The Cedar Riverside neighborhood exudes a moving, constantly changing, feel to it. Between the lively conversations happening on the sidewalks, the unending stream of traffic, and the varied storefronts, there is no doubt that Cedar-Riverside is a vibrant urban area. It is a meeting place for college students, recent immigrants, long-time residents, neighborhood activists, and hospital and university professionals. With the view of the Minneapolis skyline behind, the proximity to the river, and the LRT running through, it is an ideal location in the city.

The varied and concentrated population is also a vital part of this multi-dimensional neighborhood. And although one of this neighborhood’s strengths is its diversity, that is also very much a challenge. As Dan Cornejo describes in the University of Minnesota Area Neighborhood Impact Report, *Moving Forward Together*, there is a “lack of physical and social connections between the three different sections of the neighborhood: Seven Corners, South Cedar, and Riverside serve different populations and institutions.” Randy Stoecker adds to this idea of a disconnected area in his *Report to the West Bank CDC: Community Organizing in Cedar-Riverside, Present and Future*, “an additional challenge to community organizing is that many members of the new immigrant communities—the Oromo, Somalis, and Vietnamese—more strongly identify with their ethnic communities than the geographic neighborhood of the Cedar-Riverside.” Cornejo also describes the neighborhood as, “large numbers of college-age and other young adults gives these neighborhoods a special energy and vibrancy, but also brings a more transient spirit.” Both reports illustrate the need for cross-cultural communication and community cooperation among the diverse population in Cedar-Riverside in order to improve on the neighborhood’s assets.

Historically, the neighborhood has always been somewhat of an entry point for new immigrants, a crossroads of the city, and home to an extremely diverse population. During the 1850’s, the area known as Seven Corners was heavily occupied by German and Scandinavian immigrants. By the late 1800’s, the area was settled by a variety of European ethnicities including: Slovakian, German, Czech, Polish, Austrian, Danish, Russian, Irish and Swedish. By 1890 approximately 8000 people lived in Cedar-Riverside and two-thirds of them were immigrants.

In the late 1890s, the neighborhood was known as "Snoose Boulevard" named after the preferred snuff of Scandinavians, *snus*. It was a thriving community of immigrants, many of whom worked in the milling and lumber industries on the Mississippi River. During the early 1900’s, Cedar-Riverside had a decidedly Scandinavian character. Indeed, Cedar-Riverside boasted the largest Scandinavian community in Minneapolis. One hallmark of the neighborhood’s cultural identity was Dania Hall, which served as a cultural center for arts, theater, and socializing.

With the growing suburban development drawing residents out of the neighborhood and the expansion of the University of Minnesota to the West Bank and Augsburg College’s acquisition of additional land, there was a shift in the neighborhood population. By the 1960’s, many property owners had converted housing into rentals attracting more students from the West Bank. Many of the students were part of the Midwestern counterculture movement that burgeoned in
the neighborhood bringing with it strong cooperatives and activist work. The numerous bars and emerging music scene during this time drew in many more young people in the evenings. The New Town In-Town development that built the dense Riversides Towers drew thousands of more residents into the neighborhood changing the physical and cultural landscape forever. During the 1970's many Korean young adults moved to MN to study at the University of MN and lived in the Riverside Towers. Eventually, they moved into suburban areas but their parents, whom they brought with them, stayed in Cedar-Riverside. Today, Cedar-Riverside continues to be an entry point for recent immigrants which the growing number of East African residents populating the neighborhood in the 1990's and continuing to grow into the 21st century.

Methodology
Findings in this report come from a variety of sources including class panelists, one-to-one interviews with neighborhood residents and employees, web based research, and classroom readings. We also drew a lot of information from the Census Data Report of 2000. Because of the transient and changing population of Cedar-Riverside, we can only assume that the Census Data would look much different today and anticipate a much different landscape when the 2010 Report is completed. However, it does provide the most comprehensive information on a number of variables that are relevant to understanding the neighborhood's population.

Factors of Population
- Growth rate of the area
  - There was a 12.1 percent increase in the population of the Cedar Riverside neighborhood between 1980 and 2000.

![Cedar-Riverside / Minneapolis](image)

The Cedar Riverside neighborhood population has grown in the last twenty years overall by about 9%, more than the population of the city of Minneapolis as a whole.
- The population increase of this area can be attributed to a) an increase in immigration, especially from the African Continent and b) an increase in family size of residents in Cedar-Riverside.\textsuperscript{vii}
- The state of Minnesota received the 2\textsuperscript{nd} largest, or 11 percent of total number of refugees to the United States in the year 2006.\textsuperscript{viii} We can infer that a larger number of those refugees were from Somalia who moved to Cedar-Riverside.
- There are about 12,000 Oromo people living in Minnesota, with the majority of them residing in Cedar-Riverside (actual number living in CR is unknown).\textsuperscript{ix}
- No recent census data is available for population growth in the area, however recent population density data of the area is cited as 3,616 people/square mile, compared to the national average of 1,218 people/square mile.\textsuperscript{x}

- Age
- The population age in the area of Cedar Riverside has changed drastically according to interviewee, Chris Ruport, a youth aide at Brian Coyle, who has lived in the neighborhood for all of his life. He cites anecdotally that when he was young, there were few other young people in the towers, now families have more children, many of them younger than age 16.\textsuperscript{xi}
- A group of nearly 150 Korean Elders live in Cedar Riverside and have since the early 1970's when their children brought them to Minnesota while they pursued education at the University of Minnesota. While many Korean immigrants have moved to other areas of the metro, a small group stays in the neighborhood. Yoonju Park, Executive Director of the Korean Service Center note that the elders are increasingly scared of leaving their homes due to their perceptions of "violence and traffic".\textsuperscript{xii}
- Class speaker, John Bueche referred to the high youth population in Cedar Riverside as being something of "untapped potential" an "opportunity for partnership with the theaters in this area" and also because of this, talked of the need for a library or city programs in this area.\textsuperscript{xiii}
- Panelist, Freeda Scobey from Riverside Plaza Tenants Association talked about a 'Somali baby-boom' as the war-torn Somali community has found stability, paralleling the baby boom of post World War II in the U.S to that of the Somali community in Minnesota.\textsuperscript{xiv}
- Other class speakers have alluded to the need for the Brian Coyle Center to change the perception that it serves all people in the neighborhood, not just Somali Youth.
- The average age of the population in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood has decreased between the census years 1980 and 2000. The senior population decreased by 36 percent, the adult population by 6 percent, and the population of children in the neighborhood increased by 18 percent.\textsuperscript{ xv}
Cedar-Riverside: Age distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 to 17 years</td>
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<td>18 to 24 years</td>
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<td>25 to 44 years</td>
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<td>45 to 64 years</td>
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<td>65 to 84 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>85 years and over</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development
with data from the US Census of Population and Housing (SF1)

- The number of residents aged 18-24 years living in Cedar-Riverside is listed at 38 percent.\textsuperscript{xvi}
- A high proportion of Cedar Riverside's total population is comprised of young adults living in University of Minnesota and Augsburg College's dormitories and affordable units at Riverside Plaza.\textsuperscript{xvii}
- Mark Johnson, the Vice President of the Cedar-Riverside Business Association talked about University Students passing down negative myths of the area such as calling Riverside Plaza, the 'crack stacks' and 'ghetto in the sky'.\textsuperscript{xviii}

- **Ethnicity**
  - John Bueche from the NRP Steering Committee noted that Cedar-Riverside is a "cross-roads", a constantly changing place because the diversity of residents and their needs.\textsuperscript{xix}
  - 38% of Cedar-Riverside’s residents are foreign-born compared to 14.5 percent for the city of Minneapolis. Cedar-Riverside is considered the "point of entry" for new immigrants.
  - According to the census figures, all ethnic groups except for whites increased in population between 1980 and 2000.
While the above graph shows the ethnic distributions of the neighborhood, within these categories there are greater ethnic differences that strongly define the neighborhood and its cultural and social reality. Residents not fully captured in “Black” and “Asian” categories include Somali, Oromo, Ethiopian, Korean, and Vietnamese people.

