

**Project Report: Jan – June 2018 (with Jan – June 2017 and July – Dec 2017 activities for reference)
Northside Neighborhood Engagement & Opportunities in Clean Water Initiatives**

Goal 1: Improve water quality in Bassett Creek by engaging community members to install and maintain boulevard bioswales in collaboration with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board’s Emerald Ash Borer tree replacement program.

Objective 1: Work with the HNA to identify 5- 6 target blocks within the Harrison Neighborhood based on interest in participation, opportunity for runoff capture, and timing of ash tree removal.				
Activity	Unit	Project Activities (Jan - June 2017)	Project Activities (July – Dec 2017)	Project Activities (Jan – June 2018)
Identity block captains	5-10	7 boulevard captains were identified and engaged to reach out to their neighbors to participate in a Blooming Boulevard installation in 2017. Captains were identified through neighborhood events, flyers, block parties and word of mouth. We held a boulevard captain training on May 1. Since then, we’ve held 4 block parties (some parties hosted multiple blocks). Some parties were standalone events and others were in conjunction with other planned block events. Metro Blooms worked with block captains to invite neighbors to the events and created a number of educational/outreach materials to assist with engagement.	No updates	Boulevard captains continue to be engaged in the project through maintenance activities. A number of boulevard captains have stepped up and engaged their neighbors that have a boulevard bioswale to order replacement plants, water, and weed when necessary.
Notify MPRB for tree marking/stump removal	50-70 trees	21 ash trees were marked; all 21 were removed by MPRB. Ash stumps were ground by MPRB. Metro Blooms subcontracted with NEON to deep grind the stump and lateral roots and begin excavation for each boulevard bioswale (45-50 total).	NEON’s work completed throughout July 2017.	No updates, installations complete

Excavate and Plant Boulevards	50 – 70 boulevard bioswales	8 boulevard bioswales on Logan (both sides of street), Morgan and N. 4 th Ave. were installed spring 2017.	Boulevard bioswales installed at 37 individual properties in July & August 2017 totaling 10,825 square feet (estimated size of boulevard bioswales was 120 sq ft each. Based on this estimate, we installed 90 boulevard bioswales).	No updates, installations complete
MPRB replants Blvd trees	50 – 70 trees	Planned replanting in spring 2018.	No updates	All replanting completed by MPRB in spring 2018 (35 trees).

Objective 2: Establish and implement an equitable framework to evaluate change in the knowledge, attitudes and practices of project participants that provides measurable outcomes and guides the future replication of the project.

Activity	Unit	Project Activities (Jan - June 2017)	Project Activities (July – Dec 2017)	Project Activities (Jan – June 2018)
Establish & administer pre-test framework		Metro Blooms contracted with Lune, LLC (an evaluation & research firm) to develop and administer quantitative and qualitative research tools. Metro Blooms gathered qualitative data in May/June 2017 to advise KAP survey development (see qualitative data report by Lune in Attachment B). Initial KAP survey was distributed via mail to each Harrison resident (approx. 600) in June 2017.		KAP survey report completed January 2018 (See attached).
Final evaluation		Planned for August 2018	No updates	Plan to complete with assistance from GreenCorps member in fall of 2018.

Goal 2: Provide opportunities for neighborhood youth to access job training and career pathways in green infrastructure

Objective 1: Contract with youth and young adults in outdoor jobs programs for installations. Connect with current underutilized business contractors and develop new local connections to perform contract work.				
Activity	Unit	Project Activities (Jan - June 2017)	Project Activities (July – Dec 2017)	Project Activities (Jan – June 2018)
Contract/Schedule youth outdoor jobs programs to complete boulevard excavation and planting	15 -50 neighborhood youth	An application for Conservation Corps youth crew time for this project was submitted and approved for 2017. We worked with Conservation Corps young adult crews for 2 days to plant bioswales along Morgan Ave in spring 2017.	We worked with Conservation Corps youth crew for 10 days in July 2017 to complete excavation, mulching and seeding of the boulevard bioswales. We also worked with a crew of Step Up Interns from Wilderness Inquiry and 50 high school youth from Wilderness Inquiry to plant completed boulevards. Following completion of training with Metro Blooms, Step Up Interns reported interested in learning more about careers in landscape design, inspections, native plants, and green infrastructure installation.	No updates, installations complete
Purchase/install turf alternatives in boulevard bioswales	100-300 grasses, sedges, low grow forbs per property and or seed mix	Turf alternative plantings installed in boulevard bioswales on the block of Morgan and Logan and N. 4 th Ave.	Boulevards installed in July 2017 planted/seeded with one of 5 plant palettes developed by Metro Blooms. Each participant selected their palette of choice. Boulevards planted with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota, 50 high school youth from Wilderness Inquiry and through 2 volunteer events hosted by Utepils Brewing Co.	No updates, installations complete
Contract with local landscape contractor(s) for excavation assist.	1-2 local contractors	Northside Economic Opportunities Network (NEON), a local landscape contractor removed 5 ash tree roots on Morgan Avenue and prepped 3 boulevard	We contracted with them this summer to deep grind roots and begin excavation in each of the boulevard bioswales installed in July (90 total at 37 properties).	No updates, installations complete

		<p>bioswales along Morgan this spring. We've contracted with them to deep grind roots and begin excavation in each of the boulevard bioswales planned for installation in July (55-60 total).</p>		
<p>Objective 2: Develop a Stormwater and Sustainable Landscape Inspections and Maintenance Training Program for youth and young adults in outdoor jobs programs which can be implemented as an on-the-job training program.</p>				
Activity	Unit	Project Status (June 2017)	Project Activities (July – Dec 2017)	Project Activities (Jan – June 2018)
<p>Development and pilot implementation of maintenance training program</p>	<p>5 segments</p>	<p>Project partners were recruited and have committed. Project development is underway with a focus on Plant ID (native and top 20 most troublesome invasive) as well as recommended management. Three pilot tests have taken place or are scheduled for the coming weeks. These include two youth trainings (Mississippi River Green Team-complete and Wilderness Inquiry Ste Up Interns-scheduled for July) and one train-the- trainer event for Master Gardeners, Master Water Stewards, and Metro Blooms staff-scheduled for July. We are scheduling trainings with NEON and the</p>	<p>Four modules developed (1. Intro to stormwater BMPs, 2. Inspections & Maintenance Planning, 3. Plant/Weed ID and Management, 4. Structural Maintenance). Five pilot trainings took place in 2017. These included three youth/young adult trainings (Mississippi River Green Team, Wilderness Inquiry Step Up Interns, Conservation Corps), one train the trainer event for Master Gardeners, Master Water Stewards, and Metro Blooms staff, and one training for NEON contractors focused on general stormwater management principles, structural maintenance and weed ID.</p> <p>Piloting the Sustainable Landcare training in 2017 was invaluable to the program. We learned lessons from every pilot training and received great feedback so we are able to adapt</p>	<p>In 2018, we continue to pilot and refine the Sustainable Landcare Training program, we joined the Outdoor Youth Advisory Council to connect with outdoor jobs programs, and continue to seek funding for program implementation. We hired a Sustainable Landcare Project Manager in 2018 as we work to expand this program.</p> <p>In 2018, we're working primarily with the Mississippi River Green Team (MRGT) and the Northside Economic Opportunity Network (NEON) to train their crew members in stormwater BMP maintenance, native plant, and weed identification. The training needs to occur multiple times throughout the year in order for</p>

