

Cedar Riverside Business Association (CRBA) Recruitment Study

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our research team has been tasked with identifying reasons for low member turnout and participation in the Cedar Riverside Business Association. To do so, 27 business owners in the community were surveyed. The research team identified that in order to efficiently recruit and maintain new members, the analysis should be organized around key issues faced by business owners in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. Three issues consistently rise to the top: safety, parking and neighborhood appearance. The team believes that reorganizing CRBA meetings will provide its membership more time to work towards finding solutions to these key problems, and the solutions to these problems will both empower existing members to lead and new recruits will find a place to contribute.

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I. METHODOLOGY

Laila Davis, Ghislaine Ouédraogo, and Theresa Sweetland worked in partnership with the Cedar Riverside Business Association Executive Committee to develop a two-page survey conducted in person with 35 businesses in the neighborhood. The survey was tested by the research team, shared with the general membership and approved by the CRBA executive committee before implementation. Businesses selected for this study were chosen by the CRBA executive committee with the following criteria:

diversity of geographic location
membership activity
diversity of cultural/ethnic representation
diversity in types of businesses.

Over a six-week period, the research team conducted interviews with business owners and community leaders to gain insight into barriers to participation in CRBA and methods to activate new and existing membership. The businesses were equally divided among the team members, and short, face-to-face informal interviews were conducted with business owners or managers depending on availability.

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II. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following findings come directly from one-on-one interviews with Cedar Riverside businesses over a six week period in fall of 2005. We identified 35 businesses to interview and were able to conduct 27 interviews. Our findings can be divided into six categories: Reasons for limited participation, awareness of CRBA, what people like about the neighborhood, key issues, skills and contributions, and dreams for the community.

Reasons for Limited Participation

Among 27 businesses interviewed, our survey found various barriers to participation. The occurrence of these is summarized in the chart below.

Time availability

The primary reason for business owners' limited participation is limited time availability. This is especially true for most business owners because since they have small business, they most often play multiple roles at the same time: owner, manager, and staff. This

means their time is very limited and somewhat unevenly shared between work and personal matters (i.e. family life).

Although this lack of time limits business owners' participation in CRBA, they do note that if they did have more time, they would participate more in CRBA events. This speaks positively to their willingness to participate more in this business association. However, to the limited free time of business owners, they need to feel that they have achieved something from coming to a meeting, or they will not attend.

Limited information about CRBA

Another reason for limited participation is general misconception or misunderstanding on the purpose and scope of CRBA. Some respondents, although they received the CRBA newsletter, failed to attend CRBA meetings because even after reading the newsletter and the brochure, they were still unsure as to the role of CRBA in the community. To be more specific, some respondents felt they hadn't been approached by CRBA, and that their issues and concerns weren't represented by CRBA. A smaller number of respondents knew very little about CRBA and the neighborhood as a whole. This was particularly true for new business owners and/or business who were not CRBA members.

3. Lack of interest

When interviewed, none of the business owners cited lack of interest as a reason for *not* participating. This is particularly important to the study because it means that people are not failing to participate due to lack of interest. It appears that either a lack of sufficient information or a perception that CRBA doesn't achieve results keeps these inactive businesses from being active. The team found this information to be particularly encouraging.

B. Awareness of CRBA

89% of respondents have heard about CRBA
81% have attended a CRBA meeting
80% would attend a meeting on the key issues they identified
26% have seen the website
40% have seen the brochure

C. What people like about the neighborhood

1. Diversity

Business owners in Cedar Riverside care deeply about the community, which is evident by the number of long-term businesses located in the neighborhood. Almost all respondents enjoy the diversity of incomes, cultures, views, and ages of the residents and customers. They benefit from the proximity to downtown, the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College, and the Fairview Riverside Hospital which brings a base of customers for food, entertainment and services. The eclectic, funky, down-to-earth feeling is

something that most respondents would like to preserve and protect. For a neighborhood that is described as being in constant transition, one respondent proudly commented that it “absorbs change pretty well.”

2. Proximity

Several business owners’ favorite attribute of the neighborhood is the proximity of their businesses to their target customers. This was particularly true for East African business owners who are grateful for the fact that their business is in such close proximity to the East African populations their goods and services serve. In most cases, the target population lives in the neighborhood, which minimizes transportation and other costs usually associated with grocery shopping. So proximity acts as an advantage both for the businesses *and* their customers.

