



Title:	Authorization to Execute a Contract with Smith Partners for Engagement Support
Resolution number:	26-40: Minnehaha Creek Greenway Resident Engagement 26-41: Land Use Community Engagement
Prepared by:	Name: Samantha Hoppe Phone: 952-641-4518 shoppe@minnehahacreek.org
Reviewed by:	James Wisker, Administrator
Recommended action:	Authorize Contracting with Smith Partners
Schedule:	April 2026 – November 2026
Budget Considerations:	Res 26-40 Minnehaha Creek Greenway Resident Engagement Fund name and code: 2-2008-3400-002: MPCA Planning Grant for Stormwater, Wastewater, and Community Resilience Fund Budget: \$100,000 Requested amount of funding: \$24,750 Res 26-41 Land Use Community Engagement Fund names and codes: 4-4002-4320: Outreach – Contracted Services 2-2008-4320: Policy Planning – Contracted Services Fund Budgets: Outreach – Contracted Services: \$69,000 Policy Planning – Contracted Services: - \$199,500 Requested amount of funding: \$37,200
Past Board Action:	November 20, 2025, Policy & Planning Committee – 2027 Watershed Management Plan Updates

Background:

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) believes that natural systems underpin place and community, and that when built and natural systems work in harmony, environmental, economic, and social value is created. To achieve this vision of a [Balanced Urban Ecology](#), MCWD has committed to join with others to develop a deeper understanding of the needs and desires of communities and design projects that create environmental benefit, economic vitality, and broader social benefit within its member communities.

The District’s 2027 Watershed Management Plan (Plan) aims to continue building on MCWD’s trajectory of demonstrated impact through Balanced Urban Ecology, leveraging sustained partnerships and coordinated planning to address new challenges for the watershed over the next decade.

To accomplish these goals, the 2027 Plan must:

1. Celebrate and validate the impact of MCWD’s accomplishments over the 2017 Plan cycle.
2. Expand, refine, and strengthen MCWD’s focal geography model for project implementation.
3. Advance policy to better integrate water and land planning with public and private land use partners.
4. Prepare watershed partners and communities for evolving flood vulnerabilities.
5. Broaden and diversify MCWD’s coalition of supporters for the next decade.

2027 Watershed Management Plan Engagement:

MCWD has designed a robust stakeholder engagement process for the 2027 Plan to achieve these goals and ensure the Plan reflects the needs of the watershed's communities. In alignment with the District's Outreach Strategic Direction, the 2027 Plan engagement process is anchored around engagement with public partners through Policy Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and subwatershed planning processes. MCWD's 2027 Plan Framework also outlines methods for broad-based public engagement and communication, such as newsletters, online surveys, and open houses to keep watershed residents informed and collect their input on the 2027 Plan's priorities.

Leveraging feedback from partners, the Board, and the CAC, staff have also examined opportunities for targeted, inclusive engagement of other constituencies in shaping the Plan, including residents, community leaders, and the business community, with goals of building diverse coalitions of stakeholders that support the 2027 Plan.

To supplement engagement with public partners, MCWD has identified two key engagement initiatives that will provide strategic value to the 2027 Plan process and subsequent implementation cycle:

1. Resident Engagement in Focal Geographies - Engage residents and park users in MCWD's Focal Geographies to assess the impact of MCWD's Balanced Urban Ecology approach and past investments, build relationships with community leaders, and pilot inclusive engagement approaches, to generate insights that improve service delivery and inform MCWD's approach to engagement and project implementation.
2. Land Use Community Engagement - Engage private developers, past partners, and peers in the land use community to understand perceptions of watershed regulation and partnership opportunities, to inform refinements to MCWD's permitting and Land & Water Partnership programs that better support integrated land and water planning.

Within each initiative, staff have outlined a multi-pronged engagement process to gather key insights to inform the 2027 Plan direction.

Scope and Process:

Resident Engagement in Focal Geographies:

MCWD will conduct intercept surveys with park users in three key areas of investment within Focal Geographies: the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, Arden Park, and the Wassermann Lake Preserve. At each of these locations, MCWD will survey park visitors to better understand how the community experiences and values these restored spaces, including the importance of these projects for improving water quality, providing green space, connecting communities, and improving flood vulnerabilities. To supplement these learnings and gather broader insights within these geographies, MCWD may also interview and convene community leaders.