Somalis account for the majority of African immigrants living in Cedar-Riverside.

Alemayah Baisa, Executive Director of the Oromo Community of Minnesota, cited that there are about 12,000 Oromo people living in MN with the majority of them residing in Cedar-Riverside (actual number is not known).

There is a small population of Korean residents as well as populations of other Southeast Asian ethnicities including a Cantonese family that owns Keifer Court.

The 2000 Census data sites there were 426 Hispanic residents living in Cedar-Riverside. While this number is larger than the Korean resident rate, their presence in the neighborhood is less prominent and organized.

According to 2000 Census figures, forty-five percent of people living in Cedar-Riverside are foreign born.

Data provided by the City of Minneapolis, based on the 2000 census show that more than 500 neighborhood residents speak African languages, more than 500 speak Spanish, and more than 500 speak Vietnamese. The 500+ category is the largest grouping in these data sets. The actual number of non-English speakers is likely far greater.
• Family Structure/ Types of Housing
  o Freeda Scobey from the Riverside Plaza Tenants Association stated that there are approximately 3500 people living in the towers and they have 1308 units. Half of the units are Section 8 and half are market rate. \textsuperscript{xxi}
  o Scobey also acknowledged that the stated number of people living in the rentals may be lower than the actual number due to regulatory restrictions about the number of people living in the apartment units. \textsuperscript{xxii}
  o Relatively few University of Minnesota faculty and staff live or own homes in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood. The total percentage is listed between 0.3 and 0.6 percent. \textsuperscript{xxiii}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Cedar-Riverside}
\textit{Household composition}
\end{center}

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- Households of people who live alone and are age 65 +
- Households of people who live alone and are under age 65
- Households of people who live together but are not related to each other
- Family households (people related to each other)

Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF1)

- The composition of Cedar-Riverside households has changed rapidly in the last ten to fifteen years.
- 21 percent of households in Cedar-Riverside have children. \textsuperscript{xxiv}
- The numbers of residents aged 65 and older has shrunk 54 percent between the years 1980 and 2000 as some of the high rises in Cedar-Riverside have no longer been restricted to 'seniors only'. \textsuperscript{xxv}
o Approximately 10 percent of housing units are owner occupied, most of which are new townhomes or condo units.\textsuperscript{xvi}
o The percentage of single-family detached units available in the neighborhood is 2 percent.\textsuperscript{xvii}
o As acknowledged in class, the homeownership options within the neighborhood are scarce—much lower than the statewide percentage.

\textbf{Cedar-Riverside}

\textit{Homeowners and renters}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{Chart showing number of housing units occupied in Cedar-Riverside from 1980 to 2000.}
\end{figure}

\textit{Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF3)}

o Most of the occupied housing units in Cedar-Riverside are rented.\textsuperscript{xviii}
o The West Bank CDC maintains co-operatively owned housing in the neighborhood. This creates a more stable population of renters and houses that are more effectively maintained.
o The annual residential turnover rate of Cedar-Riverside is 33 percent, compared to a national average of only 15 percent.\textsuperscript{xix}
o Only 6 percent of residents stay longer than five years in the neighborhood.\textsuperscript{x}

- Labor force
  o The jobs available in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood are predominately in either small businesses or large institutions.
o Fairview University Medical Center has 1,868 beds and 7,000 employees.
o Augsburg College employs 600 people.
o Many of the people who work in the neighborhood do not live in the neighborhood.
o The number of college graduates living in the neighborhood, according to census data, is 5 percent, compared to the national average of 18.5 percent.\textsuperscript{xxi}
o 54.4 percent of the jobs available in the neighborhood are deemed white-collar jobs, while 45.6 percent are blue-collar jobs.\textsuperscript{xxii}
- Poverty level
  - 2000 Census figures show that the neighborhood's median household income in 1999 was $14,337 compared with $37,974 for Minneapolis as a whole. xxxiii
  - In 2000, 42 percent of neighborhood residents, and 41 percent of neighborhood families with children under 18, lived below the poverty level. xxxiv

**Cedar-Riverside / Minneapolis**

**Poverty status of all families and families with children under 18**

The percentages of families with children under the age of 18 living below the poverty level was higher than the overall levels in Minneapolis between the years 1980 and 2000. xxxv

Between the years 1989 and 1999 the percentage of families with children living in poverty remained 19 percent higher than Minneapolis, however, the proportion of families with this status decreased in that ten year period. xxxvi

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i Cornejo
ii Stoecker
iii Cornejo
iv Martin
v Writers Program of WPA
vi www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/neighborhoods/cedarriverside_population.asp
vii Fahia
viii Jefferys
References


Fahia, Saeed, Confederation of Somali Community of MN. Class Panel, October 9th, 2007.


John XXXX, Bedlam Theater Staff and NPR Officer. Class Panel, September 18th, 2007

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Ruporl, Chris, Youth Aid Brian Coyle Community Center. Interview with Kristin Farrell, October 11th, 2007.


Chapter XX
Cedar-Riverside Organizations

1.0 Introduction

The following provides a brief introduction to organizations in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood. While not an exhaustive list, we have included organizations that best represent the diversity of the neighborhood. The list includes service providers and community development groups as well as key organizations in other categories such as faith-based, housing, academic, cultural, food service, and retail.

2.0 The Organizations of Cedar-Riverside

2.1 Faith-based Organizations

Faith-based organizations in Cedar-Riverside are composed of a variety of faith backgrounds and range in size from small communities who do not own a building to larger communities who own property.

Parish of the Holy Trinity and St. Anskar –
Location: 425 20th Avenue South,
Founded: 1970s
Affiliation: Episcopal
Activities: Labor, peace, and youth issues

St. Martin’s Table and Community of St. Martin –
Location: 2001 Riverside Avenue
Founded: 1984
Affiliation: Ecumenical
Activities: Sunday evening worship service, bookstore, vegetarian lunch service, Peace Village summer day camp for elementary school children and school year program for teens, Heartland Institute classes for personal spiritual journeys, Bread for the Journey musical group, and meeting space for community groups.

Trinity Lutheran Congregation –
Location: 2001 Riverside Avenue
Affiliation: Lutheran

Mosques –
Location: Various
Affiliation: Islam

2.2 Social Service Organizations – General

The majority of the general social service organizations have been in the neighborhood for many years. Some, like the People’s Center and the Brian Coyle Community Center, are reflections of the neighborhood’s activist spirit. This spirit has remained throughout successive waves of immigrant residents, in part because there are long-term residents who carry that spirit with them and in part because that spirit is institutionalized in the neighborhood through these social service organizations. This activist spirit has generated much good in the neighborhood, in
terms of outreach to new groups of immigrants and creating a sense of neighborhood pride and identity, but it can also make it very difficult to compromise and collaborate with others.