		<p>Conservation Corps for August/September.</p>	<p>program resources to fit the needs of our audiences. One lesson learned was the importance of including maintenance of small scale structural BMPs such as trench drains and permeable pavement. While Stormwater U offers training in these topics, the level at which the training is presented is meant for professionals in stormwater management, making them daunting and less accessible for contractors that don't currently offer these services. We hope to work with Stormwater U to refine these trainings to meet our audience.</p>	<p>it to be effective, as weeds change throughout the season.</p> <p>The MRGT (20 youth) spent a day training and maintaining boulevards at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Harrison and a day maintaining Sentyrz Market raingardens in June/July 2018. We met NEON at one of their job sites to provide weed identification and management training. The MRGT and NEON have said that native plant and weed ID is an ongoing need for their crews and we have plans to continue this training partnership through this year and in future years. We've also been in discussion with a number of housing facilities that are interested in the training for their residents and staff.</p>
Revisions and publications		<p>Draft of pocket guide book for plant/weed identification is complete and printed. One revision has been made to incorporate field activities into the guide.</p>	<p>During the fall/winter of 2017 we refined the Sustainable Landcare Guide to focus on weed identification, as this was the need described by training participants and partner associations. Rather than include plans for each training module in the guide book, we've created separate lesson plans for each training module that work in conjunction with the guide. (Current draft of weed ID guide</p>	<p>Throughout the winter/spring of 2018 we worked with Blue Thumb partners to refine the list of weeds we would include in the Sustainable Landcare Guide. We're using maintenance trainings during the summer of 2018 to gather high quality weed photos to include in the guide, which will be ready for final publication by the end of 2018.</p>

			<p>available upon request. Weed ID section will be expanded according to Blue Thumb partner input).</p> <p>In 2018, we will work with Blue Thumb partners to refine the Blue Thumb Guide to Sustainable Landcare and Weed Identification and publish the final version, both in print for purchase and make it available online for partners and homeowners.</p> <p>Also in 2018, we'll continue to pilot the training program with interested groups and develop a formalized fee structure for the training program.</p>	<p>The most recent draft of the guide is available upon request.</p> <p>We've also established a weed of the week blog for the 2018 growing season (posted on Facebook and our website). The blog helps training participants continue their education following field trainings.</p>
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In addition to the above activities, there has been a lot of interest in and promotion of the Northside Neighborhood Engagement and Opportunities in Clean Water Initiatives in the last 6 months. Our Community Engagement Manager presented about environmental justice and this project to a group of about 40 WaterShed Partners in the spring of 2018. We're working with Augsburg College throughout the summer of 2018 to engage large commercial properties in the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood of Minneapolis to implement stormwater management practices and think about the opportunities to engage underserved watershed stakeholders. Lastly, we worked with the Environmental Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC) to lead a bus tour for the One Water Summit in July. As part of the tour, the bus stopped at the Harrison Boulevards and Metro Blooms presented on this project to a national audience. We've heard from a number of partners since these presentations that are re-thinking their current outreach methods to be more equitable and engaging.

Project Budget Status

Project Tasks (2016 – 2018)	Grant Budget	Match Budget	Updated Match Budget (April '17) ¹	UPDATED TOTAL BUDGET (April '17)	Grant Funds Spent to Date	Match Spent to Date	TOTAL SPENT TO DATE
Project Management and Engagement	\$24,840	\$20,150	\$6,852.25	\$31,692.25	\$23,162.50	\$10,852.25	\$34,014.75
Education and Exhibit Materials ²	\$2,500	\$6,700	\$403.72	\$2,903.72	\$1,925.71	\$403.72	\$2,329.43
Job Training + Maintenance & Inspections Development and Pilot Implementation	\$25,000	\$6,500	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$22,475.10	\$38,014.61	\$60,489.71
Landscape Contractor and Landscape Supply	\$32,810	\$39,700	\$16,027.67	\$48,837.67	\$33,032.54	\$16,027.67	\$49,060.21
Landscape Design + Oversight ³	\$9,000	\$11,750	\$13,282	\$22,282	\$11,723.00	\$13,282	\$25,005.00
Monitoring and Evaluation	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$0	\$5,500	\$5,727.44	\$0.00	\$5,727.44
Local Travel ⁴	\$350	\$550	\$434.46	\$784.46	\$953.71	\$434.46	\$1,388.17
TOTAL	\$100,000	\$90,850	\$62,000.10	\$162,000.10	\$99,000.00	\$79,014.71	\$178,014.71

Budget Notes:

¹ (Same notes as 7-1-17 grant report) Metro Blooms was awarded grants from Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's Cynthia Krieg fund (\$10,000) and Hennepin County's Green Partners program (\$15,000) to develop and implement pilot programs for the sustainable landcare maintenance training program.

¹ (Same notes as 7-1-17 grant report) We were planning to submit an Opportunity Grant application to Hennepin County to expand the boulevard project but the County requested that we focus an Opportunity Grant application on working with commercial properties along Glenwood Avenue instead. The potential \$50,000 from Hennepin County was removed from the updated match budget below.

¹ 2017 match of \$4,000 from BCWMC was added for engagement and education.

² Education Materials: (Same notes as 7-1-17 grant report) The 2016 funding from the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross Blue Shield and from Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission was spent primarily on plant material and installation of the demonstration boulevards at Redeemer Lutheran Church. The money allocated to education and exhibit materials was utilized primarily for landscape supply. In the budget below, \$2,500 was re-allocated from Landscape Contractor & Supply to Education Materials in order to cover education and outreach materials including signage, doorhangers, display boards for plant palettes, etc.

³ Landscape Design + Oversight: We were able to utilize this project as a job training opportunity for local contractors and youth crews that had little to no experience in landscape installation prior to the Blooming Boulevards experience. Because of this, these crews required much more training, oversight, and guidance from our Landscape Design team than we typically provide our landscape contractors. Also, because it was a training experience for them, the installations took longer than we anticipated. In addition, this was the first year that Metro Blooms installed more than 5 Blooming Boulevards. The quick expansion of the program was a learning experience, and required project development time from our landscape designers.

⁴ Local Travel: The Harrison Neighborhood is a diverse, low income community. This type of community has historically not been engaged in clean water projects. Working with this new community to gain trust, we found it necessary to have a strong presence in the neighborhood. This was often accomplished by Metro Blooms' Community Engagement Manager spending time "in the field" in Harrison working with boulevard captains and neighborhood partners to talk with their neighbors face-to-face. The installations also required more staff support to complete than we anticipated.



HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD WATER QUALITY SURVEY SUMMARY



Conducted by Metro Blooms in partnership with LUNE, LLC., Harrison Neighborhood Association, and the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission.

Funded by the Metropolitan Council

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Introduction

Harrison Neighborhood is one of the most culturally, racially, and economically diverse communities in Minneapolis. The neighborhood is on the forefront of a major economic boom spurred by transit investments and corridor development. It is located to the west of downtown Minneapolis within the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ). A history of undesirable development in the neighborhood caused soil and water contamination. Concerns regarding health impacts of pollution have been raised.

Harrison Neighborhood Association was formally organized in 1984 to address neighborhood problems. Harrison neighborhood residents are civic stewards who have worked diligently to clean up a former superfund site, stabilize housing and support local businesses. The neighborhood association's partnership and the residents' ongoing commitments to address environmental issues and equitable development have been critical to achieving the health, social, and environmental challenges of managing urban runoff.

In order to manage this type of pollution, local governments are turning to citizens to manage stormwater on their property in order to minimize the polluted runoff that enters our storm drains. Metro Blooms has been working with cities, watershed districts, neighborhood residents, and businesses since 1983 to promote eco-friendly landscaping and educate citizens about the importance of stormwater management.

Metro Blooms began working with the Harrison Neighborhood Association and Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission in 2016 on a project in this Near North neighborhood to engage residents and business owners in a project to prevent polluted stormwater from entering Bassett Creek and the Mississippi River. Bassett Creek is impaired, due to excessive chloride and bacteria (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency 303(d) impairment list). In order to meet local standards and reduce the negative impacts of urban runoff, the quality of water in Bassett Creek must be improved.

Metro Blooms is working with property owners in Harrison to manage their stormwater and improve water quality in Bassett Creek and the Mississippi River through the installation of boulevard bioswales. In addition to the environmental impact of these projects, Metro Blooms is working in partnership with Lune, LLC, Harrison Neighborhood Association, Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission, and the Metropolitan Council to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior related to water quality within the neighborhood. Qualitative data was gathered during the summer of 2017 (see Appendix I) to inform a neighborhood-wide Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) survey. The preliminary findings of the first round of the Harrison Neighborhood KAP survey are summarized in this report.