MCWD recently secured a planning grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for stormwater, wastewater, and community resilience, which allocates \$24,750 to support public engagement watershed-wide and in socially vulnerable [Environmental Justice areas](#) within the watershed.

Land Use Community Engagement:

MCWD will conduct interviews with past development and private business partners to identify lessons learned, assess the value of integrated planning approaches on the private business community, and support the creation of marketing case studies for land and water integration in private sector projects. To gather additional insights from the broader development community across several scales, MCWD will conduct interviews with staff and leadership at large, private development firms, regional Chambers of Commerce, and local Economic Development Authorities.

This feedback will be paired with insights from interviews with Administrators and staff at other metro watershed organizations, to assess watershed permitting approaches across the region and how other watersheds engage and partner with the land use community. These conversations will inform MCWD's permitting and Land & Water Partnership (LWP) programs, identify opportunities to improve integration between land and water planning at a regional scale, and support coordinated messaging on the value of watershed involvement in development outcomes.

Based on their team's expertise in building and engaging coalitions of diverse community partners; their strong understanding and familiarity with MCWD's approach, projects, partnerships, and programs; and their position as legal counsel for other watershed organizations across the metro, Smith Partners has prepared scopes to lend their professional services to support engagement with the land use community and residents in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, given the geography's community composition and project context. MCWD's Outreach team will lead engagement in the watershed's other focal geographies, building on lessons learned from Smith Partners' work in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway.

Recommendation:

Staff request authorization to contract with Smith Partners to support these two key engagement initiatives in amounts not to exceed the following:

- Minnehaha Creek Greenway Resident Engagement: \$24,750
- Land Use Community Engagement: \$37,200

Attachments:

- Minnehaha Creek Greenway Resident Engagement Scope
- Land Use Community Engagement Scope
- Kowsar Mohamed's Resume



RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 26-40

Title: Minnehaha Creek Greenway Resident Engagement Contracting

- WHEREAS, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District’s (MCWD or District) current Watershed Management Plan (Plan) memorialized a significant shift in MCWD’s approach to watershed management centered around its Balanced Urban Ecology Policy, which identifies community partnership as a core principle to guide implementation;

- WHEREAS, MCWD is required under Minnesota Rules 8410 to revise its Plan every ten years, with the current Plan adopted in January 2018 and due for revision by the end of 2027;

- WHEREAS, in December 2024, the MCWD Board of Managers adopted the 2027 Plan Framework, which advances the District’s Balanced Urban Ecology (BUE) vision and identifies four areas of focus: (1) developing a flood risk management strategy, (2) expanding project implementation in focal geographies, (3) strengthening the Land & Water Partnership program through proactive engagement in land use planning, and (4) establishing an evaluation framework to measure progress;

- WHEREAS, MCWD’s Outreach Strategic direction, adopted in 2020, recognized the importance of targeted engagement with land use decision-makers and community partners to shape MCWD’s work, and emphasized that effective resident engagement is geographically focused and custom-tailored;

- WHEREAS, MCWD is engaging public partners in a robust process to shape the 2027 Plan, build support for the District’s approach, and ensure the Plan reflects community priorities;

- WHEREAS, Targeted engagement with residents in Focal Geographies will allow the District to assess the community impact of past project investments, inform future project implementation approaches and inclusive engagement strategies, and build broader coalitions of support for the 2027 Plan cycle;

- WHEREAS, Based on their unique expertise and experience, Smith Partners has prepared a scope to support resident engagement in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, which is a key focal geography home to a socio-economically and ethnically diverse community;

- WHEREAS, The Board of Managers has reviewed Smith Partners’ Scope and finds that the work will generate valuable insights that will meaningfully enhance MCWD’s approach and support the delivery of a visionary, well-supported, and impactful 2027 Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby authorizes the District Administrator to execute a contract with Smith Partners for resident engagement in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, in an amount not to exceed \$27,500.

Resolution Number 26-40 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: April 9, 2026.