Brian Coyle Community Center
Overview: The Brian Coyle Community Center began as the Currie Center and carries on the Settlement House tradition that began in the U.S. during the early years of the 20th century when waves of new immigrants were arriving in American cities. The philosophy of the Settlement House movement was to provide services and resources within an immigrant community to empower people toward self-sufficiency from the ground up. Brian Coyle is now part of Pillsbury United Communities which affiliated some of the independent Settlement Houses in the Twin Cities into a coordinated structure, and it continues to provide programming and resources for community residents. In a neighborhood where space is at a premium, it provides where people can congregate, learn, play, and celebrate milestones together— including marriage. The Brian Coyle is the only space available to conduct wedding ceremonies within Cedar Riverside.
Location: 420 15th Avenue South
Activities: ESL classes, computer classes, job center, youth programs, tax assistance, legal assistance, space for other community organizations, multi-cultural emergency food shelf

Cedar Riverside People's Center
Overview: The People's Center was established as a community clinic and veterinary care center. Throughout much of its history, it desired to break ranks with the established medical structure and received no government funding for its services. That has changed in recent years and the clinic has restructured to meet federal funding requirements and to refine its mission. It no longer offers veterinary services but it has expanded its hours and services to its human clientele, and as a result, has become a much more utilized resources, particularly among Somali residents in the neighborhood.
Location: 425 20th Avenue South
Founded: 1970
Activities: medical clinic with sliding fee scale, services include pre and post-natal care and midwifery, geriatric services, and diabetes care

Fairview-University Medical Center Community Health Outreach
Location: Room 207 Riverside East, 2450 Riverside Avenue South
Activities: health promotion and health education to low-income families and residents, resource for single parents and support groups to provide network of resources, programs to meet healthcare needs of immigrant and refugee community, also runs a collaborative effort to link with other programs in the area called the West Bank Human Services Coalition

Riverside Plaza Child Care Center- Children's Home Society
Location: 1615 S. 4th Street
Activities: provides child care for residents of Riverside Plaza; the only child care center in the neighborhood

Family Opportunities for Living Collaborative (FOLC)
Location: 1515 S. 4th Street, Suite 209
Founded: 2000
Activities: support and funding for the Cedar Riverside Community School, Fit and
Friendly fitness classes provide a social outlet for Somali women who are otherwise isolated and beginning outreach to Somali men, job training assistance, planning and transportation for activities outside the neighborhood.

### 2.3 Social Service Organizations – Immigrant Resources

These organizations provide a variety of social services to members of the immigrant community of Cedar-Riverside. Although many of the organizations identified appear to provide overlapping services, each serves a particular ethnic or nationality group, reaching out to their constituents in a manner that assists individuals to comfortably bridge the cultural gap.

**African Women’s Resource Center**
- Location: Brian Coyle Community Center, 420 15th Avenue South
- Founded: 1997
- Activities: Advocacy and education on issues of domestic abuse, sexual assault, and other survival issues for African women.

**Coalition of African Women Rebuilding our Communities Heritage/Mimi’s African Art Gallery and Boutique**
- Location: 1810 Riverside Avenue
- Founded: 1999
- Activities: Support groups provide African women a safe place to discuss issues of concern.

**Confederation of Somali Community**
- Location: 420 15th Avenue South
- Founded: 1994
- Activities: Assistance in accessing social services, employment training and placement, youth activities, education about health and childcare issues, organizing community events.

**Korean Service Center**
- Location: 620 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 1
- Founded: 1991
- Activities: Assistance and advocacy for Korean elders including senior dining program, assisted living issues, ESL, access to government services, Korean gardening program.

**Oromo Community of Minnesota**
- Location: 1505 South 5th Street
- Founded: 1995
- Activities: ESL classes, assistance in accessing social services, conflict resolution, youth tutoring, assistance with US naturalization preparation

**Riverside Plaza Resource Center**
- Location: 1615 South 4th Street, McKnight 3rd Floor
- Founded: 1991 as a project of the Riverside Plaza Tenants Association
- Activities: ESL classes, computer skills, citizenship education, provides cubicle space for other organizations, community social activities.
Somali Yellow Pages –
Location: 1806 Riverside Avenue, #3
Founded: 2001
Activities: In the oral tradition of Somali culture, provides referral information over the telephone to Somali and English speakers.

2.3 Community Development Organizations
Following the same activist and organizing spirit that has driven many of the social service organizations, a number of organizations focused on community development have been established, each with a slightly different vision for the neighborhood. While great collaboration among organizations has been fostered in recent years, the focus of development within the neighborhood has long been a contentious issue and mistrust among some of the key leaders of the various development organizations has been one source of that contention. One key issue of contention among the development organizations has been the conflict around the Dania Hall site. Dania Hall was in the process of being rehabilitated and created into a functional community center and it represented one element in the neighborhood that the different development visions could agree on. The site burned in the process of redevelopment, though, and many blame the West Bank Community Development Corporation for mishandling the redevelopment and for a failure to insure the building, leaving the site vacant yet today.

Cedar Riverside Business Association
Location: 1505 Washington Avenue S
Founded: 1980s
Activities: provide businesses a voice in neighborhood planning, business forum and business development

West Bank Community Coalition
Location: 1808 Riverside Avenue S, Suite 206
Founded: 1971
Activities: City of Minneapolis recognized neighborhood association, in charge of steering committee for Neighborhood Revitalization Plan and for coordinating with City in development of neighborhood

Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization, University of Minnesota
Location: 301 19th Avenue S
Activities: An outreach effort of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota, NPCR provides technical assistance and resources to neighborhoods to aid in community planning, it also provides research assistance who are available to work on neighborhood community development projects

West Bank Community Development Corporation
Location: 1808 Riverside Avenue S, Suite 206
Founded: 1975
Activities: primarily housing development, owns and manages a large portion of the houses in the neighborhood and was formed as part of the struggle against high rise development in the area
Dania Partners
Location: 1808 Riverside Avenue S, Suite 206
Activities: a recent collaboration of business and resident interests to try to develop a common vision for the neighborhood, particularly around the Dania Hall site; has been active in the Light Rail Transit stop debate

2.4 Housing Organizations
Each housing complex in Cedar-Riverside, whether ownership based or rental, has a resident association. While most are composed of residents who volunteer their time, some associations employ a staff to provide additional services to the residents.

7 Corners Housing Board of Directors –
Location: 1400 South 2nd Street, #8322
Activities: Serves as a liaison between residents and management.

Augsburg Park Homeowners Association –
Location: 521 20th Avenue South
Founded: 1992
Activities: Management of all physical and financial aspects of the townhouses.

North West Bank Townhomes Association –
Location: 1901-1911 South 5th Street
Founded: 1985
Activities: Serves as a liaison between residents and management.

Riverside Park Condominium Association –
Location: 2601-2609 South 5th Street
Founded: 1990
Activities: Serves as a liaison between residents and management.

Riverside Plaza Tenants Association –
Location: 1615 South 4th Street, McKnight Third Floor
Founded: 
Activities: The Association employs a staff to mediate tenant-management disputes, organize community and educational programs, and provide referrals for family, employment and other needs.

Timber Park Homeowners Association –
Location: 702-708 19th Avenue South
Founded: 1991
Activities: Serves as a liaison between residents and management.

2.5 Academic
One of the organizational elements that is decidedly mission from the neighborhood is School facilities for the children. There is one small community school located within the Riverside Plaza facilities but there are no other neighborhood options for schools and kids are bussed to a number of schools in the area. The lack of schools translates into a lack of space for after-school activities and athletics and also disperses parental involvement and interaction
among different schools outside the immediate community. What are very present in the neighborhood are higher education institutions.