Methods

Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey

Metro Blooms contracted with Lune LLC to consult on a KAP study of the residents in the Harrison neighborhood during the summer of 2017. The University of Minnesota Water Resource Center has utilized the KAP method in more than 20 communities and has found the method to be comparatively quick and cost-effective. The Harrison neighborhood KAP study began with a series of qualitative survey activities, primarily short in-person interviews held at Blooming Boulevard Block Parties and Resilient Yard Workshops. Possible barriers to installing stormwater management practices on site and current resident knowledge were also discussed with Boulevard Captains and Blooming Boulevard participants. The qualitative data was then analyzed and utilized by Lune to inform the KAP survey questionnaire.

The questionnaire was then pre-tested and finalized. Lastly, a letter introducing the purpose of the survey, dates that the survey would take place, and confidentiality information was mailed to every single-family home and duplex in the Harrison Neighborhood (600 total). The pre-survey letter also gave residents the option to take the survey online through Survey Monkey before the door-to-door surveying began. The first-round KAP survey is attached as an appendix to this report as is the introductory letter.

Study Area

The area of interest for this KAP study was the Near North Harrison neighborhood (Fig. 1).

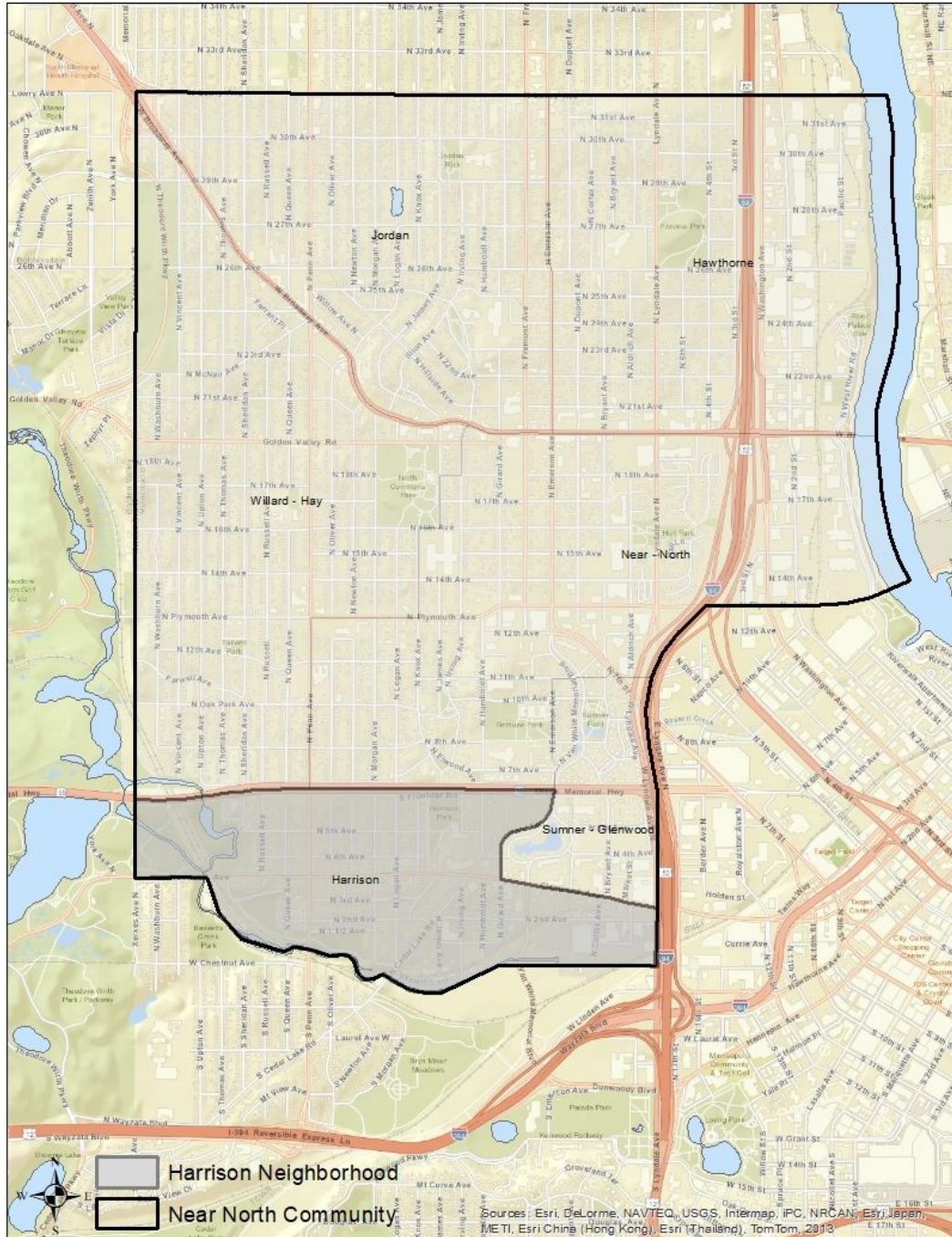


Figure 1. Outline of the study area of this KAP survey.

Survey Sample

Jeff Mattson, Director of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) GIS department and Dave Colling, Executive Director, Harrison Neighborhood Association provided parcel data using ArcGIS. Businesses, apartments, and vacant homes were removed from the sampling frame because we wanted to target homeowners in the area. Because the total number of single family homes and duplexes in Harrison is only about 600, we decided to distribute the survey to every household. Following the pre-survey letter mailing, approximately 15 homes were taken out of the sample due to vacancy.

Administering the Survey

Metro Blooms learned through the Nokomis KAP study experience that hiring doorknockers and administering surveys in person was not an effective use of time and resources.

Therefore the introductory letter was mailed and survey packets were delivered to Harrison neighborhood residents by Metro Blooms staff. Each packet contained a survey, a self-addressed and stamped envelope, and a note describing the survey and providing contact information for questions. Residents were also given the option to take the survey online through Survey Monkey (Appendix II).

18 residents took the survey online, and 15 homes were removed from the sample due to vacancy, reducing our door-to-door sample to 567 households. After one month, we received a total of 97 responses, for a 17% response rate.

Results

Knowledge

The knowledge questions in the Harrison KAP survey were meant to gauge residents' knowledge about stormwater runoff and its effects, but also about the primary causes of runoff pollution in the neighborhood. The first knowledge question of the KAP survey (Q6) examined participants' knowledge of primary source of pollution to surface waters.

