

# Hiawatha CARE Project: Fact Sheet

## Issue: Lack of Community



### Why is Community Important?

Actions taken by individuals, community members, and organizations within the community contribute to the area's social and economic environment. Community takes a broad definition, and can include neighbors on a block, members of a faith, families that share a school, people that share a hobby or sporting activity, and any other group brought together by a common interest.

Loss of community can lead to isolation and harmful behaviors. Community building can increase social justice and well-being and reduce that disconnect. Many practices, ranging from simple potlucks and small book clubs to community events, can create and build community in an area.

### How Does Lack of Community Affect Us Locally?

Neighborhood and community organizations contribute to a sense of community by sharing information, sponsoring events, and engaging community members in local issues. Local destinations, such as libraries, community centers, places of worship, parks, the YWCA, and the Midtown Farmers Market, as well as local businesses, provide a space for people to meet and socialize with their neighbors.

On the other hand, there are few public gathering spaces within the corridor area, and few organized activities and events that are both convenient and regularly scheduled. A perception of a transient community adds to the difficulty in creating community cohesion.

### Health Impacts

- Isolation can heighten physical and mental health issues.
- Seniors, who may experience mobility impairments or may have few family or friends in the area – are particularly vulnerable to the health issues associated with isolation.

### Environmental Impacts

- Sense of community may be associated with tendency to take care of the natural environment, such as picking up litter, watering boulevard trees, and landscaping.

### Financial Impacts

- Lack of support for local businesses.

### Hiawatha CARE Project Partners

Alexander's Import Auto Repair	Hennepin County	Minnesota Department of Health
American Lung Association of Minnesota	Hennepin - University Partnership	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Blue Construction	Little Earth of United Tribes	Mississippi Watershed Management Org.
City of Minneapolis	Longfellow Business Association	Preventing Harm Minnesota
East Phillips Improvement Coalition	Longfellow Community Council	St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church
Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota	Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church & Longfellow Lutheran parishes	US Environmental Protection Agency
Gardening Matters	Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	Women's Environmental Institute

# Hiawatha CARE Project - A project of Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works

## What Can Individuals Do?

- Attend neighborhood and community group meetings; participate on committees or groups that interest you.
- Participate through faith organizations, senior or youth groups, gardening groups, schools, and other groups interested in creating community.
- Join or start an organization or committee that interests you.

## What Can the Community Do?

- Support community gardens, farmers markets, and urban farms as a way to create multi-generational and multi-cultural engagement while supporting healthy food.
- Support and attend activities that bring community members together and celebrate community.

## What Can the City, County, and State Do?

- Support community and neighborhood associations.
- Sponsor or participate in community events.

## For More Information

City of Minneapolis,  
[www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ncr/index.htm](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ncr/index.htm)

Gardening Matters, [www.gardeningmatters.org](http://www.gardeningmatters.org)

Midtown Farmers Market,  
[www.midtownfarmersmarket.org/](http://www.midtownfarmersmarket.org/)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,  
[www.healthypeople.gov](http://www.healthypeople.gov)

*Photos from Hennepin County Housing, Community Works, and Transit*



## What is the CARE Project?

The Hiawatha CARE Project is a new effort to address environmental toxins in western Longfellow and East Phillips. The project brings together two dozen business, community, government, and non-profit agencies in a community-

driven effort to identify, prioritize, and address environmental risks in the area.

The project was initiated in December 2010 when Hennepin County received a \$100,000 Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) award from the

US Environmental Protection Agency. The CARE program supports local collaborations to reduce toxins in the local community.

### More Information:

[www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com/care](http://www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com/care)  
612.348.9344.