D. Key Issues

Businesses cited a number of issues of concern to them in the neighborhood, but four issues dominated.

1. Safety

Safety is an issue that severely affects one section of the neighborhood and not the other. For 7 Corners business owners, safety is not a significant issue. Most businesses in that area reported either having their own security services or not needing them. Most crimes in this area are related to underage drinking and general public intoxication of college students. In Cedar Riverside, however, safety is a constant struggle for business owners and residents. Respondents report incidents of muggings, assaults, panhandling, vehicle break-ins, loitering, public drinking and drug dealing in proximity to their businesses on Cedar Ave and Riverside. Much of the blame, whether accurate or perceived, is placed on groups of young Somali and/or Ethiopian men who are said to live in or around the Riverside Plaza Apartment complex.

The perceptions on the sources of the violence and insecurity differ depending on the business and on its recent experiences. One respondent blamed subsidized housing itself and described the concentration of low-income people in Riverside Plaza as “a recipe for disaster” and calls for the buildings to be replaced with condos. Others blame the lack of safety to intoxicated unruly youth and occasional drug dealers. Additional problems with safety are attributed to cuts in the Minneapolis police department resulting in low

response rates, no “beat cops” to patrol on foot, and increased attention pulled to downtown. One respondent mentioned that the University hires their own security patrol but maintains an attitude that if you if leave campus “it is your own problem.”

A few business owners are already making steps toward safety solutions and exploring ways to fund city cameras for the highest crime areas of the neighborhood. There appears to be a call for greater police presence on foot, bike, horse or motorcycle on the busy streets during high crime times of the evening. One business suggested funding for inexpensive waterproof cameras, which are cheap and may encourage more businesses to put them up around the neighborhood. Another respondent suggested the business owners can help control crime by reporting vagrants and shoplifting and by cleaning up litter. Participants mentioned CRBA’s annual spring clean up as a step in the right direction. Finally, involvement with young people both through parents providing better morals and through educational opportunities was offered as a possible solution.

2. Parking

Parking is an issue that dominates the intersection of Cedar and Riverside. Generally, businesses in 7 Corners do not identify parking as an important issue because of the relatively inexpensive and accessible parking at the Holiday Inn Hotel. For businesses located at Cedar and Riverside, however, parking is essential and a constant battle. Most businesses identify a need for inexpensive or free parking for their customers. Ramps used primarily by the University and meters located on side streets are seen as too expensive and prohibitive for the existing customer base. In addition, there is a perception that commuters working downtown park in and around the neighborhood and either walk or take the light rail downtown, taking up parking needed for businesses. The businesses on the far end of Riverside Ave. also suffer from lack of sufficient parking, but the lots at Cedar and Riverside are too far away to serve them. Similarly, the businesses on the far end of Cedar Ave. have parking issues, but those lots are far for them as well.

While CRBA currently has a strong parking committee, the need continues to be prevalent. Multiple business owners identified a need to organize to prevent surface parking lots from becoming ramps. Additional solutions include needing a sticker to park in lots, making meters 30 minutes instead of 15 minutes per quarter and allowing owners to rent space in front of their business from another business for customer parking. Yet another solution would be to have business owners buy and self-manage parking lots along Cedar and Riverside which are currently owned and operated by outside contractors who have no regard for their business needs.

Overall, it can be concluded that parking is an issue of great consequence for the Cedar Riverside neighborhood as a whole. Although the issue is more serious for some than others, it has the potential of spilling over and therefore affecting the vitality of other businesses.

3. Appearance

Appearance is a great concern to business owners in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood because poor appearance acts as a deterrent to potential customers. For 7 Corners business owners, run-down storefronts are perceived as an eyesore especially for potential customers coming from downtown. To make the neighborhood more attractive to prospective tenants, an entrance or “gateway” on Washington Avenue could be used as a welcoming and inviting entrance to the neighborhood from downtown, while business owners and neighbors work on a streetscaping plan, new trees, banners, and visual recognition for the neighborhood.

For the Cedar Riverside side of the neighborhood, the problem of appearance is more serious because it also involves general cleanliness. Some of the problems faced are public urination and trash, deterioration of buildings, and unwelcoming signs or poor and misleading storefronts. Additionally there is the “broken window theory” for absentee landlords who don’t upkeep their storefronts. Some ways of addressing these problems would be to encourage the city to enforce its codes by addressing graffiti, maintaining green spaces, redoing storefronts etc... This general beautification effort, with the help of public funds, will help develop the area around the light rail, and give the neighborhood a more beautiful and lively appearance. This is key to the image of the neighborhood and, most importantly, the business owners attracting customers.