**Augsburg College**
Location: 2211 Riverside Avenue South  
Founded: 1872  
Activities: small, private liberal arts college founded out of the Lutheran tradition, hosts the Center for Service, Work, and Learning which provides service learning, internship, and volunteer opportunities within Cedar Riverside for Augsburg students

**University of Minnesota, West Bank Campus**
Location: Eastern side of Riverside Avenue to Mississippi River  
Founded: 1957 as extension of University of Minnesota East Bank Campus  
Activities: large, publically funded land trust university; the West Bank hosts the Arts Quarter, the Carlson School of Management, the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, the Law School and a number of undergraduate buildings and residence halls; the West Bank is in the process of solidifying a student-led initiative- CHANCE- that seeks more active and participatory engagement between the university and the community

**Cedar Riverside Community School**
Location: 1610 S. 6th St, Suite 100  
Founded: 1993  
Activities: Minneapolis Public Schools charter school serving children in grades K-8, provides ESL and special education services

### 2.6 Cultural/Performing Arts

**Cedar Cultural Center** –
Location: 416 Cedar Avenue South  
Founded: 1989  
Activities: Hosts concerts, participatory dances, community events that feature American folk music, blues, world beat, and eclectic ethnic music. Provides music educational programs in schools, lecture-demonstrations, panel discussions with artists and music experts. Monthly calendar of events provides in depth coverage of traditional dance and music.

**Theater in the Round** –
Location: 245 Cedar Avenue  
Founded: 1952, at current location since 1969  
Activities: A membership organization. Produces 10 plays each year, including a mix of classics, area premieres and Broadway favorites. Offers classes and workshops on all aspects of theatre.

**Mixed Blood Theater** –
Location: 1501 South 4th Street  
Founded: 1976  
Activities: A professional, multi-racial theatre that produces plays and educational programs on racial and cultural themes.
University of Minnesota West Bank Arts Quarter –
Location: A 10-acre district on the University’s West Bank Campus
Founded:
Activities: Includes 5 buildings, Rarig Center (theatre), Ferguson Hall (music), Ted Mann Concert Hall, Barbara Barker Center for Dance, and Art Building. The WBAQ contains education, research, and performance/exhibition facilities for the arts (art, dance, music, theatre).

2.8 Retail and Restaurants
What characterizes the retail and restaurant options in the neighborhood is the presence of many small, independent vendors. There are larger chains along both the north and south ends of the neighborhood, where many of the students from the U of M and Augsburg venture, but the heart of the neighborhood is a cultural mix of African, Asian, and American restaurants and small retailers. One cultural aspect that easily leads to contention among neighborhood residents is the appropriateness of alcohol. Many among the Somali community abstain from any alcohol and some won’t enter establishments that serve it. As a result, there is a rift that has been created around where many in the neighborhood can legitimately go to eat and spend time together. The coffeeshops in and around Cedar Riverside have become important centers for socializing rather than the bars or pubs.

- Tam Tam’s African Restaurant
- Chai’s Thai Restaurant
- Kilamanjaro Café
- Red Sea Bar and Restaurant
- Keiffer Court Bakery
- The Nomad Pub
- Hard Times Cafe
- Golden Dragon Chinese
- K-Wok
- Mapp’s Coffee

2.9 Broadcasting
KFAI Fresh Air Community Radio –
Location: 1808 Riverside Avenue
Founded: 1978, at current location since 1991
Activities: A volunteer-based community radio station that broadcasts information, arts, and entertainment programming to a racially, socially, and economically diverse audience.

Somali Yellow Pages Radio Broadcasts –
Activities: Broadcasts news and entertainment programming for the Somali community.

3.0 Organization Interactions – the POETS System
People

- The organizations generally reflect the people in the neighborhood- the demographics and cultural make-up- particularly in terms of social service organizations, restaurants, and faith-based organizations.
- There are no Latino focused restaurants or services organizations, which reinforces the idea that there’s a hidden Latino population. There is apparently a small but significant Latino population but there isn’t much outward evidence of it.
- There are not a lot of typical draws for college students within the heart of Cedar-Riverside. While some students enjoy small, hole in the wall places, many want the more familiar and more standard chain restaurants. The cultural divide regarding the appropriateness of alcohol also may serve to keep many college students on the periphery of the neighborhood. This is not necessarily negative but it does represent one element of a division among the people and their values within the neighborhood.

- Long-term residents and newly arrived immigrant residents have different visions for and needs from the community. Many long-term residents no longer have children at home and schooling is not as much a necessity, while with the “Somali baby boom” the number of Somali children has increased dramatically and the need for more school facilities has increased with it.

**Structuration**

**Vertical Influence:**
- A lack of land drives many community decisions regarding what programs can be offered and where they can be held.
- Relationships with the City of Minneapolis in the process of neighborhood development requires trying to work through competing visions for the neighborhood.
- Decisions made outside the neighborhood have affected the types of services available to residents, particularly in the case of post-office and library facilities. This neighborhood has neither and does have access to the University of Minnesota’s post-office and library facilities but because the U is such an internally focused community, those services are not intended to be made convenient to neighborhood residents but rather convenient to student use.

**Horizontal Influence:**
- Greater collaboration among neighborhood organizations is starting to happen, including between the neighborhood development organizations and the large academic institutions. There is much work that needs to be done still on this and a lot of trust that needs to be built, but there is a great focus currently on working together than there has been in the recent past. Many of the social service organizations are also trying to collaborate or at least be aware of what each other are doing so comprehensive services can be provided without competing as much for resources.

**Agency:**
- The efforts to provide greater collaboration among organization is one collective effort to promote change and stability within the neighborhood. The various organizations themselves- the sheer number for such a small area- also represent a focus on both changing and stabilizing the neighborhood.
- The CHANCE initiative that started at the Humphrey Institute and is now being formed into a great West Bank initiative is becoming a proponent of change in the relationship between the University of Minnesota and the Cedar Riverside neighborhood.

**Conflict Over Scarce Resources:**
- Space is the scarcest resource in the neighborhood and is a barrier to developing more programs for youth or other residents. The academic institutions hold large areas of space that could be utilized by the neighborhood and also have programming in place for youth
in other capacities but because the mission of these institutions is largely self-focused, a conflict of interest exists and much of the space remains out of reach for neighborhood use.
Overview

The manmade and natural environments in Cedar Riverside have a major influence on the community. The environment can shape people, development and culture. This chapter examines multiple aspects of the neighborhood's environment including the following areas:

- Boundaries
- Natural Elements
- Transit Ways
- Institutions
- Housing
- Businesses and Streetscape

A map of the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood is provided below for reference on the environment which we are reviewing.
Boundaries

There are a number of physical boundaries that define the physical environment of Cedar Riverside. Key boundaries include:

- Cedar-Riverside is bounded by the Mississippi River on the east, I-94 on the south, and I-35-W on the west.

- Subdivisions- The neighborhood can be divided into different subsections including Seven Corners (bounded by 35-W, the river, 19th Ave, and Washington Ave), the Augsburg campus (bounded by 20th Ave, Riverside Ave, 25th Ave, and I-94), and the U of M West Bank campus(bounded by the river, 1st St, 19th Ave, and 4th St).

- Access points- the neighborhood can only be reached through a limited number of access points. By car these include Cedar Ave (under I-94), 20th Ave (over I-94), 25th Ave (over I-94), Washington Ave (over 35-W and over the Mississippi), Riverside Ave (over I-94) and 19th Ave (over the Mississippi). By foot/bike these include a bridge at 22nd Ave (over I-94), a bridge off of 20th Ave (over the Mississippi), and the light rail path (under I-94, and over 35-W).

Natural Elements

Cedar-Riverside is mostly a flat, developed urban area. As the land nears the Mississippi River it slopes down to “flats”, low grass areas along the riverbank now called the West River Parkway. Green space includes the West River Parkway along the Mississippi, Currie Park in the west, and Murphy Square in the south.