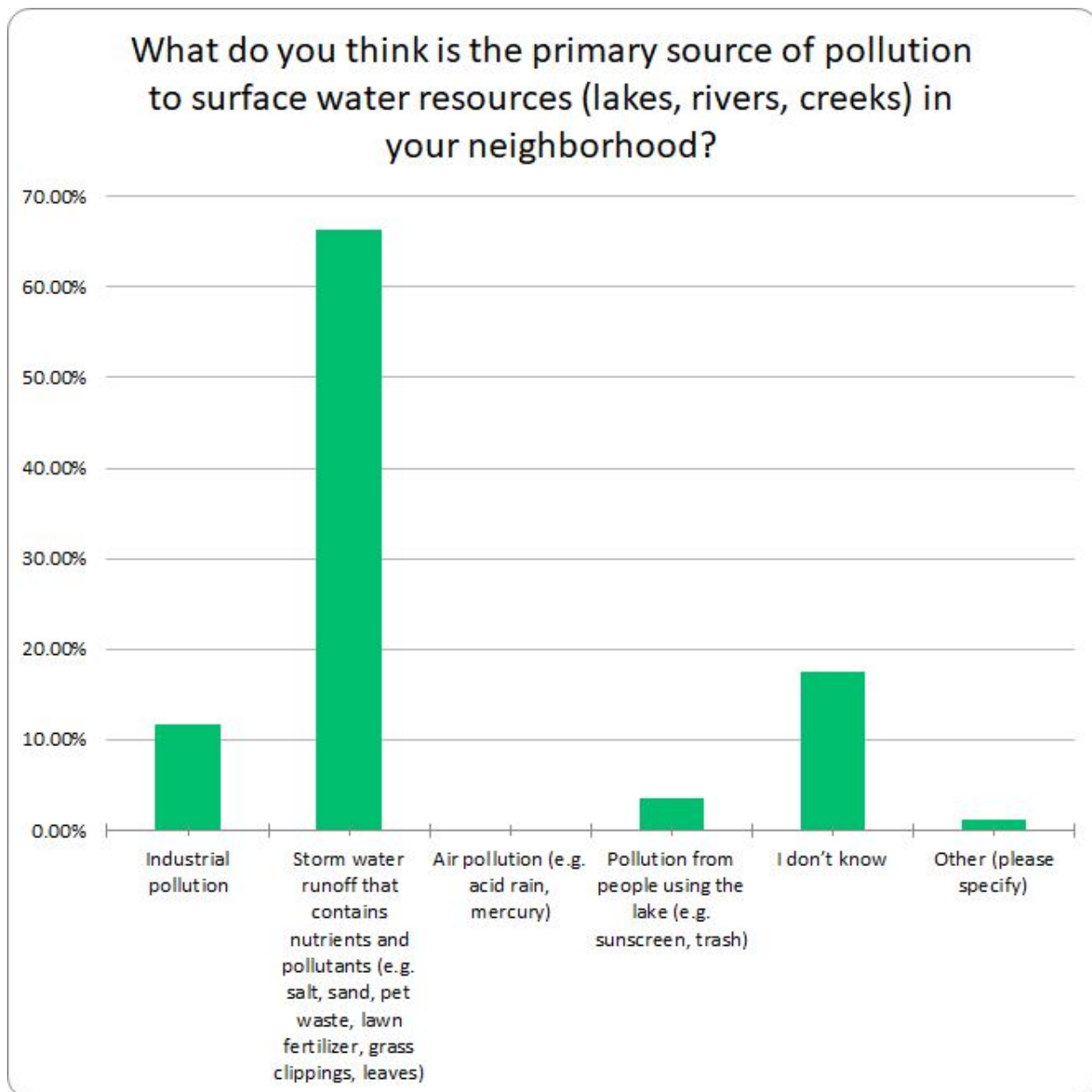


Figure 2. Harrison neighborhood resident knowledge about the primary source of pollution to surface water resources.

The majority (66%) of participants surveyed recognize that stormwater runoff containing nutrients and pollutants is the primary source of runoff pollution, but 17% said they didn't know, and another 12% believed industrial pollution was the primary source.

The next knowledge question (Q8) asked residents about the impacts of their yard care activities on water quality.

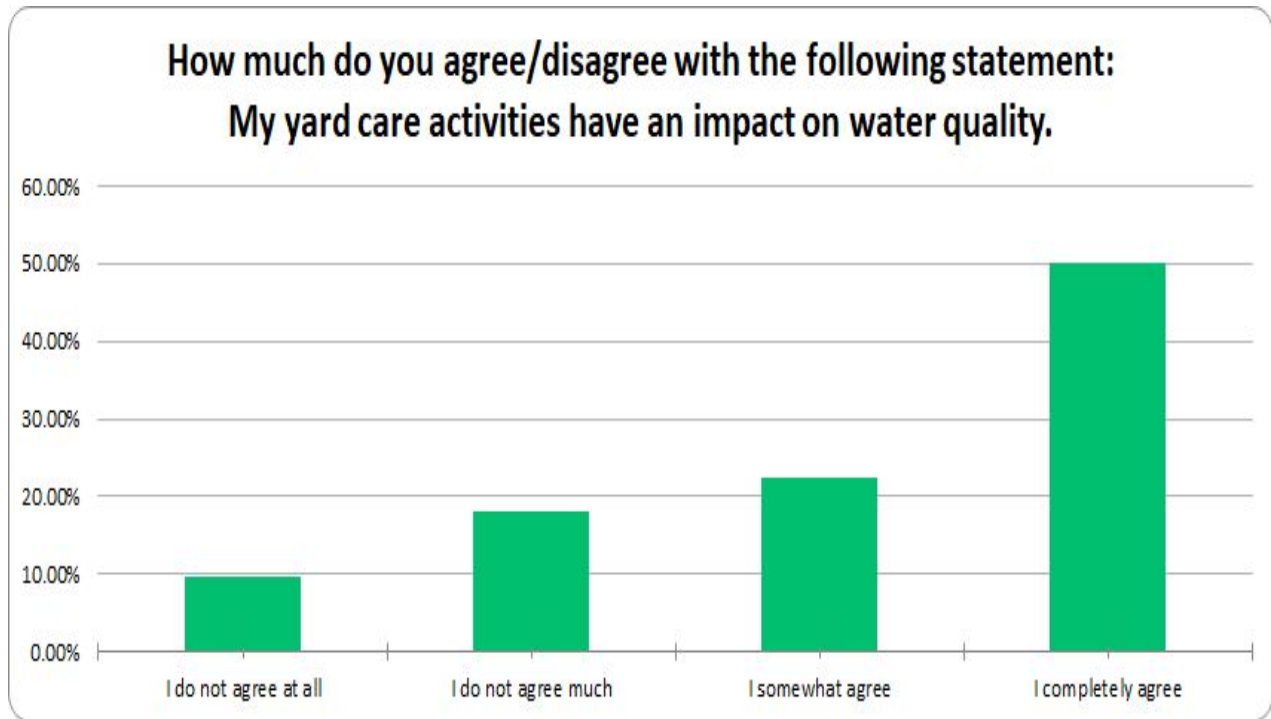


Figure 3. Harrison neighborhood resident knowledge about the impact of their yard care activities on water quality.

47 of the participants surveyed completely agreed with the statement: My yard care activities have an impact on water quality. 21 somewhat agreed and 26 residents did not agree much or at all with the statement. This result may be due to the fact that many are practicing yard activities that reduce the environmental risks of urban runoff.

Attitudes

The attitude questions in the KAP survey revealed residents' concerns about water quality and their beliefs about who is responsible for it as well as who they trust as a source of environmental information.

Most residents (64%) are either very concerned or fairly concerned about the water quality in their neighborhood (Q5). This shows us that they recognize the issue, although many people (36%) also expressed little to no concern at all about water quality in the neighborhood.

Participants were also asked about who they believed should be responsible for maintaining clean water in their neighborhood (Q7). Respondents were allowed to "circle all that applied" and while the vast majority (83%) said the City of Minneapolis should play a part, 71% believed neighborhood residents were responsible. Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (BCWMC) was third (68%) and local businesses came in fourth (66%) (Fig. 5). The number of respondents who reported that BCWMC should play a part shows us that most

people know what BCWMC is and what they do, showing a relatively high knowledge in the community about local government and water quality.

Figure 4. Harrison residents level of concern about surface water in the neighborhood.