 Secretary Date: _____



RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 26-41

Title: Land Use Community Engagement Contracting

WHEREAS, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District’s (MCWD or District) current Watershed Management Plan (Plan) memorialized a significant shift in MCWD’s approach to watershed management centered around its Balanced Urban Ecology Policy, which identifies community partnership as a core principle to guide implementation;

WHEREAS, MCWD is required under Minnesota Rules 8410 to revise its Plan every ten years, with the current Plan adopted in January 2018 and due for revision by the end of 2027;

WHEREAS, in December 2024, the MCWD Board of Managers adopted the 2027 Plan Framework, which advances the District’s Balanced Urban Ecology (BUE) vision and identifies four areas of focus: (1) developing a flood risk management strategy, (2) expanding project implementation in focal geographies, (3) strengthening the Land & Water Partnership program through proactive engagement in land use planning, and (4) establishing an evaluation framework to measure progress;

WHEREAS, MCWD’s Outreach Strategic direction, adopted in 2020, recognized the importance of targeted engagement with land use decision-makers and community partners to shape MCWD’s work;

WHEREAS, MCWD is engaging public partners in a robust process to shape the 2027 Plan, build support for the District’s approach, and ensure the Plan reflects community priorities;

WHEREAS, Strategic engagement with the land use community, including past partners, private developers, and watershed peers, will build MCWD’s understanding of how the land use community perceives watershed regulation and partnership, informing partnership opportunities, outreach strategies, and refinements to MCWD’s permitting and Land & water Partnership (LWP) programs to support integrated land and water planning;

WHEREAS, Based on their unique expertise and experience, Smith Partners has prepared a scope to support engagement with identified stakeholders in the land use community;

WHEREAS, The Board of Managers has reviewed Smith Partners’ Scope and finds that the work will generate valuable insights that will meaningfully enhance the District’s approach and support the delivery of a visionary, well-supported, and impactful 2027 Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby authorizes the District Administrator to execute a contract with Smith Partners for land use community engagement, in an amount not to exceed \$37,200.

Resolution Number 26-41 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___eyes, ___nays, ___abstentions. Date: April 9, 2026.

 Secretary Date: _____



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www.smithpartners.com

2027 Watershed Management Plan Community Partnership and Strategic Engagement

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Targeted Resident Engagement in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway

Project Team:

MCWD	Smith Partners
James Wisker, <i>Strategic Advisor</i>	Louis Smith, <i>Strategic Advisor</i>
Samantha Hoppe, <i>Project Manager</i>	Kowsar Mohamed, <i>Engagement Lead</i>
Maia Irvin & James O'Brien, <i>Engagement Support</i>	

Project Summary:

Plan and implement targeted engagement with residents in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway corridor to assess the impact of MCWD’s past investments, build relationships, and pilot inclusive engagement approaches.

Desired Engagement Outcomes:

1. Document how residents experience restored water spaces in MCWD.
2. Synthesize lived experiences of residents in focal geographies into case study stories.
3. Strengthen narrative foundation of the 2027 Plan, and measures of thriving community success.
4. Surface trust dynamics and engagement gaps.
5. Understand resident perceptions of flood risk in this geography.
6. Identify lessons for improving inclusion in future project planning.
7. Produce recommendations for refining MCWD’s Inclusive Engagement Framework.
8. Conclude plan process with highest level of support possible from communities.

Background Context & Resources:

The following resources will be provided for review and context for the project.

- [2027 Watershed Management Plan Webpage](#) and [Kick-off Meeting Presentation](#)
- [Community Capacity Assessment Study in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed, Amit Pradhananga and Mae Davenport \(April 2013\)](#)
- [Minnehaha Creek, A Case Study of Urban Water Resource Planning & Implementation Strategies, James Wisker \(October 2014\)](#)

- [Minnehaha Creek Greenway Webpages](#)
- [MCWD 50th Anniversary Videos](#) - Minnehaha Creek Greenway
- Minnehaha Creek Greenway Factsheet
- MCWD Minnehaha Creek Greenway Area ACS and Met Council Equity-Based Data

Scope of Work and Process

Smith Partners Activities:

Timeline	Activity	Est. Hours	Est. Cost*
Task 1. April – May 2026	<i>Task 1. Discovery & Engagement Design</i>		
	Review Background Resources	8hrs	\$2000
	Staff Coordination & Discovery	4hrs	\$1000
	Site recon	2hrs	\$500
	Design Engagement Plan	6hrs	\$1,500
Task 2. June – July 2026	<i>Task 2. Intercept Engagements (2-3 intercepts, 8-10 participants)</i>		
	Draft questionnaires & protocols	8hrs	\$2,000
	Staff Coordination	4hrs	\$1,000
	Intercepts	6hrs	\$1,500
	Documentation	4hrs	\$1,000
Task 3. July – August 2026	<i>Task 3. Community Leader Connections (~6 interviews)</i>		
	Stakeholder analysis and ID	3hrs	\$750
	Scheduling and Coordination	3hrs	\$750
	Interviews	6hrs	\$1,500
	Staff Coordination	2hrs	\$500
	Documentation	4hrs	\$1,000
Task 4. August – September 2026	<i>Task 4. Small Group Dialogues (2-3 dialogues)</i>		
	Stakeholder Analysis and ID	2hrs	\$500
	Participant Recruitment	8hrs	\$2000
	Staff Coordination	2hrs	\$500
	Scheduling and Stakeholder Coordination	4hrs	\$1,000
	Preparation and Facilitation Planning	3hrs	\$750
	Dialogues	6hrs	\$1,500
	Documentation	4hrs	\$1,000
Task 5. September – November 2026	<i>Task 5. Documentation and Synthesis</i>		
	Compilation and Drafting	4hrs	\$1,000
	Staff Coordination	2hrs	\$500
	Review and Finalization	2hrs	\$500
	Presentation of Findings	2hrs	\$500
Total:		99hrs	\$24,750*

*An average billable cost of \$250/hr is used for simplified budgeting purposes.

Key Deliverables:

- Focal Geography Lived Experience Synthesis Report
- Narrative case studies and qualitative metrics for 2027 Plan communications
- Engagement lessons for MCWD's Inclusive Engagement Framework refinement



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2027 Watershed Management Plan Community Partnership and Strategic Engagement

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Land Use Community Engagement

Project Team:

MCWD	Smith Partners
James Wisker, <i>Project Manager</i>	Louis Smith, <i>Engagement Lead</i>
Samantha Hoppe, <i>Engagement Support</i>	Kowsar Mohamed, <i>Engagement Support</i>
Veronica Sannes, <i>Strategic Advisor</i>	

Project Summary:

Plan, implement, and document engagement with past development partners, Metro Watershed District Administrators, and economic development agencies to understand how the land use community perceives watershed regulation and partnership, informing refinements to better integrate land and water planning in MCWD programs.

Desired Engagement Outcomes:

1. Understand and document how past development partnerships experienced watershed regulations.
2. Identify where watershed permitting functioned as strategic value-add versus regulatory hurdle.
3. Surface opportunities for accelerating environmental entitlement while maintaining standards.
4. Inform MCWD’s permitting strategy and implementation within the 2027 Plan cycle.
5. Build relationships with potential partners to support future project implementation.
6. Assemble portfolio of case studies from business and development partners.

Background Context & Resources:

The following resources will be provided for review and context for the project.

- [Sensible Land Use Coalition Housing Affordability Retreat White Paper, December 2025](#)
- MCWD’s Land & Water Partnership Initiative [Kickoff](#) & [Capstone](#) Publications
- MCWD Permitting Program Strategic Visioning Synthesis
- [MCWD’s Land & Water Partnership Program Guidance](#)
- [Land & Water Partnership Program Webpage and Project Pages](#)

Scope of Work and Process

Smith Partners Activities:

Timeline	Activity	Est. Hours	Est. Cost*
Task 1. April 2026	<i>Task 1. Discovery & Engagement Design</i>		
	Review Background Resources & Stakeholders	4hrs	\$1200
	Staff Coordination & Discovery	4hrs	\$1200
Task 2. April – May 2026	<i>Task 2. Metro Watershed Interviews (6-8 interviews)</i>		
	Draft Questionnaires & Protocols	6hrs	\$1800
	Staff Coordination	8hrs	\$2400
	Interviewee Coordination & Scheduling	6hrs	\$1800
	Interviews	8hrs	\$2400
	Case Study Documentation	6hrs	\$1800
Task 3. May – June 2026	<i>Task 3. Development Partner Interviews (8-12 interviews)</i>		
	Draft Questionnaires & Protocols	6hrs	\$1800
	Staff Coordination	8hrs	\$2400
	Interviewee Coordination & Scheduling	8hrs	\$2400
	Interviews	12hrs	\$3600
	Case Study Documentation	8hrs	\$2400
Task 4. June – August 2026	<i>Task 4. Private Developer Interviews (~6 interviews)</i>		
	Stakeholder Analysis and Identification	6hrs	\$1800
	Preparation and Questionnaire Drafting	6hrs	\$1800
	Staff Coordination	6hrs	\$1800
	Interviewee Coordination & Scheduling	8hrs	\$2400
	Interviews	8hrs	\$2400
	Documentation	6hrs	\$1800
	Total:	124hrs	\$37,200*

*An average Smith Partners billable rate of \$300/hr is used for simplified budgeting purposes.