Transit Ways

Roads

Roads grid throughout Cedar-Riverside with Riverside Avenue cutting diagonally across the grid from the north-west to the south-east. Washington Avenue cuts a deep gully across the northern portion east to west, separating Seven corners and part of the West Bank from the rest of
Cedar-Riverside. Washington Ave can be crossed by brdes on Cedar Ave, 19th Ave, and on the West Bank's large elevated plaza. Many streets are dead-ends and closed to through-traffic.

**Light Rail**

The light rail touches the south-western edge and has a stop at 16th Ave and 6th St. It connects to downtown Minneapolis on the northern end, and to the Airport and Mall of American on the southern end.

**Bike/walking Paths**

There are multiple bike paths. One runs parallel to the light rail track (thus providing an access point not accessible by car), one path runs along the Mississippi, and one connects to a bridge off of 20th Avenue going over the Mississippi. Additional, on the West Bank campus, there are numerous bike/walking paths, and a large bridge above the roadway which connects to the U of M East Bank.

**Institutions**

The Cedar Riverside neighborhood's physical environment is heavily influenced by the three major institutions in the neighborhood: the University of Minnesota's West Bank campus, Augsburg College and Fairview Medical Center. These major institutions are shown on the above map of the area. They occupy much of the land fronting Riverside Avenue through the neighborhood. The impact of each institution's physical environment on the neighborhood is outlined below. A map illustrating the location of these major institutions is provided below.
University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota’s Minneapolis campus includes a strong presence in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. The West Bank campus includes buildings for performing arts, business, public affairs and law. The campus has expanded towards Riverside Avenue one of the main corridors for the neighborhood. The outer edge of the campus for some time has been the large Carlson School of Management building which many members of the community feel turns its back on the community and acts as a big wall separating the neighborhood from the West Bank Campus. The campus continues to push towards Riverside Avenue with Carlson’s new Hanson Hall on the corner of 19th Avenue and Riverside. The University has worked with neighbors to design the orientation of the building and its surrounding landscape. The building includes a large outdoor gathering area and an entrance off of Riverside Avenue. The building will open in the spring of 2008 and could potentially significantly alter the West Bank Campus’ relationship with the broader neighborhood. Another major university owned parcel along Riverside between 22nd and 21st Avenues is currently a surface parking lot.²
Augsburg College

Augsburg College has been in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood since 1872 making it the oldest remaining institutional presence in the neighborhood. While it is smaller than the University of Minnesota, it still exerts a strong influence on the neighborhood. The opening of Augsburg’s Oren Gateway Center in the summer of 2007 created a new major presence along Riverside Avenue. The center was built facing out towards Riverside Avenue rather than towards the inside of the Augsburg campus. It also includes a new Barnes and Noble campus bookstore and restaurant which are open to the public.3

Fairview Medical Center

Fairview Health Services operates the University of Minnesota Medical Center and the University of Minnesota Children’s Hospital. Fairview has campuses on both the East Bank of Campus and on Riverside Avenue on the West Bank of Campus. Currently most of Fairview’s land directly on Riverside Avenue is parking lots and other parking structures. In 2007, Fairview announced some major changes to the Riverside Campus. Fairview will be building a new 92 bed children hospital building at the corner of 24th and Riverside Avenue. This facility
will be completed by 2011 at which point Fairview plans to move most of its adult services to the East Bank and centralize all children and family related services on the Riverside Campus. In theory, this would keep the level of traffic related to the Riverside campus constant despite the new building.\textsuperscript{4}

\textit{New Childrens Hospital Building}

\section*{Housing}

Perhaps the single biggest factor in Cedar Riverside’s man made physical environment is the Riverside Plaza apartment complex. The complex occupies multiple blocks along Cedar Avenue between Riverside Avenue/4\textsuperscript{th} Street to 6\textsuperscript{th} Street. The six buildings in the complex include more than 1300 apartments (half of which use Section 8 housing subsidies). The complex includes many resident services such as a playgrounds, convenience store, charter school and more.\textsuperscript{5}

\textit{Riverside Plaza Apartments}

Overall most of the housing units in Cedar Riverside are rental as opposed to owner occupied. According to the 2000 census numbers, the neighborhood included 2,547 rental units and 291 owner occupied meaning only 10\% of all units were owner occupied.\textsuperscript{6} In addition to the Section 8 Housing in Riverside Plaza, there is also a public housing project farther down Cedar Avenue. The high proportion of rental units impacts the physical
environment of Cedar Riverside. With less home owners, the environment is cared for in a different way since the occupants do not have a long term investment in the neighborhood.

**Businesses and Streetscape**

The businesses within the Cedar Riverside also have an impact on the physical environment of the neighborhood. Most of the neighborhood’s businesses are located along Cedar Avenue with some on the non-institutional sections of Riverside Avenue and a cluster of businesses in the Seven Corners area at Cedar and Washington. Many of the businesses are restaurants and bars which often bring outsiders to the neighborhood. While this draw of outsiders is often good for businesses, many neighborhood residents have expressed concern at the rowdiness that these establishments cause.

The businesses also help to create the streetscape environment in the neighborhood. If businesses have dark or foreboding storefronts, the street is seen as inactive and dark. The streetscape also could include more natural elements of the environment. It is often easy to forget the streetscape when considering the physical and natural environment of a neighborhood. The streetscape may seem like the empty space between physical structures but it actually plays a huge role in how a person experiences a physical place.

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1 Minneapolis Neighborhood Base Map Web Page <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/neighborhoods/cedarriverside_base_map.pdf>
2 Carlson School of Management Website <http://www.csom.umn.edu/page5980.aspx>
4 Fairview Website <http://www.uofmchildrenshospital.org/About/News/c_410832.asp>
5 Riverside Plaza Website <http://www.riversideplaza.net/main.htm>
6 Minneapolis Neighborhood Web Page <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/neighborhoods/cedarriverside_housing.asp#TopOfPage>
7 Cedar Riverside Business Association Website <http://www.cedarriverside.com/crba.html>
TECHNOLOGY OF CEDAR-RIVERSIDE

Transit: Movement through the Cedar-Riverside Island

The triangular island of Cedar Riverside Neighborhood is created by its natural border of the Mississippi River but also its two man made borders of Interstate 35W to the west and Interstate 94 to the south. These routes were developed in the 1970s as a means for commuters to easily access the city from outer suburban rings but effectively cut off the neighborhood from much interaction with the rest of Minneapolis.

For most people, the most significant transit technology factor in Cedar-Riverside would be the arrival of Hiawatha Light Rail Transit system (LRT) and the stop located at 613 15th Avenue South which provides fairly quick and convenient access to several destinations within Minneapolis and Bloomington. The section of the LRT system from Fort Snelling to Downtown opened in mid-2004 and the extension to the Mall of America was opened in late-2005. In contrast to LRT stops located further from the center of the city, which do not have significant residential density to support a station and need supplemental feeder buses, Cedar-Riverside greatly exceeds the minimum and thus does not directly connect to MetroTransit buses.

Overall, LRT has been extremely popular in Minneapolis with ridership greatly exceeding projections. A basic statistical assumption is that 25% more people will be willing to use a train than bus. Thus, a bus traversing the LRT route would have 25% less passengers than the LRT due to a passenger preference for train. However, the Hiawatha route has seen over a 40% increase in passengers with the installation of the LRT. Although this has partially been due to concurrent events such as higher gas prices and a
larger focus on the environment, most concede that area residents have a strong preference for LRT. This has also had an impact on Cedar-Riverside as its location closer to the center of route means that it faces fuller trains than people at more distant stops. While initial planning into the Cedar-Riverside was minimal because planners expected low turnout of riders, the stop has surprised many as it is the second highest rider frequented station on the line.