4. Housing

There is a long-standing problem of a high ratio of rental to ownership in the neighborhood. This poses a problem for residents because rental housing is not always well-maintained. In addition, when neighborhood residents start to look into buying housing, they are forced to look outside of the neighborhood. This high resident turnover can make it difficult to forge a strong community. Housing is an important issue for businesses, because they draw from people who live in the neighborhood. Some feel that low-income residents are too densely populated. Businesses lament that Cedar Riverside is just outside the enterprise zone of downtown.

Businesses have raised various solutions to the housing issue. Some businesses have expressed an interest in seeing more high-rise condo development along the river, and in seeing Riverside Plaza replaced with condos. Others would like to see more federally supported housing.

5. Other Problems

The businesses we spoke to raised a number of other issues. The first is that they would like to bridge divides both cultural and geographical. Some feel that there is an “edge” when a member of the East African community walks into a white-owned business. Others express concern that immigrant businesses do not have the type of presentation or offer goods that attract non-immigrant customers, and they would like to see these businesses broaden their customer base. For their part, the immigrant businesses did not express an interest in drawing non-immigrant customers as one of their key issues. One business owner who we asked directly said that non-immigrants made up only about 25% of his business, but that 25% was important to him. There is general interest in trying to bring communities together to understand each other’s beliefs. One specific suggestion

that some businesses are already putting into practice is to hire bilingual staff (in white-owned businesses) to “help cultures mesh”.

A geographical divide exists between Cedar Avenue businesses, the businesses at the far end of Riverside near Highway 94, and Seven Corners. Seven Corners has fewer problems with crime and generally has a more “upscale” feel. This is partially due to its proximity to the Law School and the Humphrey Institute, and to the “upscale” student housing located there. If the rest of Cedar Avenue could link up with Seven Corners, they might be able to draw some of this customer base. One business suggested making the bridge over Washington Avenue more attractive to pedestrian traffic to aide in this effort.

A history of blame is also a big issue in Cedar Riverside. From our limited research in the neighborhood, we understand that the neighborhood became fractured when Riverside Plaza was built in the 1970s, and it has never quite fully recovered. Some feel that neighborhood problems, such as crime, are unjustly blamed on Riverside Plaza or immigrant residents. Others see the blame as being focused on the West Bank CDC for its complex role in the redevelopment of the neighborhood. In either case, this “culture of blame” is big barrier to community-building.

Finally, businesses also cited business owners living outside the neighborhood, the bar scene, and frequent business turnover as issues. One suggestion was to emphasize the music scene rather than the bar scene in marketing the neighborhood. Frequent business turnover may not be an accurate perception, as the chart below shows.

E. Skills and Contributions of Interview Group

We asked the interviewees what skills or contributions they currently offer or would like to offer to the community. Their responses show that the neighborhood has a broad range of assets that could be applied to neighborhood revitalization:

Grand Marc- brings a certain amount of demographic- bring economic value to the neighborhood, especially the bar scene. Bring visual appeal to the neighborhood.

FreeWheel Bike Co-op- tries to give bike cops innertubes so they don’t have to patch. Train to repair bikes. Safety clinics and bike rodeos in schools. Supports biking benefits.

Midwest Mountaineering- brings people to the neighborhood through expos and as a destination business in general. Neighborhood cleanup.

Intercontinental Video- provides movies from home for homesick immigrant community. Draws university students studying film. Operates like a library, teaching people to be open-minded about the cultures of other countries.

West Bank CDC- facilitates orderly development in the neighborhood. Helps businesses reach out to broader customer base through business consulting. Micro-loan program.

Halal Mini-Market- trains people looking for jobs and gives them references.

Cedar Cultural Center- music programming advice- interest in neighborhood events and festivals.

Southern Theatre- streetscaping advice and interest, artistic programming, brings people

into the neighborhood.

Samiya's Clothing- helps raise awareness about the issues currently facing business owners.

Viking Bar- has been working in the neighborhood for 32 years and has the benefit of knowing the history of the neighborhood and witnessed its changes over the past few decades.