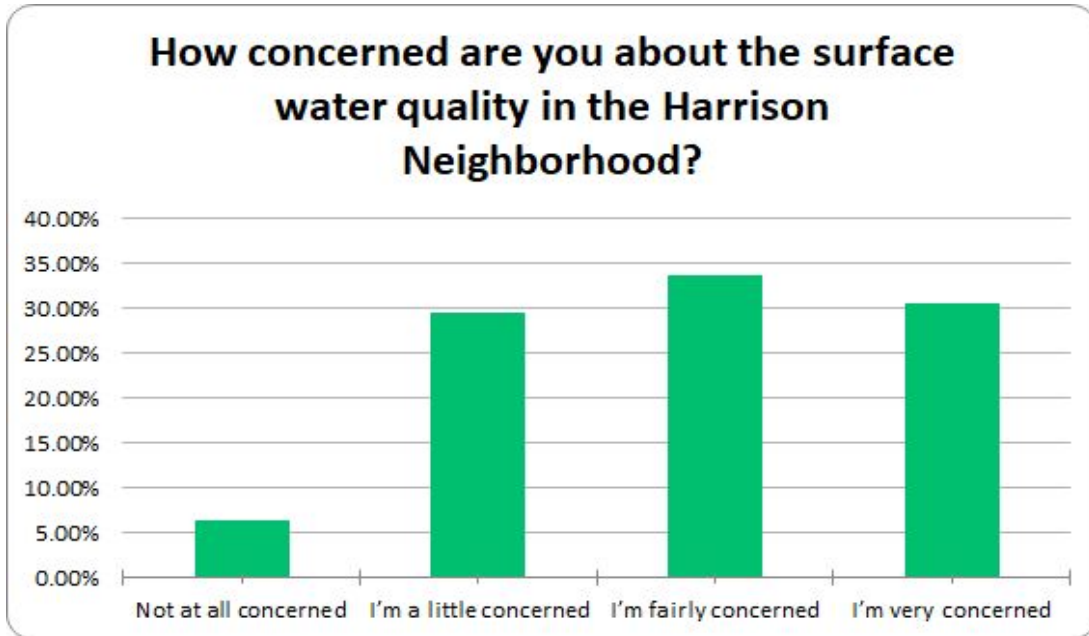
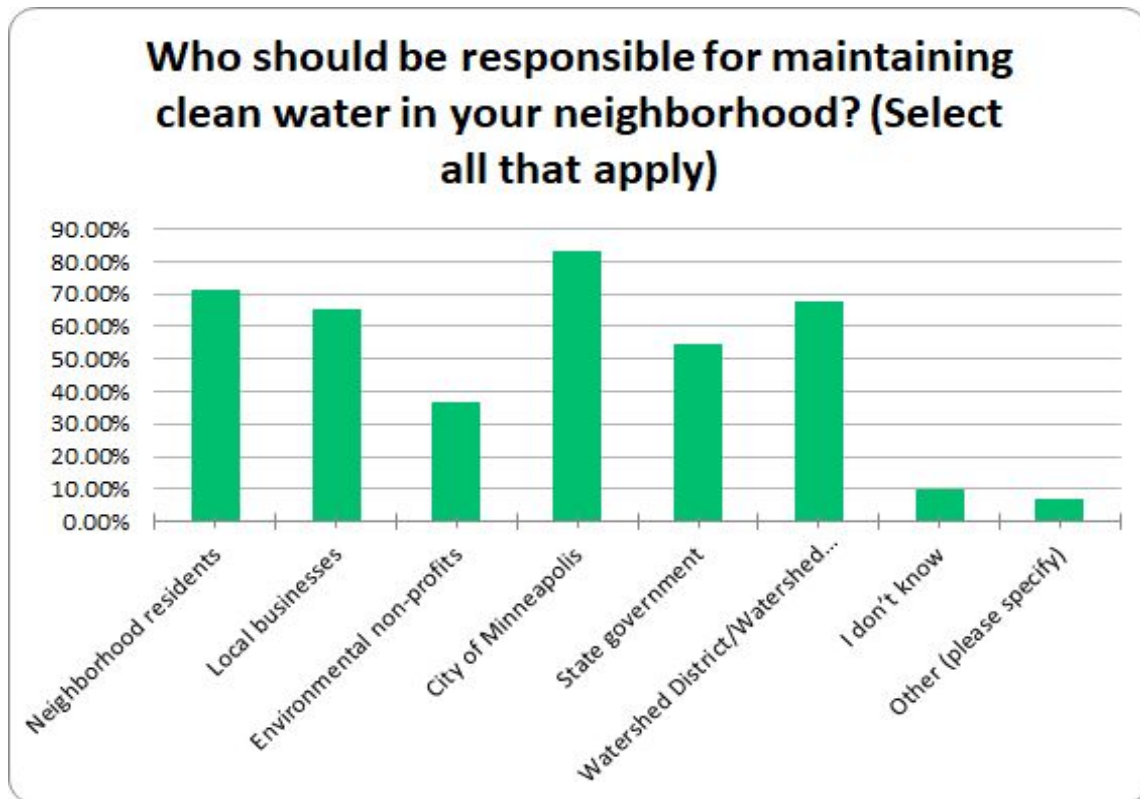
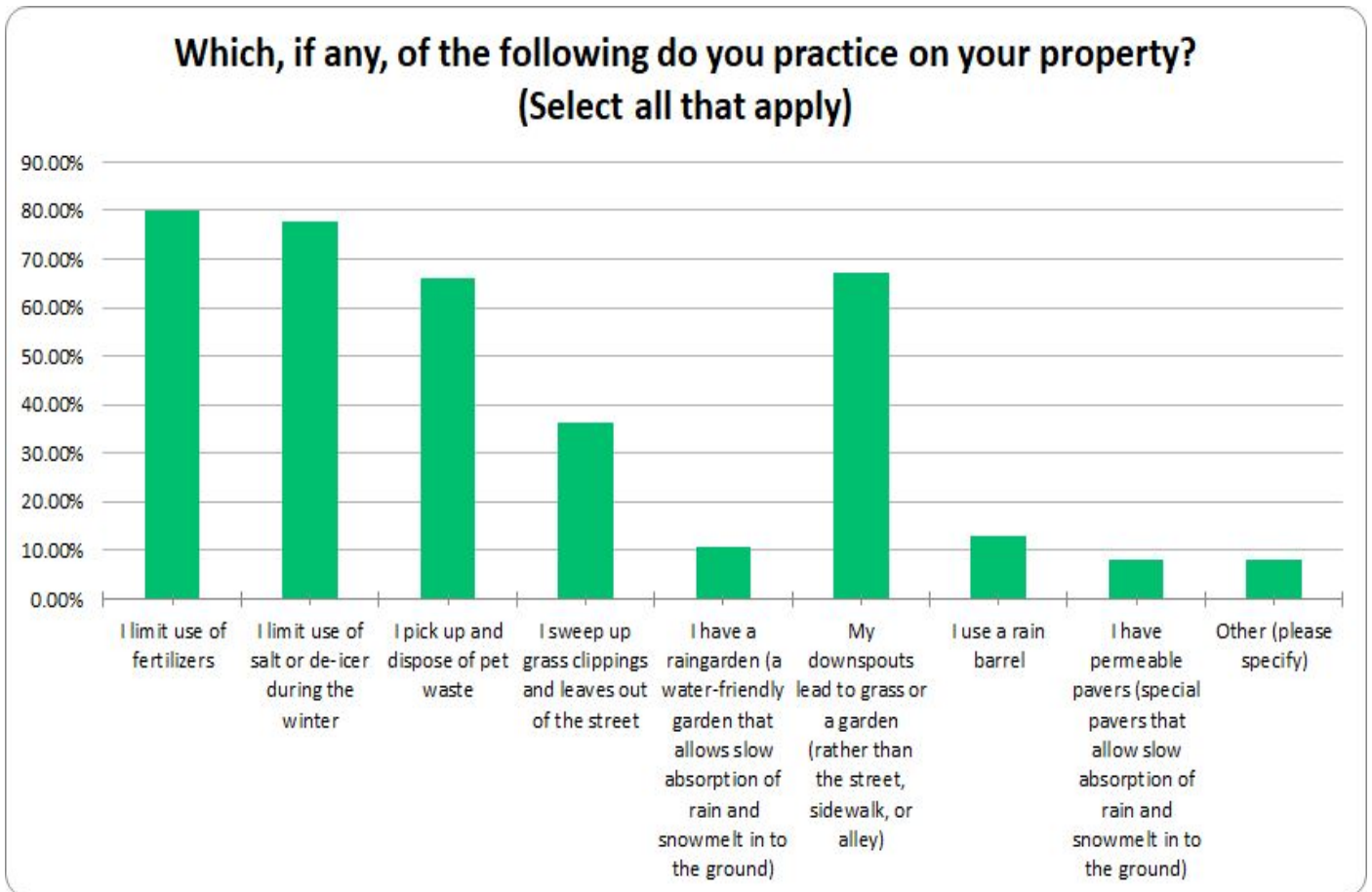


Figure 5. Attitudes about responsibility for maintaining neighborhood's clean water.



Practices

Figure 6. Practices that Harrison residents currently practice on their property.