The arrival of the Hiawatha Line and development of future lines and stops has not been without controversy. Initially there was uncertainty as to whether a station would even exist in the neighborhood. Gardens maintained by Korean elders were a victim of the construction and neighborhood organizing took place around the issue. Final resolution involved moving them to another location to make rail for LRT. Many stakeholders believed that it would have been more beneficial to have the route directly on Cedar rather than the current stop.

Organizers in the area are now focusing on conversations regarding the construction of the Central Corridor connecting Minneapolis to St. Paul and traversing the Washington Avenue bridge on the University of Minnesota campus. Once again, station location has become a central area of discord. Many neighborhood residents would like the station to be further west, particularly beneath Cedar Avenue to encourage greater walking traffic between the Seven Corners enclave and the rest of the neighborhood. It is likely that it will be very near the end of the bridge and on the U's West Bank campus in order to serve the maximum number of students as a current plan has the stop designated at the 19th Avenue bridge. Construction of the Central Corridor is scheduled to being in 2010 and be complete in 2014.
A number of bus lines also serve the Cedar-Riverside area but are also designed to meet primarily the needs of students. Most stops occur nearer the campus than major housing centers. Although the arrival of LRT brought proximity to the community, variety of destinations has suffered since it lowered the number of buses that service wider areas traversing highly populated areas. Cuts to bus service as LRT increases continue to show the disparity transit subsidies have towards business commuters as opposed to urban residents.

In addition to more recent mass transit impacts, the Cedar-Riverside has been greatly impacted by transportation in the form of road and interstate construction which has insulated and segmented the neighborhood. It has cut off residential areas and created underpasses which are perceived as unsafe, fairly or not. It has also made being a pedestrian difficult as roads which do not have sidewalks and have barriers preventing crossing now dominate the landscape.

**University of Minnesota Library systems: Resources driven to discover**

The libraries located within the West Bank portion of the Twin Cities campus of the University of Minnesota are an important technological resource within the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood. Represented by Anderson and Wilson facilities, these places have connections to the entire catalogue of books, magazines, journals and publications throughout the University system in Minnesota. The entire system ranks as number 13 out of the top 113 research libraries in America and is number one in loaning unique materials to other library systems throughout the country. Citizens have access to over 6.2 million volumes of resources through these two locations.
Andersen Library, located within the Anderson Hall complex, was commissioned and named after former governor Elmer J. Anderson in 1999 and is considered the most state of the art library within the Twin Cities campus. It has a smaller collection of books and resources but is noted for its children’s literature section as well as ongoing exhibits of local, state, national, and international interest. While community members can access some of these materials, they are not allowed to take them out of the library and are at the mercy of the academic calendar since students’ needs are placed first.

The Wilson Library provides a key source of printed and electronic material on the humanities and social sciences. Included in some of its collections are the Ames Library of South Asia, Business Reference Service, East Asian Library, Electronic Text Research Center, Government Publications Library, James Ford Bell Library, and the John R. Borchert Map Library. Access to information about these amenities is available online for the public. People can take virtual tours of the facilities and see where these collections are located along with the visual awe of variety of the collections.

**KFAI: Communications spanning the world**

KFAI is a radio station that uses the tag line “radio without boundaries.” While this may be representative of its programming, physically its headquarters for programming and administrative offices has been located in the historic Bailey Building at 1808 Riverside Avenue since 1991. The radio station first began as an operation from Walker Community Church in 1978. At the time it was only an underground operation as it used a 10 watt transmitter placed on top of nearby Seward Co-Op. Today the station works with a 125 watt transmitter stationed atop the downtown Foshay building as well
as using new media, including podcasts and MP3 clips, to broadcast through its online website at KFAI.org.

KFAI's mission is to serve as a "volunteer-based community radio station that exists to broadcast information, arts and entertainment programming for an audience of diverse racial, social and economic backgrounds." The station has a full time, part time and volunteer staff of over 400. Its budget is mainly listener funded to the range of $1.2 million. The local publication, The City Pages, named the station "Best Radio Station" in the Twin Cities for the seventh consecutive year in 2007.

Its eclectic programming is one of the most diverse in the nation. It began programming towards immigrant and ethnic groups in the Twin Cities with its 1981 first airing of "Gao Hmong" a Hmong community discussion hour. Since then the station has created cultural programming for Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Oromo, Filipino, Cambodian, Vietnamese, South Indian, and Native American among other ethnic groups within the metro area. Along with creating its own programming, KFAI, broadcasts, nationally syndicated news an programming from across the nation like DemocracyNOW, LatinoUSA, CounterSpin, This Way Out, and Free Speech Radio News.

Fairview Hospital Campus: Headquarters of Medical Innovation

Fairview Health Services is the largest private medical provider system in the state of Minnesota. Not only is its University of Minnesota campus headquarters located within Cedar-Riverside but its foundation donor activities and administrative offices are housed in the large complex at 2450 Riverside Ave. In 1955 the first facilities were
opened with a focus on pediatric health management. In 1997 the University of Minnesota developed a partnership with Fairview. Fairview works in coordination with its University of Minnesota medical partners as one of the top 15 research medical centers in the United States.

Fairview Health Services, and particularly the University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview, have four areas of pioneering expertise; pediatric care, bone marrow transplant, whole organ transplant, and cardiaic care. Among its many notable achievements, Fairview completed the first pediatric open heart surgery, pioneered neonatal and pediatric hemodialysis, and performed first successful pediatric bone marrow transplant. For its many successes the University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview is ranked seventh of 82 in “quality and safety among U.S. academic medical centers, according to the University HealthSystem Consortium (UHC).”

Currently, the information technology staff at Fairview Health Services are working to create easier electronic access to medical files not only for doctors but for patients as well. Through a developing application of My Chart online, patients would be able to have limited access to their medical history from anywhere. This would encourage more responsibility on the part of patients as they would be empowered by the direct information they could access.
Cedar-Riverside has a Continuum of Variability in Culture

Observations of Cedar-Riverside indicate that its complex culture is made up of a spectrum of values and beliefs. Those values are sometimes very diverse and unique to individuals, but some stand out as agreed upon by the neighborhood generally. “Preferences, values, attitudes and beliefs must be in common to a significant number of individuals who act or are willing to act on them in order to qualify as social-psychological elements in human ecology...”\(^1\) Those homogenous values make up the overarching culture of the community. Of all the aspects of a community ecosystem, culture is particularly complicated and essential because unlike the other elements, which can be readily viewed, beliefs and values are internal and personal to people. They can only be recognized by the words of individuals or through their actions.

There are also values and beliefs that are not entirely variable and are not entirely agreed upon by members of a community. Those values fall in the middle of the spectrum and, since only some members of a community hold them, conflicts between those beliefs and the beliefs of others may exist. Homogenous and less homogenous cultural values fall in different places on the ecological cultural spectrum of any community, but since Cedar-Riverside is a community with such diversity, it has a particularly complex spectrum of cultural beliefs.

**Homogenous Cultural Values**

Despite the diversity in people who live in Cedar-Riverside, there are some commonly held values with less variability. These beliefs paint a picture of the general culture of the community.

\(^1\) POETS, pg. 3
One of the most commonly reported values in interviews was an appreciation for diversity and a variety of experiences. The wide variety of nationalities, ethnicities and backgrounds of the population of Cedar-Riverside affects this in a few ways. First, people who live there are more frequently confronted with diversity and it becomes a norm. Also, people who are more appreciative of diversity may move to the neighborhood to seek it out. However, care must be taken in simply accepting population realities as cultural norms. This is an example of a “homogenous cultural value” that may not be as universally held by the residents of Cedar-Riverside as it appears. Many people may have no choice but to reside in Cedar-Riverside because they are immigrants or asylees, and a of lack of low-income housing elsewhere, tolerant landlords who will accept payment on first paycheck to let people build credit or family connections in the area make this neighborhood the only viable option rather than a value choice.