Key Deliverables:

The MCWD staff team will collaborate on synthesis and drafting of the following deliverables based on engagement documentation from Smith Partners.

- a. Business and Development Value Proposition Report
- b. Land & Water Partnership Program and Permitting Program Recommendations
- b. Watershed Partnership and Regulation Case Study Briefs



Kowsar D. Mohamed, MURP, CSM

Social Impact Executive

Dedicated cultural architect and champion of solutions that drive transformative change through cross-functional and cross-cultural collaborations that result in streamlined, simplified, and increased team/board/council productivity and engagement. Driven to continuously strengthen organization, client, and stakeholder relations through intentional partnership management.



Kowsar@estratgrp.com



612-707-5038



kowsarmohamed

SOCIAL EQUITY + IMPACT EXECUTIVE

Kowsar D. Mohamed is a social scientist and economic development practitioner based in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region, who has led multiple inclusive growth and sustainability initiatives with public and private sector partners. Ms. Mohamed's work has resulted in transformative public-private partnerships that have created pathways to move the bar on technological, social, environmental, and governance strategies most recently spearheading the State of Minnesota's Equity Analysis Diagnostic Tool adoption and socialization, City of Saint Paul's MSP TechHire Program and the Center for Economic Inclusion's Regional Inclusive Growth Network in partnership with the Brookings Institute.

Areas of Expertise: Public Interest Design and Technology, Environmental Social Governance Research, Program Management, Stakeholder Engagement, Organizational Development, Business Case Development, and Outsourcing/Vendor Management

Technical Skills: Power BI, Tableau, MLS, CoStar, MNCAR Exchange, Redfin, Esri: ArcGIS, Mentimeter, Jira, Adobe Suite, Microsoft Suite, Google Workspace, Figma, Axure, and Scrum Alliance Certified ScrumMaster (CSM)

AWARDS, MERITS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

2024 – 2026	NSF Research Traineeship: Circularity Impact Program Fellow
2024	City of Minneapolis Creative CityMaking Artist
2024	Minnesota Young American Leaders Program (MYALP)
2023	University of Minnesota Tribal Relations Fellow
2022	Urban Land Institute Minnesota Real Estate Diversity Initiative
2021	City of Minneapolis Public Health Advisory Committee Membership Award
2019	Women's Foundation of Minnesota YWI Fellow
2017	University of Minnesota President's Award for Outstanding Service
2016 – 2017	University of Minnesota Policy Engagement Program Fellow

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Enterprise Director State of Minnesota – Office of Inclusion, Saint Paul, MN	January 2025 – Present (Pop. 36,000)
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- Lead a team of 3 FTEs and restructured internal workstreams to enhance operational efficiency and strategic alignment.
- Provide strategic guidance to cabinet-level agencies to design and implement equity and inclusion strategies aligned with the One Minnesota Plan.
- Co-lead the Enterprise HR/LR Policy and Procedures Review Group to advance the charge of EO 23-14 by reviewing and updating five enterprise-wide policies and procedures.
- Track and monitor completion of One Minnesota Long-Range Plan recommendations in coordination with the Enterprise Long-Range Plan Implementation Team, composed of cross-agency partners.
- Spearhead enterprise-wide modernization of telework policies, fostering shared understanding and equitable application across all agencies.
- Directed the rollout of the MMB Welcome Center, reaching over 300 returning agency employees following the March 2025 enterprise telework policy transition.
- Provide consultation on inclusive risk mitigation strategies for enterprise continuity planning and enterprise public engagement pilot initiatives.
- Guide the development of the enterprise-wide employee engagement survey, embedding measures for equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
- Manage DEIL (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Leadership) Liaison network convenings and launched the Office of Inclusion's inaugural monthly newsletter.
- Advise enterprise communications on messaging related to cultural heritage months, diversity proclamations, and inclusion-centered events for state employees and external partners.

Director of Strategic Inclusion

February 2024 – January 2025

- Spearhead tracking and monitoring of enterprise-wide inclusion initiatives in alignment with the One Minnesota Plan and Long-Range Plan Recommendations.
- Provide guidance and support to small agencies in the development and implementation of their equity and inclusion strategies.
- Organize and facilitate Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Leadership (DEIL) monthly and quarterly meetings to socialize best practices and collaboration across state agencies.
- Develop and direct strategic priorities for the Office of Inclusion, ensuring alignment with state-wide goals and objectives.
- Collaborate with state leadership to develop and refine policies that promote inclusion and equity within all state departments and agencies.
- Conduct comprehensive data analysis to monitor the effectiveness of inclusion programs and provided detailed reports to senior leadership.
- Design and deliver training programs to enhance cultural competency and foster an inclusive work environment across state agencies.