Merkato Restaurant- has organizing skills that could be used to mobilize people to put pressure on the police to have a more consistent presence in the neighborhood.

African Development Center- provides services to the community to help them gain control over their lives. Ability to target businesses and increase their participation.

Mapps Coffee Shop- has marketing skills, open-mindedness, and imagination to put towards for the beautification effort.

Lucky Dragon- could provide meeting space for CRBA.

Otanga Grocery- keeps an eye on teens from both within and outside neighborhood that are hanging out on the street, advises them on problems with their parents, asks them why they're not in school.

African International Mall- creates jobs for the elderly in the community. Creating a business that will draw customers from outside and off the light rail. Neighborhood marketing plans.

Associated Bank- helps new businesses get started in the community. Working with the Muslim community to develop a way for them to take out loans without violating their religious beliefs. Hires multi-lingual staff to better serve customers.

Davanni's- sponsors local school and sports activities. Contributes to charity. Marketing. *Starbuck's-* provides meeting spot for local communities, a social and political forum. Donates coffee and pastries to charity. Local grants: "Make Your Mark" projects that match volunteer hours with money, and a large annual grant, probably to the Somali school on Franklin.

Cedar-Riverside Community School- provides ESL skills. Received a tech grant to provide computer training to parents. Partners with Fairview University Hospitals and Augsburg with their service-learning component.

F. Dreams for the Community

We originally thought that the question, "What is your dream for the community?" might not be of interest to the business owners, but in fact it was quite the opposite. The interviewees seemed to enjoy the challenge of visioning for the future, and the question elicited a variety of original responses:

Contribute to the local economy and run successful business. Would like to see the value of the area go up and transition downtown and the university.

Recognition of our duties and other people's rights

Places for kids for after-school and evening activities where they feel safe.

Lower rents, affordable housing for everyone and cheaper rent for business owners.

Value the casualness of the neighborhood- not taken over by larger more formal businesses.

Have this neighborhood become a harbor for all sorts of services that would be provided as co-ops. Expand the solid foundation of co-op businesses.

More police and more security in the neighborhood.
Have bilingual people in businesses to help out.
To have business owners help each other and have stronger communication among business owners.
To be like the 7 Corners which means more safety, more access, and more patronized businesses. Be like 7 Corners and better!
Cleaner stores, better service, and stronger relationship among business owners.
Everything is perfect as it is!
Have a site for community agencies in one spot, without duplication.
Have the cultures mesh. Get rid of the “edge” when Somalis come into white businesses.
Get the Post Office back.
Increase the student-immigrant ratio.
Create a beautiful, safe destination. Make the neighborhood more unique, homey, and village-like through more green spaces and better lighting, for the benefit of those who live there, as well as drawing business.
Everyone doing better economically. Higher education levels in community. Better trust.
Have a nice, safe, peaceful neighborhood.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

While we focus a great deal in this report on issues and solutions presented by businesses, these are mainly for the benefit of CRBA members in choosing where to focus their mobilization and participation efforts. We will not propose solutions to the issues raised by businesses as we are leaving this to their discretion. Our recommendations suggest ways in which CRBA can change its structure and practices to better represent neighborhood businesses. The following recommendations for CRBA can be divided into two categories: structural reorganization and recruitment strategies.

There are many ways in which CRBA could change its structure in order to foster active membership. Our first recommendation is to organize CRBA members around the key issues which we have identified through the interviews: safety, parking, appearance, and housing. These are issues which the business owners themselves have raised and are passionate about. However, raising issues is not new to CRBA. In the past, business owners have brought issues to CRBA meetings where they were discussed, but limited action has resulted.

To address this problem, we suggest changing the format of the monthly meetings to allow time for “action groups” of members to gather in small groups to discuss strategies for addressing these issues. It is important to label these groups “action groups” rather than “committees”, as members may shy away from committee responsibilities. The leader of one of these groups could be called a “point person” (for parking, for example) rather than a committee chair. By allowing the action groups time to get to know a small group of fellow-business-owners during the meeting time, we hope they will bond on a personal level and be better able to work together to solve issues in the neighborhood. The groups will use flip-charts to record ideas, and will present them to the larger group

for feedback. They will then assign tasks such as research and contact-building to each member to accomplish before the next meeting. The process of recording the tasks and presenting them to the rest of the group should help to keep members accountable and active. The action groups should each choose a small attainable goal to attack first in order to build confidence and motivate before moving on to the “big problems”. We recommend safety cameras, because this is already three-quarters accomplished, and banners, as they would be highly visible in the neighborhood. The existing members will then be able to use these accomplishments as examples of the fruits of active participation when drawing in new members. This will be an important step in the direction of changing the perception of the role of CRBA from “we” and “you” to “us”.