Work ethic is also commonly reported to be valued in the community. It is apparent in the existence of number of locally owned and co-operative stores that neighborhood efforts have been made to keep supporting and working in these businesses. This observation goes to the additional community belief in the importance in local versus large commercial businesses. The small businesses have survived throughout the years as well as changed to account for the tastes of new people arriving from all over the world.

In fact, there is most certainly a strong influence from immigrants’ varied experiences in their native countries that impacts interactions in neighborhood. For example, if someone comes from a country that had a corrupt police force, he would be much less likely to contact Minneapolis police to report a crime. A person from a country in which it is normal to have many people living together may not appreciate local housing regulations.
Conflict Arises When Values Diverge

Cedar-Riverside is home to one of most culturally diverse populations in the Twin Cities. All basic sociological understandings encompass the universal reality that each and every culture is characterized by its own unique, individualized value system. It follows that while these values may overlap in some places, they diverge in others, creating a high potential for conflict. In addition, a transient population will generate an even greater probability of conflict as ethnic groups move in and out of the community.

An exceptionally diverse and uncommonly transient population in a relatively small area such as Cedar-Riverside is likely to be characterized by particularly high incidences of conflict. One helpful system of conceptual organization of the interrelationships amongst culturally diverse groups cohabiting one particular area is known as “urban ecology,” which focuses on the manifestation of interrelationships in a city.\(^2\) The elements of this system are represented by the acronym P.O.E.T.S., representing the following factors: population, organization, environment, technology, and social-psychological considerations. We will briefly examine the first four of those elements in turn below, focusing on their interaction with social-psychological factors and a few examples of the potential conflicts that could arise between each.

Population Defines Culture

The population of an area necessarily defines the culture and the community’s values. As mentioned above, the population of Cedar-Riverside is not only exceptionally culturally diverse, but also unusually transient; the large majority of occupants stay for however long it takes to establish a reliable income flow, then move to the suburbs, in pursuit of a higher quality of life and increased access to necessary resources. Much of the

population that is non-immigrant is student-based, a group inherently transient and unlikely to establish long-term ties to the community. The transient nature of the population also makes it difficult to accurately assess who is living in Cedar-Riverside at any one time; the cultural ebb and flow of the neighborhood does not lend itself well to survey. Thus, we must accept and work with a minimal understanding of the makeup of the neighborhood as a natural consequence of trying to hit a constantly moving target.

An example of a potential conflict arising from the population element of the urban ecological system can be seen in the struggle to define and preserve the historical value of Cedar-Riverside. Since the population is characterized by a constantly high rate of turnover amongst its occupants, it is difficult to establish a longstanding institution or tradition that can be maintained across the wide span of cultural factions that rotate through the community. As a result, a generally common value in the importance and maintenance of local history is complicated by varying understandings of how that value should be manifested, as each group has individual values that dictate their behavior and activities in Cedar-Riverside.

**Organization as a Cultural Necessity**

The need for a social organizational scheme is especially prevalent in a highly diverse and transient neighborhood such as Cedar-Riverside. “For human beings, organization is always social because they cannot exist on a sustaining basis apart from other human beings. As interdependent creatures, it is necessary that they organize, that is, make their activities regular and systematic when they are living in the same group.”³ Within Cedar-Riverside, there are a multitude of organizations established to function as support systems for the immigrant populations; recently, many of those organizations have managed to pool their

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³ Gist & Fava, pg. 1. Emphasis in original.
efforts and resources to collaboratively address the issues confronting the neighborhood. Thus, the community members have improved their ability to communicate across cultural, economic, and language barriers, largely aided by the efforts of the local organizations centralizing their energies.

Shadowing these positive movements towards the development of a tighter-knit, well-balanced community are the challenges presented when attempting to reconcile vast and widespread diversity in culture and values. Although most organizations are geared towards the best interests of the community members it seeks to serve, they are inherently bound by some constructs that limit their resources and accessibility. Oftentimes the residents simply don’t know about the sources of assistance available to them, or encounter frustrating barriers to obtaining them (for example, language barriers). One conflict that has been reiterated numerous times is the discord between the City of Minneapolis’ values and those of the Cedar-Riverside community members. It is difficult to obtain evidence demonstrating whether these conflicts are truly material or a product of poor communication and leadership, but the consequences are the same. Increased tension between the overarching organizational entity that controls the neighborhood’s access to resources and the vulnerable population of the neighborhood creates a progressively negative relationship that ultimately hinders the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively.

The Role of Environmental Factors

A relationship innately exists between a culture and the natural environment that surrounds it. This connection is generally characterized by a jointly influential relationship; while environmental factors often define the boundaries of a population’s ability to expand, “the process of adjustment is continuous and reciprocal because man in turn modifies the
environment via his technology and culture."4 Minnesota’s terrain is generally flat, lending itself well to urban development.

Cedar-Riverside is uniquely positioned along the Mississippi River, an environmental element that greatly impacts the cultural development of the area. The river serves as a natural split in the cityscape, bringing increased cultural variation on each bank along with it. One natural consequence of the river boundary is the limitation it puts on expansion; there is simply nowhere for sprawl to perpetuate itself, increasing the pressure on the other areas of the neighborhood already tightly packed and over-populated. Tight space increases (and sometimes forces) interaction, which can be both a positive and a negative factor, depending on how the cultural conflicts are manifested at any given point in time. It follows that one source of tension interwoven throughout conversations with community members is the conflict between development and growth and preservation. Many of the ethnic groups inhabiting Cedar-Riverside place great value on the preservation of historical and meaningful locations, an emphasis that can meet resistance when it becomes beneficial to utilize any and all available space. In this and many other ways, environmental considerations indirectly influence the social aspects of a community like Cedar-Riverside.

Technological Influences on Culture

Over the course of time, technological advances have played an obviously pivotal role in the progression of every culture and social structure around the world. In Cedar-Riverside, the most recent and admired example of this is the LRT, which has increased accessibility of resources for a large portion of the community members. Other less obvious manifestations of the important influence of technology are also woven into the fabric of the Cedar-Riverside community; for example, the People’s Center recently revitalized their

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4 Id.
marketing and communication strategies, creating a more positive relationship with the neighborhood members. Although we don't know exactly what technology played a role in this development, ultimately, utilizing new strategies to overcome the language barriers proved to be a successful enterprise.

It is not difficult to imagine the considerable potential for conflict creation when evaluating the relationship between technology and culture. As a general rule, people do not adjust easily to change; as we know, the fast-moving world of technology waits for no one. What now seem like commonplace amenities (for example, wireless internet in coffee shops) were not even conceived of five years ago. Due to the increasing reliance of a large portion of society on such technological advancements, small businesses that cannot afford or do not have access to such resources can take a hit. In a place like Cedar-Riverside, where a significant portion of the community places great value on small, family-owned specialized businesses that are often not built on a firm financial base, much of the neighborhood will be disadvantaged. Technology is, by nature, constantly expanding its reach and influence; as time progresses, it may be difficult for a neighborhood like Cedar-Riverside to its head above water.

Conclusion

A community with such a diversity of people, in which both the history of the place and the highly transient nature of the residents interact, is particularly eclectic, yet also has some identifiable, cohesive elements. Conflict abounds even in basic values, made explicit by contrasts such as the abundance of bars next to the high number of Muslim residents. Nonetheless, tolerance and history serve to unify the community. The best approach to being sensitive to the cultural aspect of this community is refraining from entering it with the assumption that individuals share an overarching cultural value system.
STRUCTURALIZATION

HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIPS

As Warren has stated, a community’s horizontal pattern of relationships is the “structural and functional relation of its various social units and sub-systems to each other (1978).”

