

THIS MONTH IN EAST PHILLIPS & MIDTOWN...

EPIC AND MPNAI POTENTIAL MERGER Frequently Asked Questions

Have other neighborhood organizations merged?

Yes! There are a few examples of other neighborhood organizations merging in Minneapolis. In 2023, Beltrami and Northeast Park neighborhoods merged into the Lower Northeast Neighborhood Association. The two organizations struggled to stay afloat from funding cuts and believed that merging could concentrate their resources and help them better serve residents. In a Star Tribune article, one Northeast Park resident in response to the merger said "I think it's a great idea, it gives us access to more funding and people dedicated to community growth."

Does this mean there won't be an East Phillips or Midtown Phillips?

No! East Phillips and Midtown Phillips will still be their own neighborhoods. This potential merger is about the neighborhood organizations merging, not the neighborhoods themselves. There will still be an East Phillips and a Midtown Phillips, but if we merge then there will be one neighborhood organization serving both neighborhoods. This organization can still have specific initiatives within each of the neighborhoods to attend to their unique identities but our funding, staff, and boards would merge. See question below about equitable investment and board balancing.

Will city funding increase with more community outreach? Why can't we afford to do things like we did before?

No, funding from the City is a standing annual amount based on neighborhood demographics. For more information on the timeline, process, and guidelines for securing funding from the City, please visit the city's website on neighborhood funding.

In the past, EPIC and MPNAI were volunteer run and most funding went directly to partner organizations. Partner organizations now get funded directly from the City of Minneapolis through the [Partnership Engagement Fund](#). In recent years, maintaining the minimum requirements for operating a 501c3 non-profit has become less manageable by a volunteer board of directors, let alone, managing the operations of a nonprofit as well as sustainable programming for residents.

Are the Phillips West and Ventura Village neighborhoods also merging?

No, only EPIC and MPNAI boards have agreed to pursue a merger conversation with their organizations. Aside from EPIC and MPNAI, no other mergers are planned. PWNO, EPIC, and MPNAI are discussing a programming collaborative, meaning we would like to partner on programs across our neighborhoods, but PWNO has not voted to pursue a merger.

Hey neighbors! As many know, EPIC and MPNAI are considering merging organizations to better serve our residents. Throughout our engagement process, we have heard the same questions and concerns. We wanted to provide neighbors with an FAQ of questions that have been consistently asked.

Where did this idea come from?

In October of 2022 MPNAI began having conversations about joining forces with EPIC. In February, 2023 they initiated a connection with EPIC to further pursue that idea. This spearheaded the MPNAI-EPIC joint staff collaborative that started in October 2023 that has brought new energy into our neighborhood organizing.

This is feeling fast! What's the urgency?

We understand this may feel fast! But this is a conversation that started in October of 2022 and has led to multiple conversations, engagements at partner organizations events, virtual and in-person meetings, tabling, and continued engagement presently. We also have an open feedback form where you can give us advice directly. Staff and board want to reach our vision and mission to create thriving, safe, and healthy neighborhoods. In our current climate, a volunteer board cannot adequately achieve this without help. We feel we need to combine resources and funding so we can focus on residents!

How will we ensure that each neighborhood will be invested in equitably with resources and outreach?

A merged organization will have bylaws that represent both neighborhoods. These bylaws will include "at-large representatives" who offer a broad perspective on both East and Midtown Phillips, alongside neighborhood-specific representatives. We are seeking the community's input on what these bylaws should look like. Ideally, we also want our staff to live in both neighborhoods, and currently, they do.

We believe it is the responsibility of both the board(s) and staff to regularly assess and evaluate who is and isn't being represented. There are many groups—such as people experiencing housing instability, various ethnic and language communities, different age groups, and people with disabilities—that are often overlooked in decision-making processes.

By ensuring our board and staff are representative of both neighborhoods, we aim to fairly distribute funding and resources across East and Midtown Phillips. We also recognize that East and Midtown Phillips face many of the same challenges. By sharing resources and aligning our vision, we believe we can more effectively address these common issues.

For more information on the merger visit: unitedphillips.org/merger



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CALLING ALL BUSINESS OWNERS ON THE CHICAGO AND BLOOMINGTON AVE CORRIDORS!



Are you interested in revitalizing your business (or starting a new one) and enhancing your space? We're excited to bring new resources to the Midtown and East Phillips areas, including:

- Facade and livability Improvements
- Partnerships to minimize business displacement and invigorate the local economy
- Encouraging new business development to fill vacant commercial properties
- Mobilizing businesses to increase food access and connect with neighborhood residents
- Developing more 3rd spaces for neighbors to gather and build community

If you're ready to join this movement and create lasting change in your community, please scan the QR code below to start a conversation on how we can best assist you.



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