A significant number of survey respondents are implementing clean water practices as part of the landscape routine. 78% are limiting the use of salt or de-icer during the winter, 80% are limiting the use of fertilizer, and 66% report that their downspouts lead to grass or a garden (rather than the street, sidewalk, or alley). These actions reduce the amount of nutrients and pollutants being distributed by urban runoff and demonstrate an attitude of personal responsibility

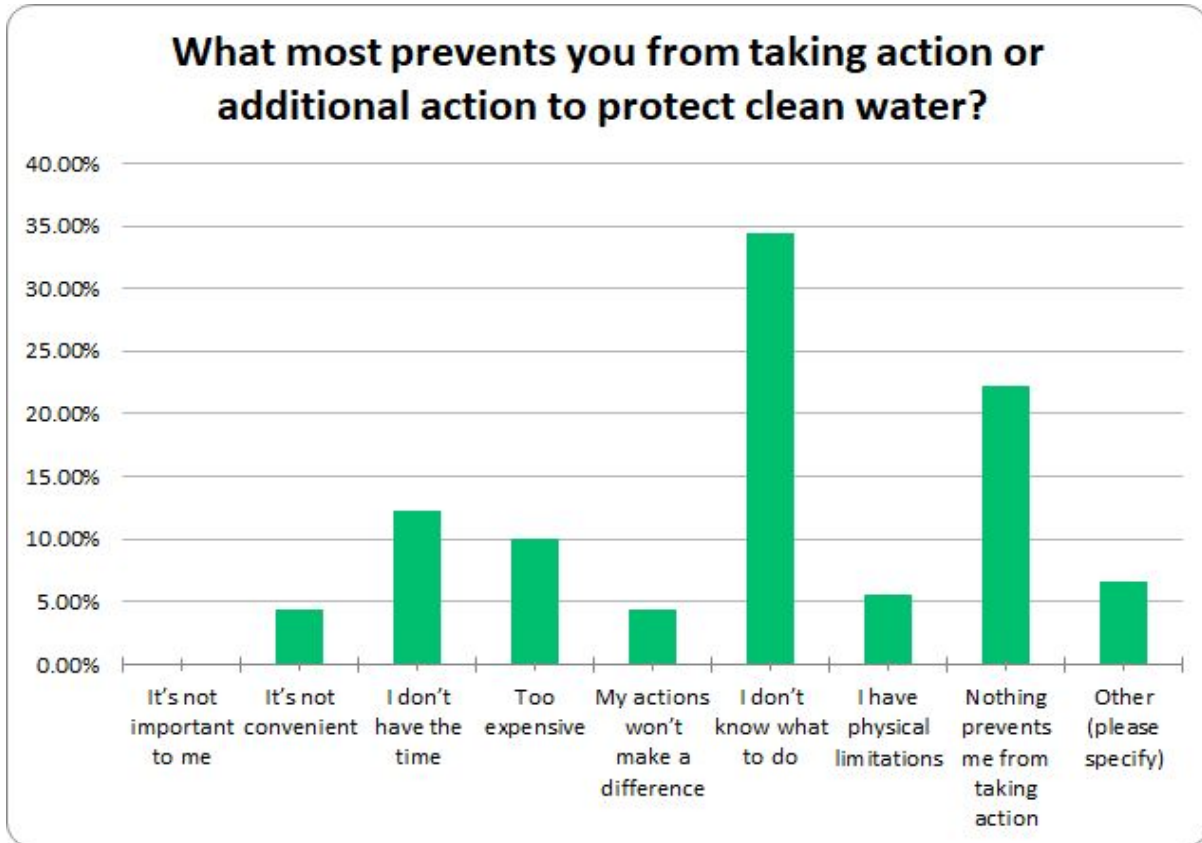


Figure 7. Barriers identified by residents that prevent them from taking action to protect water quality (Q15).

In contrast, based on the results obtained in this survey Metro Blooms learned that 33% of respondents did not know what action to take to protect clean water.

Conclusions

Equity

Harrison Neighborhood Association’s website states that “their neighborhood is one of the most culturally, racially, and economically diverse communities in Minneapolis. Harrison residents have built a rich history of art, creativity, and resilience. Local businesses have built a strong community of investment and possibility. We stand at the crossroads of opportunity and equity”. <http://www.hnampls.org/>

In general, the Harrison neighborhood stakeholders who completed our survey were mostly homeowners (73%) who seem to be aware of stormwater runoff issues and how they connect to their yard care practices.

However, when you look at the Wilder Foundation Minnesota Compass project report compiled about Harrison neighborhood, you will find demographic information that indicates that more than 50% of people who reside in the neighborhood are renters and people of color. <http://www.mncompass.org/profiles/neighborhoods/minneapolis/harrison#>

Eighteen percent of the participants surveyed for this report indicated that they were renters (Q18). 84 participants out of 97 provided demographic information (Q23) through which we learned that 86% described themselves as White, 11% described themselves as Black, 6% described themselves as Asian, 4% described themselves as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish heritage, and 1% described themselves as Native American or Alaska Native. 13 did not respond to this question.

We recognize a need to integrate new equity mechanisms that increase access and opportunities for renters and people of color to participate in our clean water initiatives. Many renters do not have the authority or capacity to make landscaping decisions about the property. We learned that this was a major barrier for renters in Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) scattered site housing properties in the neighborhood.

Financial Barriers

In addition to a high number of renters in the neighborhood, another possible reason for very few installed best management practices in Harrison is the perceived expense of installing such practices. Forty-six (58%) residents indicated that funds to help offset costs would help them take action on their property to protect clean water.

Neither the City of Minneapolis nor Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (BCWMC) have local cost share programs for private property owners. Exploring cost-effectiveness of other cities' cost share programs and tracking the environmental impacts of empowered stakeholders taking action to protect clean water resources could inform consideration. We would encourage these units of local government to expand the benefits of water investments more equitably to be more inclusive of all residents, especially renters and people of color, so that they can also take clean water action in their neighborhood. We also encourage these governmental units to continue to invest in building the capacity of non stormwater professionals to address environmental risks in their communities.

Knowledge Barriers

The education gap for all residents seems to be between recognizing the need for healthy lawn care practices that protect clean water resources and having the capacity and knowledge to implement them. Metro Blooms and partners began addressing this education gap through the Blooming Boulevards demonstration installation at Redeemer Lutheran Church, by distributing informational pamphlets, and encouraging residents to attend do-it-yourself workshops and participate in the Northside Neighborhood Engagement & Opportunities in

Clean Water Initiatives (NNEOCWI) project. Thirty-seven property owners have since installed Blooming Boulevards in the neighborhood and a minimum of 6 commercial and institutional business owners will have the opportunity to participate in the project as well.

Many more residents in the neighborhood have expressed interest in participating in the Blooming Boulevards program. Fifty-five (71 %) survey participants indicated they would be willing to add a Blooming Boulevard to their yard care activities (Q16). This presents a great opportunity for community resilience and clean water education and action; to show residents how they can address environmental risks by implementing practices on their own property.

References

APPENDIX I

Minnesota Compass-Harrison Neighborhood

<http://www.mncompass.org/profiles/neighborhoods/minneapolis/harrison>

Qualitative Data Analysis

METRO BLOOMS, BLOOMING BOULEVARDS PROJECT
EVALUATION

JUNE, 2017

LUNE, LLC

Evaluation | Research



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Introduction

This document summarizes the findings from the qualitative data collection related to the evaluation of the Metro Blooms Blooming Boulevards Project in the Harrison Neighborhood.

The goal of this evaluation project is to identify impacts of the Blooming Boulevards Project in the Harrison Neighborhood of North Minneapolis in order to adaptively improve the effort in the Harrison Neighborhood and inform similar efforts in other neighborhoods in the Twin Cities Metro Area.

The effort has four key objectives:

- To identify community values, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors related to protecting environmental assets and resources;
- To identify barriers and motivators to participation in pro-environmental behaviors, in particular, participation in the Blooming Boulevards Project;
- To explore community's perceived benefit of the Blooming Boulevards Project and track change in perception through implementation of the Project; and
- To identify the network of influence initiated by the Blooming Boulevards Project.

Evaluation and qualitative research overview

Evaluation is systematic program assessment to address questions about operations and results. Using social science methods, evaluation can offer insight into motivations and constraints of program participants and non-participants, suggest opportunities to increase effectiveness of program delivery, and provide recommendations for adjustments to help meet overall program goals.

Qualitative research is appropriate for the capture of deep stories on a range of perspectives. The goal of qualitative analysis is not to statistically represent the beliefs of a broad community population. Study findings will represent the beliefs and opinions of the study participants, who have different backgrounds, experiences, and connections to community and water. While study findings should not be generalized, the study provides important insight and lessons about community members and community engagement. Findings can support the development of further research, highlight gaps in current approaches to Metro Blooms programming, and highlight the voices of community members regarding natural resource and community issues.