The Cedar-Riverside neighborhood’s horizontal pattern of relationships is critical to meeting the needs of the neighborhood’s residents. This pattern is especially important, as vertical, helpful relationships, may be deteriorating or not providing needed services. In an interview with Jim Ruiz, president of the West Bank Community Coalition, he suggested that national and local governments are putting more pressure on community groups and non-profit organizations to meet community needs and providing less funding and less support for services, such as community libraries, post offices, policing levels, and streetlight repairs to name a few.

Student interviews showed a number of horizontal relationships among residents and community groups and among groups themselves. Because Cedar-Riverside is a densely populated neighborhood, one cannot write about horizontal relationships without mentioning the important role played by those groups and people involved in providing housing.

Decades ago, many horizontal groups and leaders, along with people providing important vertical relationships, developed housing agreements that allowed for long-term occupancy and affordability in the neighborhood. Because the neighborhood has

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2 Interview with Jim Ruiz, Dawn Skelly, 10/16/07
historically welcomed various groups of immigrants and students, many tenant are low-income and receive housing subsidies.

Groups like the Riverside Plaza Tenants Association help residents get connected to community services and understand how to advocate for tenants who need help explaining their “credit” situation or establishing credit. They frequently advocate on behalf of residents, who speak limited English. In one case, the tenants, their association, and the Korean Service Center came together to change the proposed light rail stop that was to be located in front of the senior high rise. Their combined efforts allowed for a beautiful community garden in the space.

As the community has grown and changed over the years, the housing groups have changed with them, allowing for more immigrant voices and direct access to decision-making. This trend has been seen in the many community groups that also exist. Community groups like the West Bank Community Coalition and Dania Partners have become more inclusive. There are a number of support services and groups in the community that support recreation, learning, and healthcare, and that frequently collaborate with one another and with the tenants groups to serve the residents. These include the Brian Coyle Center, the different immigrant organizations like the Korean Service Center, Cedar-Riverside People’s Organization, and others.

There are visible efforts of important horizontal relationships at work, such as people coming together to discuss what to do with Dania Hall space and how to find/expand important community space; plan community events such as Cedarfest; encourage patronization of local businesses, mentor others within the community; and increase attendance at community meetings.
On a broader scale, several horizontal groups have collaborated to develop a small area plan. Groups like the Neighborhood Revitalization Program steering committee, West Bank Community Coalition, Cedar Riverside Business Association, and CHANCE are important to this effort and important in their own missions in building effective coalitions and areas of horizontal support.

One of the major problems with the horizontal groups and relationships in Cedar-Riverside is the multiple stakeholders and multiple agendas, along with a lack of full neighborhood representation/participation due to a number of factors. This leads to a lack of a central, coordinated effort for addressing community concerns. As a result, community decision-making is fragmented and at best meeting the needs of only certain groups of residents.

AGENCY

Cedar Riverside is a neighborhood once known for its activism and agency, both by the individuals in the community as well as the organizations representing those individuals. This perception historically started in 1970 when a group of neighborhood residents and business owners created the Cedar-Riverside Community Union and successfully opposed and halted Keith Heller and Gloria Segal’s “New Town in Town” project. This activism momentum and character of the neighborhood carried through the 1980s.

However, in the late 1980s and the early 1990s much of this agency started to change. This was in part due to the large influx of immigrant and refugee groups that presented a language and culture barrier to the neighborhood’s past forms of mobilizing
and organizing. In addition, events such as the Dania Hall fire in 2000 further fractured organizations and trust. A “culture of blame” was created where some community members believe “neighborhood problems, such as crime, are unjustly blamed on Riverside Plaza or immigrant residents.”[^3] Others focused blame on “the West Bank CDC for its complex role in the redevelopment of the neighborhood[^3]” and because they are often labeled with the responsibility of Dania Hall burning down[^4].

Today, the neighborhood is showing increased signs of agency in an atmosphere of ethnic diversity and difference. One major initiative is Dania Partners, a coalition comprised of 16 neighborhood organizations. This collaborative illustrates agency in several ways. First, the organizations involved in the group comprise a wide array of interests and backgrounds. Bringing all of these people together indicates that the community is beginning to work across lines of difference and overcome some of the language and cultural barriers that previous made neighborhood-wide collaboration difficult.

Second, the coalition has already had a significant success in bringing the community together to rally against the University of Minnesota’s Light Rail Transit plans. This shows that it is not only important that these organizations are forming a coalition, but that they can take effective action and build community-wide movements around a specific issue[^4]. It is this ability to mobilize and organize the neighborhood that made Cedar Riverside such a powerful political force in the 70s and 80s.

[^4]: Interview with Tim Mungavan, Sarah Martyn Crowell, 10/11/07.
Agency is also seen in the neighborhood’s relationships with surrounding large institutions, particularly Augsburg, Fairview Hospital, and University of Minnesota. Although the neighborhood suffers from a lack of space, little youth programming, and competition over financial resources, these institutions are starting to form partnerships with the neighborhood to alleviate these issues. For example, Fairview Hospital has partnered with Families for Opportunities Living Collaborative on their Fit and Friendly program as well as providing partial funding for Somali women health classes. The University of Minnesota has gained an important presence in the community through initiatives like CHANCE (Cedar Humphrey Action for Neighborhood Collaborative Engagement). Aside from partnering with coalitions like Dania Partners on the LRT issues and initiating other projects, CHANCE members are now being included in Dania Partner meetings and being asked to act as “neutral observers” at events to give constructive feedback. These actions indicate the trusting connection growing between the two networks. Also Augsburg continues to be seen as an important partner to the neighborhood both in giving resources and in creating positive change.

A third area important to agency is the stabilization of the East African immigrant community. This community comprises a large portion of the Cedar Riverside residents and they also are the majority of residents in the Riverside Plaza Towers. This population’s stabilization is evidenced particularly through the long term residency many residents in Riverside Plaza have established. In fact, there is now “a waiting list to lease

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6 Interview with Africa Abdi, Marissa McGuire, 10/23/07; Interview with John Bueche, Sebastian Ellefson, 10/23/07; Interview with Pam Deshaw, Karly Zufal, 10/24/07.
a residence in the complex. The stabilization is also seen through the decrease of tribal fighting and willingness to include other minority groups, particularly in Riverside Plaza.

This has led to increased agency in several ways. The West Bank Community Coalition has increased East African membership on its board, indicating the belief that this group is an important voice in the community and fosters their inclusion in the broader neighborhood. In addition, places like the Korean Service Center had extended elder care programs to include the Somali population. Although this program recently stopped, it established “new relationships and understanding between the Somali and Korean communities” which can further the agency of both groups by collaborating and consolidating their resources in the future.

Some main issues with agency include the difficulty in communicating information across the community. For example, trying to promote and recruit community members to come to neighborhood meetings is more difficult than in the past due to the diversity in the neighborhood. In addition, there is little programming for Somali youth and young adults (particularly men) to actively engaged their talents and energy in the neighborhood. A related issue is that funders are skeptical about giving money to organizations that serve the Somali population; due to past grievances over some of these organizations not achieving promised goals. Therefore, potential programs and initiatives that could help build the agency of the Somali community never come to fruition.

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8 Interview with Fredda Scobey, Ben Marcy, 10/17/07.
9 Interview with Yoonji Park, Katie Peacock, 10/22/07.
10 Interview with Rosemary Knutson, Julie Warner, 10/16/07.
11 Interview with Pam Deshaw, Karly Zufal, 10/24/07