRC has assisted include suburban Cleveland (race relations), Maine (community violence) Oklahoma League of Women Voters (criminal justice) and Lima, Ohio. In Lima, communities of faith joined forces with the state university, labor unions and the chamber of commerce, and the mayor and city council to initiate the first city-wide study circle program on race relations. Study circle participants in Lima have done everything from building new playground to changing the makeup of a regional board. A statewide study circle program in Oklahoma helped the state legislature enact sweeping changes in the criminal system. ●

continued on back page

Community Circle Dialogues:

continued from page 25

conversations, generate ideas for community action and mobilize citizens to take action in new and different ways that bridge the diverse cultural, ethnic and racial communities that make up Saint Paul.

A metropolitan Citizens Summit, sponsored by Minnesota Meeting and Minnesota Public Radio, is also planned for early Winter that will include participants from all of the Twin Cities area circles, and invited community and public officials. At the Summit, participants will use electronic audience response technology to discover areas of consensus and to prioritize action steps for the community. ●

If you are interested in learning more about community circle dialogues in Saint Paul, call Barb Rose at (651) 659-6031 or email her at bar@wilder.org. If you live or work in Minneapolis, call Dick Little at (612) 330-1505.

From: LOUSCHOEN@aol.com
Date: Mon, 13 Sep 1999 14:29:33 EDT
Subject: Minneapolis Fdn prop
To: ehpe@augsbu.edu
X-Mailer: AOL for Macintosh sub 189

Dick,

Here's the heart of the proposal which I've drafted into the cover page.

Please let me know whether you support this concept or would like to alter it in some way. I'm working on the balance in the context of the Minnesota Common Grant form.

Thanks,
Lou

From: LOUSCHOEN@aol.com
Date: Tue, 14 Sep 1999 03:02:56 EDT
Subject: Positioning the MHP partnership
To: eh@augsb.org
X-Mailer: AOL for Macintosh sub 189

FYI, here's how I've tweaked the paragraph describing your partnership in the PR campaign. Let me know if it works for you or needs further elaboration:

EHEP is a partner with the Minnesota Housing Partnership and the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless in the public relations campaign, funded by The Minneapolis Foundation/Thorpe Fund, to break down barriers of public resistance to affordable housing in the Twin Cities area. This campaign is expected to further spur interest and participation in the community circle discussions which focus deeper awareness and understanding of the issues.

ALSO:

(I THOUGHT I SENT THIS EARLIER BUT CAN'T FIND A RECORD OF ITS HAVING GONE OUT: THIS IS THE HEART OF THE MPLS FDN PROP., AS HIGHLIGHTED IN COVER PAGE. YOU AGREE?)

Amount Requested: \$75,000

Budget total for activities for this request: \$150,000

Brief Statement of purpose for this request: The Minneapolis Foundation is asked to provide 50 percent of the operating support for the Education and Housing Equity Project 2000, as it expands its organizing and educational components (1) to strengthen neighborhood leadership and community social infrastructure in order to facilitate an interactive educational outreach and (2) to extend its outreach for involvement families - to include youth and children - in consideration of the critical issues of education, housing, and economic development in relation to race and economic opportunity.

HERE'S ANOTHER KEY SEGMENT THAT INVOLVES AN UPDATE;

Based on the first round of conversations in 1997-98, EHEP and its partners identified promising practices that advance educational success and expand affordable housing choices, shared the results with various stakeholders (e.g., the West Metro Education Program), revised the study guide and enhanced the process for the second round of conversations in 1998-99. Now, further refinements are under way including development of an optional discussion segment on economic issues.

FYI, PART OF MY FOCUS HAS BEEN TO TIGHTEN UP YOUR MINNESOTA COMMON GRANT PROPOSAL AS WELL AS UPDATING IT. BASED ON MY UNDERSTANDING OF FUNDER PREFERENCES, I THINK YOUR ORIGINAL WAS A TAD LONG. HAVE YOU HAD ANY FEEDBACK ON THAT FROM ANY FUNDERS?

**COMMUNITY CIRCLE COLLABORATIVE
EDUCATION AND HOUSING EQUITY PROJECT**

122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 320

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Phone: (612) 871-8980

Fax: (612) 871-8984

February 28, 1997

Mr. George A. Garnett
Vice President, Programs
The Minneapolis Foundation
A200 Foshay Tower
821 Marquette Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Dear George:

Thanks for the very productive meeting earlier this month. It is a great pleasure to work with funders who are not only supportive of our work but also eager to offer new ideas and to actively help shape projects. You and Paul Williams are both great assets to our work and we thank you.

