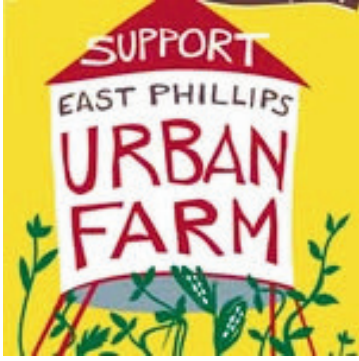
Returning to Roof Depot:

A New Chapter in East Phillips



By Alondra Cano

Returning to the Roof Depot project feels deeply personal. As a former Minneapolis City Council Member, I saw firsthand the power of East Phillips residents who organized, advocated, and refused to let their neighborhood be overlooked. Today, I'm proud to return to this work as Strategic Development Director for the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute (EPNI).

The Roof Depot has always represented more than a building or a piece of property. It represents a community's vision for its own future—a future rooted in environmental justice, economic opportunity, cultural connection, and the well-being of the people who call East Phillips home.

For years, residents have made their voices heard about the need to address environmental harms and invest in solutions shaped by the people most affected. Their persistence is a reminder that meaningful community development begins with listening, building trust, and recognizing the leadership that already exists in our neighborhoods.

In this new role, I look forward to helping EPNI strengthen partnerships, advance its development goals, and turn community vision into lasting opportunities. That means working alongside Little Earth families, residents of the East Phillips neighborhood, public partners, and supporters who want to build on EPNI's strengths and endurance.

I know this work takes patience, collaboration, and a willingness to navigate challenges. But I also know what this community can accomplish when people come together around a shared purpose.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to return—not as someone bringing a vision to East Phillips, but as someone joining a community that has been building its vision for years. I look forward to listening, learning, and working with our neighbors to help move the Roof Depot project forward.

The future of Roof Depot should be shaped by the people who have fought for it. I'm honored to be part of that next chapter.