Strategy Consultant

November 2021 – Present

Smith Partners, Minneapolis, MN

- Advise public sector and community clients on inclusive policy design, systems planning, and cross-sector strategy development.
- Facilitate stakeholder engagement processes and co-design solutions for complex environmental, social, and governance (ESG) challenges.
- Lead strategic initiatives such as the Cedar Riverside Partnership, supporting long-term community resilience and infrastructure planning.
- Convene diverse coalitions and advisory groups to build consensus, align shared priorities, and co-develop strategic plans and governance frameworks.
- Develop data-informed reports, presentations, and briefing materials to guide public decision-making and support transparent community, partner, and client engagement.
- Support grant seeking and fund development efforts, contributing to the successful securing of public and philanthropic investments to advance project goals.

Principal

April 2018 – Present

Enigma Strategies Group, Minneapolis, MN

- Develop agile strategies for regional public private partnerships to transform their current economic development planning, neighborhood small area plans, consortium implementation and marketing efforts.
- Plan and implement several community-wide vision processes ranging from 50 – 350+ participants that have created community vision statements, resolutions, and community action goals for business retention, attraction, and development.
- Secured over \$350k in investments for community-founded organizations driving systems and place-based change.
- Serve as a point for risks, issues, and obstacles, ensuring action items are clearly defined and driven to a resolution for client projects.
- Provide advocacy and synergy to new and existing regional business owners, industry partners, and community organization.

Director of Strategic Partnerships and Inclusive Growth

July 2022 – February 2024

Center for Economic Inclusion, Saint Paul, MN

- Led a portfolio of earned revenue initiatives with public, private, and civic sector clients generating measurable racial equity results with expected year over year growth for client organizations and the MSP region.
- Oversaw and managed inclusive growth and competitiveness contracts/projects values at \$2M+, ensuring public, private, and civic sector clients obtain excellent project results.
- Directed and supervised 3 FTEs and an external subcontractor to fulfill inclusive growth, racial equity evaluation, transportation, workforce development and employer inclusivity contracts.
- Executed, planned, and organized racial equity educational trainings and workshops for public sector client projects impacting 3.1M Minnesotans in the 7-county metro.
- Conducted organizational culture assessments and system audits with clients; develop reports and recommendations to

client project elected and appointed public officials.

- Led development and defining of project scope and objectives, involving all relevant shareholders to ensure technical feasibility.
- Collected survey, focus group, and interview data (quantitative and qualitative) to identify themes around identity-based disparities in lived and worked experience to redesign policies, plans, and practices to be more equitable and reflective.
- Administered and managed the functional and technical design, prototyping, and process design stages of implementations.
- Planned and provided Board of Directors and Senior Leadership Team support for project management systems as needed.
- Facilitated partnerships with business and cultural intermediaries, racial and economic justice organizations, and faith-based entities.
- Strengthened the capacity of local, regional, and state-wide public agencies through workshops, trainings, and engagements to produce racially equitable and economically inclusive results in workforce development, economic development, and land use planning.
- Co-directed, planned, and designed the development of a racial equity analytical tool for local government to build towards building racially equitable structures and systems.

Adjunct Instructor

March 2021 – Present

Department of Urban Studies, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, MN

(Pop. 51,147)

- Prepare and develop curriculum for: URBS 3200 – Urban Studies Colloquium: Cultural Districts – Resilience and Recovery in Twin Cities Cultural Districts.
- Deliver virtual and in-person learning-centered class instruction to 18 upper-level undergraduates through culturally competent teaching methodologies, community panels, and student-led peer-to-peer learning circles. Mentored and managed team of 2.