This letter is to outline the elements of a "Citizens Summit" on creating better schools and affordable housing for every resident of the Twin Cities. The project is designed to bring some closure to the "Community Circles" meetings now, or about to be, underway: to honor the work these dedicated citizens have undertaken, to provide a forum for further exchange of ideas (now in the form of more concrete solutions and next steps) among these diverse citizens, to further build connections among citizens metro-wide to *act*, and, finally to generate attention for those ideas among local and national policy leaders, the media and the public.

As we discussed, our plan is to hold a major public forum featuring a speaker of national stature. The program will be co-hosted by the Community Circle partners and the Minnesota Meeting. I've had a long conversation with George Latimer and he agrees that Andrew Cuomo, the new Secretary of HUD, would be an ideal speaker. Mr. Cuomo has expressed a keen interest in what we are doing – and George thinks we have a good chance at getting Cuomo within our May timeline.

The Citizens Summit with Mr. Cuomo will have two parts:

1) A Citizens Forum with the participants from the Community Circle project. At the forum, participants will present their best ideas for moving from ideas to action on better integrating the metropolitan area. The session will be fully interactive, with the participants having the ability to electronically vote on or rate the various ideas presented. The forum will be moderated by Mr. Latimer and co-facilitated by Jayne Marecek, president of EXPRESS.

In addition to Mr. Cuomo, the forum will be attended by a number of local policy makers/elected officials, from suburban, urban, metropolitan, school, county and state government – all the key officials working on or influencing these issues. The goal of the meeting will be to have these policy makers present to listen to citizens, and to understand the depth of support for their ideas. Our plan is to have 150-200 citizen participants from the study circles join us for the sessions, as well as several dozen policy makers.

2) **A Minnesota Meeting address.** In conjunction with the forum, the Minnesota Meeting will also host an address by Mr. Cuomo. The larger group of community leaders – largely from business and the professions – will join the 200 or so participants from the morning forum for the Minnesota Meeting, which will likely be held just after the forum. It will be very easy for the forum participants – and the elected officials – to stay on for the luncheon, which will be broadcast live on the stations of Minnesota Public Radio. The Minnesota Meeting will also give Mr. Cuomo an excellent opportunity to relate to this larger audience his understanding of the work that happened that morning. Our target date remains late May.

The cost of the above is \$8,000. That cost will cover complete use of the EXPRESS Communications interactive meeting technology at the forum, and provision of the firm's expertise on meeting design, agenda-setting, media relations, and planning of such events. That amount includes \$1,000 to cover all miscellaneous costs associated with the forum (mailing, copying, etc.) and to purchase lunches for some participants. The Minnesota Meeting will cover all travel and lodging costs for Mr. Cuomo, will provide its staff for making all logistical arrangements and coordinating the large-scale meeting itself, will allow all participants to attend the Minnesota Meeting at the membership rate of \$18 and will provide luncheon scholarships for lunches of some non-profit and low income participants (with the project picking up some, too, on a needs basis).

The Community Circles project will handle all communications with the participants and the elected officials (with professional communications advice and support from EXPRESS, which has handled many similar public policy programs) and will actively recruit diverse participants.

As we stated at the meeting our goal is to bring together a group of diverse people who are all committed to moving ahead on these important issues, to "change how we do business" on these issues (schools, housing and segregation), to quote George Garnett. The group will include diversity by race, gender, income, geographic location and political perspective – and profession. We want new people in this discussion – including business owners and a very good mix of suburban and urban people.

We also desire to provide an evening forum for Community Circle participants, especially for those participants who will not be able to attend the daytime forum coupled with the Minnesota Meeting.

This forum will be moderated by Mr. George Latimer and Ms. Vivian Jenkins Nelsen and will use an interactive process modeled after the public deliberations of the Kettering Foundation's National Issues Forums and the Study Circles Resource Center. It will be held prior to the Minnesota Meeting forum, to enable the fullest possible input into the Citizens Summit. The cost of doing that forum is \$2,000. Accordingly our total request from the Minneapolis Foundation (and its partnering funders) is for \$10,000.

We think it would be ideal to have the project jointly funded by the Minneapolis Foundation and the Saint Paul Foundation (or another major St. Paul-based funder). Please do not hesitate to call me – or any of us – with questions. Thanks, again.

Sincerely,

Dick Little, Coordinator

cc: Paul D. Williams, Project Manager, *Building Better Futures*, The Minneapolis Foundation
 Mike Anderson, Board Member, Education and Housing Equity Project
 Jayne Maracek and Ken Darling, EXPRESS Communications/Minnesota Meeting
 Leonard Witt, Minnesota Public Radio Civic Journalism Project
 George Latimer, Professor of Urban Studies, Macalester College