

Whittier Supportive Housing Project

June 2002

*A project of the
Minneapolis Neighborhood Information System (MNIS)
at the
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)
University of Minnesota*

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The Minneapolis Neighborhood Information System (MNIS) is a collaborative capacity-building effort intended to meet the needs of community-based organizations by providing access to property data that can inform community revitalization efforts and housing intervention and investment strategies. Partners in this project include the City of Minneapolis, the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, select Minneapolis neighborhood organizations, and CURA. Participating neighborhood groups receive training, project assistance, GIS expertise, and access to property information, as well as opportunities to share ideas about GIS projects and housing strategies with other neighborhoods.

Minneapolis Neighborhood Information System (MNIS)

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Whittier Supportive Housing Project

Neighborhood: Whittier

Project Completion Date: June 2002

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Project Description: Whittier, Stevens Square, and Loring Park neighborhoods have expressed concerns about the concentration of supportive housing and social services in their neighborhoods. These concerns include impacts on community livability, the safety of vulnerable populations, and potential adverse effects on neighborhood development and revitalization efforts. Prior concerns led former City Council member Jim Niland to facilitate passage of the ¼ Mile Spacing Ordinance. With the Whittier and Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhoods in mind, this ordinance sought to de-concentrate supportive housing facilities across the city.

In 2001 the Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation proposed a 40-unit facility (Lydia House) for a former nursing home site at 1920 LaSalle Avenue. The facility's developers requested the following from the Minneapolis Planning Commission:

- (1) A Waiver from the ¼ Mile Spacing Ordinance
- (2) A Conditional Use Permit
- (3) Two Variances from the City's Zoning Code

A joint task force of the Whittier Alliance and Stevens Square Community Organization (SSCO) determined that the existing concentration of supportive housing is already extreme, especially when compared to the city as a whole. Of the city's 88 neighborhoods, four (Whittier, Phillips, Stevens Square-Loring Heights and Central) house 43% of the city's 157 supportive housing facilities. Thirty-eight neighborhoods have no such facilities and 18 have only one.

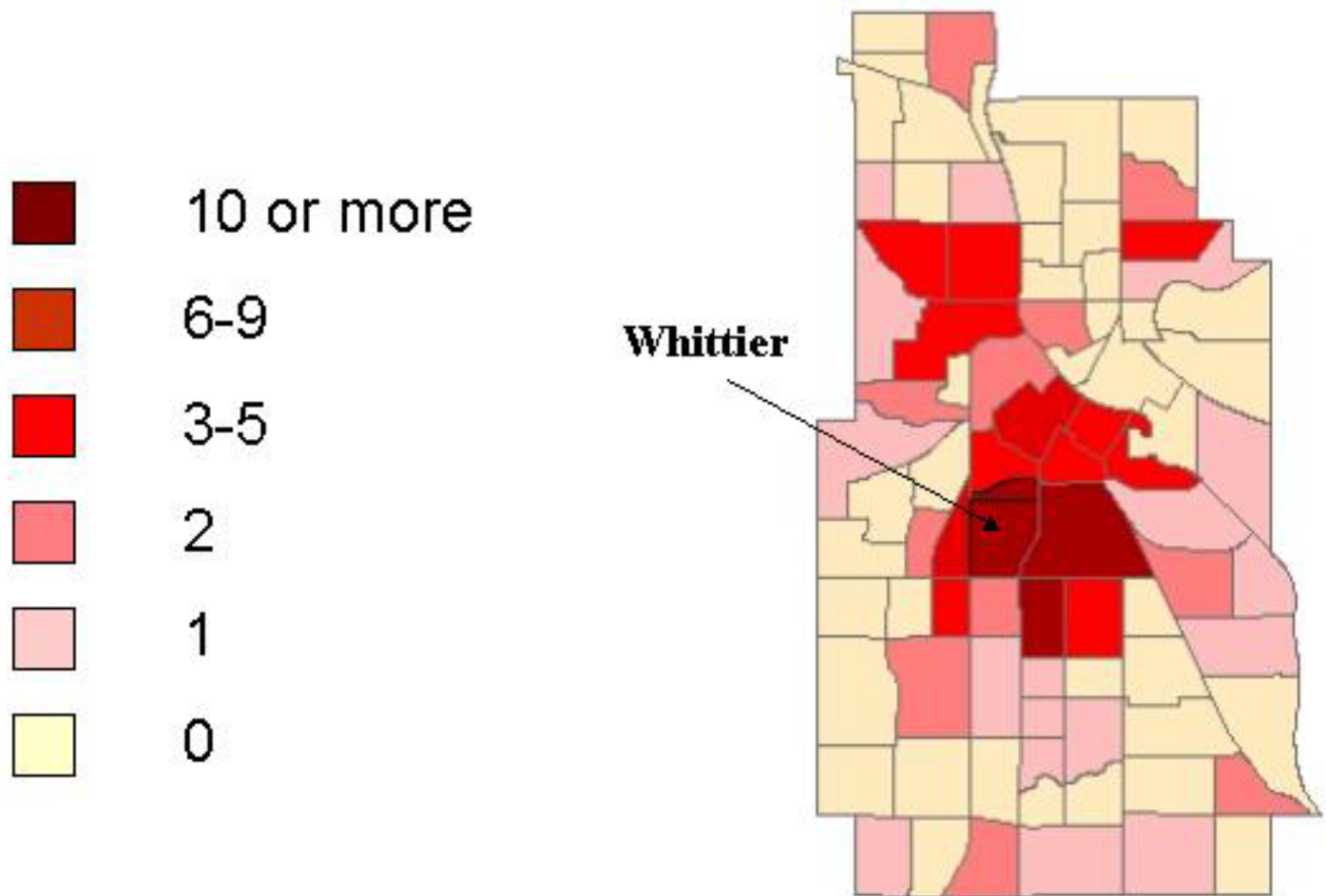
Process: To support the work of the Task Force, the Whittier Alliance collected data on supportive housing facilities and mapped both City and neighborhood recognized sites and their relationships to the proposed site at 1920 LaSalle. Data collected was entered into an Excel spreadsheet and geocoded using ArcMap software.