Another structural change would be to hold CRBA meetings at each other’s businesses. The current meeting location, a conference room at the Holiday Inn, is not only too formal for an organization that wishes to be “grassroots”, but it is geographically distant from the heart of the neighborhood. We have already mentioned the perceived divide between Seven Corners and Cedar Avenue. As the majority of businesses are located on the Cedar Avenue side, and the businesses with most of the issues are located there, it would make sense to have meetings there. Suggested locations from business owners are the Cedar Cultural Center, Mapps Coffee Shop, and the Lucky Dragon.

Besides these structural changes on committees and meeting location, there are a few more additions to the CRBA goals that we envision. First, we have heard from a number of businesses that they felt CedarFest was an important event for the neighborhood. It was a yearly festival which brought many new people to the neighborhood through a street fair involving bars, food, and music. Some people felt CedarFest got too rowdy with drunken people, and if reinstated it should have a change of name in order to change the reputation to make it more family-oriented. Playing down the drinking aspect would also make it more acceptable to the Muslim community.

Aside from CedarFest, another regular event that CRBA may want to consider would be to bring in speakers, trainers, or business owners from other neighborhoods to present information pertinent to the business community. This could include information on loans, cultural understanding, marketing, banner programs, streetscaping, safety, organizing, or Special Services Districts. A SSD is another consideration for CRBA. One business owner feels it would be a great asset to the neighborhood in terms of streetscaping and beautification. He suggested hiring a lobbyist to educate the neighborhood businesses on the benefits of a SSD, as it would require a willingness to pay higher taxes, which many businesses are against.

A way to get extra help in neighborhood beautification and development efforts without raising taxes would be to rebuild alliances with the West Bank CDC and the West Bank Community Coalition to allocate NRP funds. Although the NRP is being operated through a committee of the WBCC, this committee is independent and welcomes business input. There are many opportunities for collaboration, as the First Step Plan Summary produced by the Cedar Riverside NRP Program identifies many of the same issues that the business owners in our survey did, in particular safety and appearance.

They have already proposed allocating \$66,000 towards safety cameras, \$10,000 towards creating a SSD, \$5,000 towards banners and signs, \$32,500 towards lighting and safety at the LRT station, and much more, and they are currently seeking community support for these proposed allocations. A member of the NRP Committee attended the CRBA meeting on December 15th to present this First Step Plan Summary and hand out surveys to CRBA members so they could express their preferences for NRP money allocations.

Some smaller, but still effective, changes to the CRBA goals would be simple changes to the newsletter and website. We found through our survey that 37% of businesses first learned about CRBA through the newsletter. By creating a “Member of the Month” section in the newsletter and on the website, CRBA would be able to bring attention to people who are contributing to the neighborhood in big ways. We hope that this will present a picture of an active, member-driven organization, and will inspire other business owners to follow their example and get involved.

In terms of recruitment strategy, several steps can be taken to increase participation. To recruit new members, existing members will have to be more proactive. The newsletter and the website were recent attempts to give CRBA a higher profile in the neighborhood and draw in new members, but they have not proved fruitful. Our overwhelming positive response to one-on-one interviews suggests that face-to-face interaction with business owners will be more successful in recruiting new members than the newsletter and the website. In particular, we hope that current members will invite their neighbors to the January CRBA meeting in person. A list of businesses interviewed with their top three issues and their willingness to attend a meeting was passed around at the Dec. 15th meeting so that current members can initial the names of at least two businesses that they intend to invite personally in January. This practice could be institutionalized by creating a yearly visioning meeting every January. Current members would make an extra effort at this time of year to build new recruitment by personal invitations to new neighborhood businesses and by focusing on new ways to energize existing participants.