Data collection

Matrix activity

Decision-making matrix approach is intended to provide a structure for community members to discuss and prioritize local environmental actions to support community-based implementation. The area of focus for this activity was “Creating a Resilient Yard”. Participants were given 10 action items with the potential to create a more resilient yard. The items were:

- A. Plant native plants and shrubs
- B. Create a rain garden
- C. Plant pollinator friendly plants
- D. Talk to friends and neighbors about your actions
- E. Keep up to date on changing climate and weather
- F. Get involved in community decision making
- G. Install permeable pavers/pavement
- H. Encourage others to create resilient yards
- I. Involve youth in creation of resilient spaces
- J. Support organizations working to create resilient communities

Participants were asked to complete the following two tasks, in order-

1. For each action, use the corresponding letter to indicate on the grid how difficult to implement *and* how much impact it could have.
2. After you have completed the grid, prioritize the actions (1-highest priority, 10- lowest priority) by placing a number 1-10 on the line next to the action.

Interviews and “open house” sessions

Over the course of a series of community events, participants were invited to offer input via direct interview or an “open house” style response format. Both methods were intended to gather rich, meaningful information on participants’ community values, priorities, and perspectives on their natural environment to inform future Metro Blooms programming and survey instrument development, actively engage community participants in the data collection process, and promote relationship development and reciprocal learning among community participants.

Facilitators managed a process to ask participants a series of questions about community values, needs, and priorities. These questions were either directly through a semi-formal group

interview or posed as an opportunity to respond to questions left on a flip chart sheet during a community event.

Findings

Matrix activities

The results of the matrix activity are as follows:

Overall impressions [7 respondents]

- Planting native plants and shrubs was generally perceived to be the lowest difficulty/highest impact action
- Planting pollinator friendly plants and talking to friends and neighbors were also generally perceived to be of lowest difficulty, but with mixed levels of impact
- 4 out of 7 respondents considered creating a rain garden and installing permeable pavers/pavement to be of highest difficulty, but also of medium to high impact

Averaged priority scores [6 respondents]

- A – Plant native plants and shrubs (2.7)
- C – Plant pollinator friendly plants (2.8)
- B – Create a rain garden (4.2)
- J – Support organizations working to create resilient yards (5)
- D – Talk to friends and neighbors about your actions (6)
- E – Keep up to date on changing climate and weather (6)
- F – Get involved in community decision-making (6)
- I – Involve youth in creation of resilient spaces (6.2)
- H – Encourage others to create resilient yards (6.5)
- G – Install permeable pavers/pavement (8.3)

**Highest priority
to lowest priority**



Interviews and open ended questions

Theme tables offer a snapshot of the range of perspectives included in participant responses. Findings from the interviews and flip chart exercises are summarized below. The left column “Topic area” identifies the subject or issue of interest. Questions used to identify topic areas included:

- “What makes you feel proud about your community?”
- “When you think about the future of your community, what is your top priority?”
- “What concerns you about the environment in your community?”

- “What would you change about the environment in your community if you had the opportunity?”
- “What motivates you to keep your community clean and be boulevard captain?”

Responses to these questions were clumped into themes. The middle column, “theme” identifies the over-arching groups of responses. The final column, “sub-theme”, notes the more specific nuance within each theme group. In some cases, more specific sub-themes were not identified and the sub-theme column was remains blank for the theme group.

As an example, for the topic area of community pride, participants noted items related to location commonly. In turn, location was noted as a theme. The specifics of location as a source of pride (close to parks, close to downtown, etc.) are noted as sub-themes.

Theme Table

Topic area	Theme	Sub-theme
Areas of community pride	Sense of community	Connections between neighbors
		Small community
		Friendly relationships
		Not pretentious
	Diversity	
	Active involvement	Representation at HNA
		Involvement in block clubs
		Local investment
	Location	Close to parks
		Close to downtown
		Centrally located
		Transportation options and related development
	Resiliency	Anything can happen and they bounce back
		Strong community
		Stable community
New families moving in		
Community Priorities	Economic opportunities	Glenwood development planning
		Business development (filling vacant shops)
		Internship opportunities
		Livable wages
		Increasing property values
		Landlord buy-in to community investment
		New bus and LRT

	Increased transportation opportunities	More connected bike lanes
		Walkability improvements
	Aesthetic improvements	Changes to yards
		Picking on trash and litter
		Limiting erosion of hillsides on to sidewalks
Increasing community connections		
Community Concerns	Resident longevity and community commitment	Rental upkeep/Absentee landlords
		Gentrification
		Home ownership rates
		Affordability/Increased property values
	Safety	Walkability/sidewalks
		Crime
	Environmental impacts	Paper plant pollution to Bassett Creek
		Soil contamination
		River pollution
		Garbage burner air pollution
		Erosion and runoff
		Trash and litter management
		Invasive species
Community environmental priorities	Housing stabilization	Increased homeownership
		People of color in rentals/apartments
		Minneapolis Public Housing landscaping, home improvements
		Landlord relations
		Better kept rentals
		Affordability – income cap on who can buy PRG houses
	Improved land use practices	Eco/bee friendly landscaping
		More community gardens
		Parks oriented towards community and youth engagement
Motivations to keep the community clean	Commitment to health and wellbeing	
	Community connection	Family
		Neighbors
		Friendships

Use of qualitative data analysis results

An initial primary use of findings from the qualitative data collection was to inform the development of a quantitative survey tool. The survey will be appropriate to glean generalizable and broad neighborhood level perspectives. It is important, however, that the survey resonates with the community. Integrating qualitative results should help produce that result.

For example, there was an interest in including questions in the survey about community values and priorities. The selection of answer to the question were taken directly from qualitative findings:

What do you value the most about the Harrison Neighborhood? *(Check one)*

- Sense of community connection
- Diversity
- Active and involved citizens
- Location near other amenities
- Strength and resiliency, ability to bounce back
- I don't know
- Other (please specify): _____

Metro Blooms may additionally choose to use the qualitative findings independent of the survey results. For example, family, friends and neighbors emerged as important motivators for participation in environmental initiatives. In turn, Metro Blooms may find benefits to highlighting opportunities for social connections as part of their programming. Further, economic and housing stability appeared as a theme across qualitative research participants. This could be used to justify increased partnerships with other community organizations or to further explore the economic benefits of Metro Blooms' programming.

June 1, 2017

Dear Harrison Neighborhood Resident,

As many of you know, Metro Blooms is a local organization that engages with neighborhoods across the metro on a range of issues, including the environment, gardening, water protection, youth development, economic opportunity, and community engagement. **“Blooming Boulevards”** is a **Northside Neighborhood Engagement & Opportunities in Clean Water Initiative** (metroblooms.org/boulevards).

Community partners are working collaboratively with Metro Blooms to achieve clean water goals and respond to environmental threats to the urban forest in Harrison posed by the Emerald Ash Borer. We are doing this through environmentally friendly landscaping projects and are stimulating the local economy by employing local youth and contractors.

In order to better understand Harrison residents’ thoughts and opinions around the Blooming Boulevards project, Metro Blooms will be sending you a survey in the mail in approximately one week. This survey will take about ten minutes to fill out, and free postage for mailing in your responses will be included. By completing the survey, you will be providing extremely valuable input that will help to guide program decisions and, ultimately, create a stronger and more resilient and healthy neighborhood for all.

Online survey option

If you would prefer to take the survey online instead of completing the mail version, please follow this link to access the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/bloomingboulevards>

If you complete the online survey by June 15th, would like to ensure that you do not receive a mail survey, and are comfortable attaching your responses to information that could identify you, you are encouraged to enter your home address in the space provided at the end of the online version.

Survey follow-up & drawing registration

Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. We assure you that your responses will be kept entirely confidential and secure. The results will be released only as summaries so that individual responses cannot be identified. We ask that the survey be completed by the person in your home that makes most of the decisions, and is at least 18 years old. As a thank-you for your participation, households that complete the survey will be registered for a drawing to win a free rain barrel with installation from Metro Blooms!

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Kim Carpenter (kim@metroblooms.org).

Thank you in advance for your help, and best regards!



Becky Rice, Executive Director, Metro Blooms



Metro Blooms
 PO Box 17099, Minneapolis, MN 55417
 Phone: 651-699-2426
 www.metroblooms.org

Harrison Neighborhood Survey

Conducted by Metro Blooms

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey about your community!