Outcomes: One important issue shown as a result of the mapping is that the City recognizes only seven supportive housing facilities within

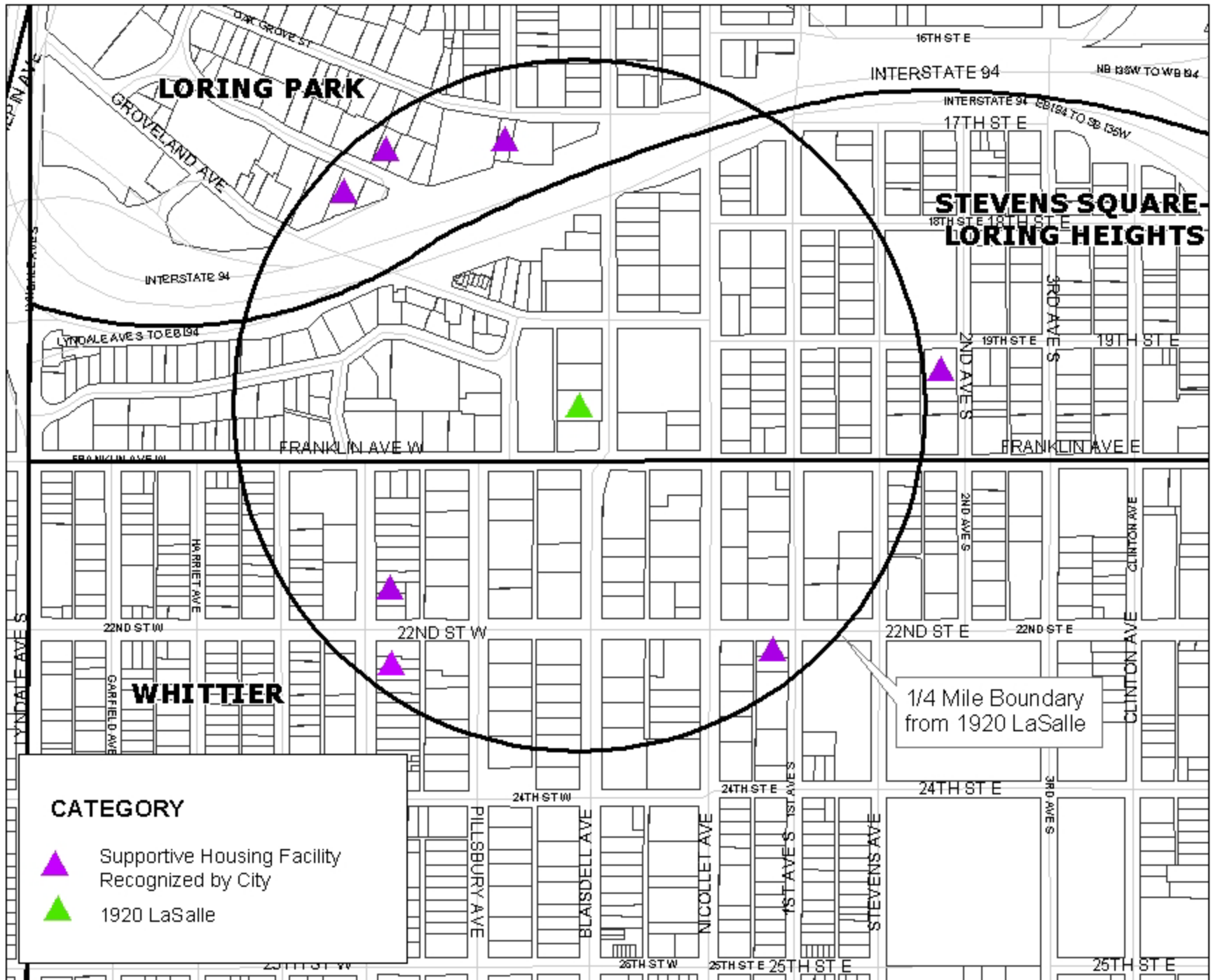
the 1/4 mile boundary while the neighborhood found 18. The map of neighborhood-recognized sites was published in the July 2002 issue of The Whittier Globe, alongside Letters to the Editor about Lydia House. In addition, maps were presented during oral arguments in a lawsuit brought by neighborhood residents against developers of proposed facility and the City of Minneapolis that is pending in U.S. District Court. The neighborhood plans to continue to adjust maps as additional facilities are identified or as existing sites expand services.

Data Sources: Whittier Alliance, City of Minneapolis.

Supportive Housing Facilities by Neighborhood



Supportive Housing Facilities Recognized by the City of Minneapolis



Supportive Housing Facilities & Non-Residential Social Services