Finally, we see a grave missed opportunity in the lack of ties between CRBA and massive neighborhood institutions such as the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College, and Fairview Riverside Medical Center. Many in the neighborhood seem to feel that these institutions are too large to care about the neighborhood and will simply “do their own thing”. They often even feel that the institutions are hostile towards the neighborhood. For example, the University of Minnesota was for a time during its new student orientation discouraging students to visit Cedar Riverside, as it was not perceived as safe. The neighborhood also feels that the U often builds with its “back to the neighborhood”, making it less inviting for the two to mix. But the business community cannot simply ignore these issues out of frustration with the large institutions. Contrary to popular belief, these institutions *do* have a stake in the safety and viability of the neighborhood, and they may be willing to provide resources for specific projects. They also have the largest untapped customer base for many businesses and could be approached for marketing and promotional opportunities. Mapps Coffee Shop has been extremely successful in attracting Carlson and Humphrey students into Cedar Riverside, and the Lucky Dragon attracts faculty and staff. With so many customers right next door, CRBA

should consider how to build stronger relationships with these large neighborhood institutions.

One more institution deserves mention, although it is much smaller and not as well known. The African Development Center “works within African communities in Minnesota to start and sustain successful businesses, build assets, and promote community reinvestment.” With such a mission statement, we recommend that CRBA and the African Development Center join forces, particularly to aid CRBA in its effort to connect with new immigrant businesses.

In conclusion, the energy and commitment of CRBA members and members-to-be place CRBA in a promising position to revitalize the Cedar Riverside neighborhood and accomplish their goals and dreams. We hope that our research will be of use to CRBA in this effort.

SAFETY

7 Corners Problems:

Not significant problems associated with safety

7 Corners Solutions:

have security guards available when bars close

Cedar-Riverside Problems:

News of an attack spreads fast. People loiter, panhandle, cars are broken into in daylight.

They share a precinct with downtown but the police stay downtown. Used to have 2 9-5 beat cops but there were cut.

Not enough tax base in the neighborhood to get decent police response.

University has their own patrol but is you go off campus, “it is your own problem.”

Subsidized housing attract crime. Concentrating low-income people is a “recipe for disaster”.

16 year old Somali kids- drinking and drugs, committing crimes. Parents are in the neighborhood.

Drugs and drinking on the streets

Cedar-Riverside Solutions:

Police coverage. (bikes, walking, horses)

\$70 waterproof cameras are cheap and could encourage more businesses to put them up

City provided cameras

Businesses can help control by reporting vagrants, shoplifting and by cleaning up litter.

CRBA’s annual spring clean up

Kids need moral values from parents.

Restrict young people from buying liquor at the liquorstore in neighborhood

APPEARANCE

7 Corners Problems:

would like the neighborhood to appealing to prospective tenants

run-down storefronts when entering the neighborhood from downtown look scary and dangerous and are a deterrent for new customers

7 Corners Solutions:

Need leadership on a streetscaping plan, new trees, banners and visual recognition for the neighborhood

Need to have an “entrance” or gateway for the neighborhood from downtown

Cedar Riverside Problems:

“Broken Window Theory”- absentee landlords don’t unkeep

Public urination and trash

Deterioration of buildings
Unwelcoming signs- storefronts- people think places are closed

Cedar Riverside Solutions:

City needs to enforce its codes on the books. Graffiti needs to be removed right away
City needs to maintain green spaces- clips lawns (like Dania Hall lot), needs to be done regularly- not once a year.
Install public restroom on Cedar Ave.
Planters, lights, sidewalks define a neighborhood, storefronts
Beautification efforts to physical appearance
Develop area around light rail
Funding available for businesses to paint

PARKING

7 Corners Problems:

Do not see parking as a problem, plenty of parking in Holiday Inn lot

Cedar Riverside Problems:

Need parking for customers and employees. Ramps are too expensive. Some businesses need free parking because their competition
People park in neighborhood and walk downtown
Parking belongs to apartments and customers can't park. Meters are 15 minutes for a quarter.

Cedar Riverside Solutions:

Prevent parking lots from becoming ramps
Need to have a sticker to park.
Make meters 30 minutes a quarter- can hand out quarters.

OTHER

Housing Problems

People would stay in the neighborhood if they could find affordable housing
Cedar Riverside is just outside the enterprise zone of downtown

Housing Solutions;

Federally supported housing.
Replace Riverside Towers with condos

Other Problems

Businesses turn over frequently
Business owners don't live in the neighborhood
People don't cross the bridge between 7 Corners and Cedar-Riverside areas.

Other Solutions

Emphasize music scene instead of bar scene
Have bilingual people in businesses to help "cultures mesh"