Senior Project Manager

January 2019 – July 2022

Department of Planning and Economic Development, City of Saint Paul, MN

(Pop. 307,193)

- Managed \$1.2M in commercial development contracts/projects; ensuring that the city and client(s) obtain the best possible loan rates and project results.
- Co-designed a \$250K technical assistance program to support Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) operated small businesses in Saint Paul.
- Coordinated program management for the city's Strategic Investment Fund, which served as a tool to attract and recruit new employers to the city. On average assisted one to two businesses per year with this direct investment.
- Managed the MSP TechHire workforce development tech-equity program to provide \$330k+ in tech training scholarships to underrepresented communities in tech.
- Designed and developed a User Experience program for young adults with Right Track Saint Paul, Step-Up Minneapolis, and Prime Digital Academy; resulted in sustained MSP TechHire budget and expansion.
- Led the initiation, planning, and management of all aspects of the 'Cultural Destination Area' equitable development initiative on behalf of the City of Saint Paul, including designing and reviewing project proposals, contracts, financing, negotiating deal terms, and resolving elements associated with the initiative.
- Strategically deployed \$30k in pre-development planning funding to support business technical assistance providers.
- Coordinated and conducted site visits and tours for businesses, clients, and community partners interested in investing in Saint Paul.
- Negotiated and approve contracts/agreements with suppliers, businesses, developers, lenders, federal, state, and local agencies.
- Facilitated 20+ community trainings and economic development information sessions ranging from 25-60 participants.
- Collaborated with 50+ community experts, government entities, businesses, and foundations on economic development and planning ecosystem strategies.
- Investigated economic and business development contracts to determine regulatory actions and provide advice on eligible uses and sources.
- Implemented and advance economic development goals and strategies for the City of Saint Paul, and partner with the development community, local businesses, chamber(s) of commerce, and various City departments and staff.
- Provided guidance to the Mayor, City Council, and community partners on department strategies, policies, and logistics.
- Served as a business development liaison for the department's vertical.
- Coordinated efforts along cultural/commercial corridors and nodes to support business development and expansion of the tax base.

Community-based Researcher

September 2018 – June 2019

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, MN (Pop. 51,147)

- Researched and produced reports relating to immigrant youth and parents involved in K-12 education using culturally appropriate assessments and interpreting measures.
- Developed and executed engagement plans to inform community members of educational opportunities which included attending local events, visiting places of worship, and hosting events with community members.

Project Coordinator

September 2018 – June 2019

Hennepin-University Partnership, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, MN

(Pop. 51,147)

- Directed the planning and execution of mixers, leadership meetings, and brown bags for Hennepin County staff and University of Minnesota faculty.
- Managed project budgets over \$100k for large-scale events and maintained strong relationships with numerous local vendors to assist with planning events.
- Coordinated communications and developed social networking outreach plans which reached over a 100+ attendees.

Real Estate Development Associate

October 2017 – May 2018

Element, Inc., Minneapolis, MN

- Led the functional and technical design, prototyping, and processing design stages of the public market feasibility study for the City of Minneapolis' RFP for the '2600 Minnehaha' site.
- Conducted qualitative and quantitative culturally competent interviews with BIPOCI business owners for the feasibility study as needed.
- Conducted market research of the Minneapolis/St. Paul and adjacent first-ring markets utilizing MNCAR Exchange, CoStar, Craigslist, and MLS.

Community Development Manager

February 2015 – October 2017

West Bank Community Coalition, Minneapolis, MN

(Pop. 8,094)

- Oversaw and led complex neighborhood development projects with multiple project teams and contractors.
- Led a team of 2 FTEs and 2 interns.
- Developed culturally relevant marketing materials in line with the business services and managed the relationships with small businesses and community-based organizations.
- Managed 30+ cases of residents receiving housing services and updated their information as required by external programs.
- Collected and analyzed legislative information, maintained the database, and participated in hearings/briefings.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Xcel Energy Environmental Justice Accountability Board, Board Member	November 2024 – Present
Ramsey County Workforce Innovation Board, Tech Committee Member	January 2021 – Present
City of Minneapolis – South Side Green Zone Council, Chair and Council Member	May 2019 – Present
UMN Regents Candidate Advisory Council, Council Member	October 2020 – December 2024
Partnership in Property Commercial Land Trust, Board of Directors – Business Retention	September 2021 – April 2023
City of Minneapolis – Public Health Advisory Committee, Ward 6 Representative	January 2017 – January 2023
City of Minneapolis – Vision Zero Advisory Committee, Community Representative	December 2018 – February 2020

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Student in Natural Resource Science Mgmt., College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences – Twin Cities
Master of Urban and Regional Planning, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Metropolitan Design Certificate, College of Design, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Bachelor of Science – Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Bachelor of Arts – Global Studies, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
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