Metro Blooms is a non-profit organization in Minneapolis with the mission to promote and celebrate gardening, to beautify our communities and help heal and protect the environment. We are working in the Harrison neighborhood and want to learn more about how you feel about Harrison, water, and the environment. We assure you that your responses will be kept entirely confidential and secure. The results will be released only as summaries; individual responses will not be identified. We ask that the survey be completed by the person in your home that makes most of the lawn and yard care decisions and is at least 18 years old.

By completing this survey, you have the opportunity to win a free rain barrel with installation from Metro Blooms. If you'd like to enter the rain barrel drawing, please provide your contact information at the end of the survey.

Section 1 – The Harrison Neighborhood

Please share your thoughts on the Harrison Neighborhood. Learning more about the area will help us better design programs that are a good fit.

What do you value the most about the Harrison Neighborhood? *(Check one)*

- Sense of community connection
- Diversity
- Active and involved citizens
- Location
- Strength and resiliency, ability to bounce back
- I don't know
- Other (please specify): _____

How important are the following qualities of a neighborhood to you? *(Circle one number in each row.)*

	Very unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Somewhat important	Very important
Privacy and respect of property	1	2	3	4
Social interaction/Good relationships among neighbors	1	2	3	4
Access to public transportation	1	2	3	4
Economic and employment opportunities (livable wages)	1	2	3	4
Opportunities for youth to gain professional skills and be involved in the neighborhood	1	2	3	4
Promotes active/healthy living, recreation and leisure	1	2	3	4
Opportunities for meaningful involvement in decisions that affect me/my property	1	2	3	4

Opportunities to serve in leadership roles	1	2	3	4
A welcoming place for people of all backgrounds and perspectives	1	2	3	4
Access to basic services (e.g., health care, transportation, healthy food)	1	2	3	4
Safety and low crime	1	2	3	4
Trees	1	2	3	4
Clean streams and rivers	1	2	3	4

Which, if any, of the following environmental concerns do you have regarding your neighborhood? (Check all that apply)

- Litter and trash
- Loss of tree canopy due to Emerald Ash Borer
- Air pollution
- Access to green space or open space
- Access to public transportation
- Climate change and extreme weather impacts
- Soil contamination and other impacts from historical industrial land uses

What types of activities would you suggest to bring the community together?

Section 2 – Water and the environment

Please share your thoughts on water and the environment in the Harrison Neighborhood. For this survey we are most interested in hearing your thoughts on surface water resources like streams, lakes, rivers, and wetlands, (rather than drinking water or ground water). Learning more about this will help us target resources and assistance.

How concerned are you about the surface water quality in the Harrison Neighborhood?

- Not at all concerned I'm a little concerned I'm fairly concerned I'm very concerned

Which of the following do you think is the primary source of pollution to surface water in your neighborhood?

- Industrial pollution
- Stormwater pollution: Yard/street runoff that carries nutrients and pollutants (e.g. salt, sand, pet waste, fertilizer, grass clippings, trash) to water resources
- Air pollution (e.g. acid rain, mercury)
- Pollution from people using the lake (e.g. sunscreen, trash)
- I don't know
- Other (please specify): _____

Which, if any, of the following concerns do you have regarding surface water resources (Bassett Creek, Mississippi River, Wirth Lake) in your neighborhood? (Check all that apply)

- Negative impacts on fish and aquatic life
- Harmful bacteria and fungi
- Smell and looking bad
- Impacts to recreational uses
- I have no concerns
- I don't know
- Other (please specify): _____

How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement: My yard care activities have an impact on water quality

- I do not agree at all I do not agree much I somewhat agree I completely agree

Who should be responsible for maintaining clean water in your neighborhood? (Check all that apply)

- Neighborhood residents
- Local businesses
- Environmental non-profits
- City of Minneapolis
- State government
- Watershed District/Watershed Management Organization
- I don't know
- Other (please specify): _____

Who do you trust as a source of environmental and water information in your community? (Check all that apply)

- My neighborhood association
- City staff person
- Environmental non-profit
- University of Minnesota Extension Office
- State Government (Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency)
- Watershed District/Management Organization
- Federal government agency
- My friends and family
- My neighbors
- Other (please specify): _____

Section 3 – About you

Please tell us about you and your household. Providing this information will help us understand what people are willing to do, who we are hearing from in Harrison and who we still need to reach.

What language(s) do you speak at home? _____

Approximately how many years have you lived in the Harrison neighborhood? _____ year(s)

What year were you born? _____ year Prefer not to respond

Which, if any, of the following do you practice on your property? *(Check all that apply)*

- I limit use of fertilizers
- I limit use of salt or de-icer during the winter
- I pick up and dispose of pet waste
- I sweep up grass clippings and leaves out of the street
- I have a raingarden (a water-friendly garden that allows slow absorption of rain in to the ground)
- My downspouts lead to grass or a garden (rather than the street, sidewalk, or alley)
- I use a rain barrel
- I have permeable pavement (special pavers that allow slow absorption of rain in to the ground)
- Other (please specify): _____

What most prevents you from taking action or additional action to protect clean water? *(Check one)*

- It's not important to me
- It's not convenient
- I don't have the time
- Too expensive
- My actions won't make a difference
- I don't know what to do
- I have physical limitations
- Nothing prevents me from taking action
- Other (please specify): _____

Which, if any, would you be willing to add to your yard care routine? *(Check all that apply)*

- Fertilize less frequently
- Use less salt and sand on my sidewalk and driveway
- Pick up and dispose of pet waste every day
- Sweep up grass clippings and leaves out of the street
- Install and maintain a Blooming Boulevard or raingarden (a water-friendly garden that allows slow absorption of rain and snowmelt in to the ground)
- Direct downspouts towards a garden or grass (rather than the street, sidewalk, or alley)
- Set up a rain barrel
- Install permeable pavement (special pavers that allow slow absorption of rain in to the ground)
- None of the above

What would help you to take action on your property to protect clean water? *(Check all that apply)*

- On-site help from a landscape professional
- Learning more by attending a workshop
- Online resources
- Funds to help offset costs
- Help with installation
- I'm not interested
- Other (please specify): _____

What is your housing arrangement? (Please check one.)

- I own my own home
- I rent
- I am the landlord
- I am sharing housing with others
- Other (please specify): _____

Who makes decisions about the property where you live? (Please check one.)

- I make the decisions.
- A family member makes the decisions.
- A family member and I make decisions together.
- I leave it up to my renter.
- I leave it up to the landowner/property owner.
- I work together with the renter/landowner to make the decisions.
- Some decisions are up to me; others are up to the property owner.
- Other (please specify): _____

How do you prefer to receive information about activities and projects in your community? (Check all that apply)

- Through social media (please specify): _____
- Local newspaper
- Neighborhood newsletter
- By mail
- Through email
- In person (at events, workshops, etc.)
- By visiting a website (please specify which ones): _____
- Other (please specify): _____

What is your gender identity?

- Male Female Transgender Gender non-conforming Another identity
- Prefer not to respond

What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? (Check one.)

- Some high school
- Completed high school
- Some college but no degree
- Associate degree or vocational degree
- College bachelor's degree
- Some graduate work
- Completed graduate degree (masters or Ph.D.)
- Prefer not to respond

Which categories best describe you? (Please check all that apply.)

- White
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish heritage
- Black or African American
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Some other race, ethnicity or heritage (Please specify): _____

Which of the following best describes your total household income? (Please check one.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 - \$74,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 - \$24,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 - \$99,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 - \$34,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 - \$149,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000 - \$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 or more |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to respond |

Optional: If you would like to be entered into a drawing to win a free rain barrel with installation from Metro Blooms, please provide your contact information below.

Email:

Or

Home Address:

Optional: Metro Blooms is working in your neighborhood to improve water quality and create pollinator habitat. If you would be interested in participating in a Blooming Boulevard project with Metro Blooms and your neighbors, provide your contact information below. If you already provided your contact information for the drawing above, please check the box below instead.

Email:

Or

Home Address:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the survey!

Once the survey is complete, please fold it in thirds, and mail it back in the enclosed addressed and stamped envelope.

If you have questions, please contact Metro Blooms at 651-699-2426 or kim@metroblooms.org