

NOTE: At the March 10, 2016 Steering Committee meeting, it was decided that the Congress Park Green Team would not submit this proposal to the SNMF grant program. This draft is posted for the CPGT's use for ideas for building capacity within our community.

Congress Park SNMF Grant

Project Lead Contact Information	Liz Goehring, Congress Park Green Team Co-Leader Congress Park lizg313@gmail.com 814-574-0770
Organization Contact Information	Congress Park Neighbors, Inc Registered Neighborhood Organization Maggie Price, Board Member cpnboard@congressparkneighbors.org 303-333-5478 <What address to use here?>
Project Title	Connecting Community: Laying the Foundation for a Sustainable Congress Park Neighborhood
Amount Requested	\$2,500
How many people are on your project team?	40 - The entire Green Team will be working on various aspects of the project
Fundraising Ability	Advanced. At least one person on the team has raised money lots of times.
Online Fundraising Ability	At least one member on the team has experience raising money online.

Project Scope

(Overview of the project) ==> Connecting Community, Building Awareness

Provide a detailed workplan describing exactly what you will do, why you want to do it, and the step-by-step activities of the project.

The Congress Park Green Team (CPGT) is a committee of Congress Park Neighbors, Inc. (CPN). While we are a new group, having just launched on January 1, 2016, we are already over 40 members and as our first project are organizing "Regeneration! Congress Park Earth Day Festival" on April 23, 2016 with a total of over 20 booths, activities and presenters. In the long term, CPGT is interested in helping Congress Park become a certified Sustainable Neighborhood, and fully recognizes that to do so requires the voluntary, on-going enthusiasm and involvement of a significant proportion of its neighbors. As a result, the CPGT seeks to build the mechanisms and support to connect neighbors and partners to work together on shared interests around sustainability issues. This project, Connecting Community, is the focus of this grant.

The Connecting Community project has four major components: 1) Establishing Effective Communications Channels; 2) Surveying, Mapping, and Sharing our Assets; 3) Raising Awareness through Speakers & Film Series on Sustainability-themed Initiatives; and 4) Connecting Community through Earth Day Festivals. The overall goal is to build the capacity to empower Congress Park neighbors to become a community working towards a common goal of sustainable living.

1) **Effective two-way communication throughout the community** is critical for all efforts of the CPGT, from 'getting the word out' on various events to gathering neighbors' interests. Using existing neighborhood communications methods (i.e., newsletter, e-newsletters, website, bi-monthly meetings, NextDoor.com, social media), we seek to expand "the conversation" through quarterly news articles (e.g., in the newsletter "Sustainability Corner"), meetup.com groups, and surveys (both online and door-to-door) to solicit neighbors' input and interests. We will also use these channels to feature the good work of particular neighbors, as a ways of thanks and encouragement.

Communication is more than "getting the word out" and surveys. In addition to formal channels of communication, we recognize the importance of face-to-face conversations when communicating about sustainability topics and seek to promote this deeper mode through a "Let's Talk Neighbor to Neighbor" program. Add Living Room Salons and gridding the neighborhood ideas. Even more than using workshops (which often suffer from poor attendance) to raise awareness about an issue, this "neighbor to neighbor" approach encourages direct one-on-one discussions, building on relationships, neighbors' expertise, and shared interests to spread ideas and actions. Neighbor to neighbor conversations may involve, for example, inviting a neighbor to attend a Speakers Series talk, film or educational workshop; or sharing one's experience (and enthusiasm for) commuting by bike/bus; or discussing the benefits of xeric landscaping and then connecting a neighbor to xeric garden mentors in the community. Good conversations can serve to elicit neighbors' interests in various sustainability topics. Ultimately the conversations build community. To formalize the program, Green Team members will brainstorming ways that they have been effective in reaching out to others, learning best practices from each other, as well as from communications experts (e.g., <http://climatecourage.cc/>), and establishing ways to formally engage interested neighbors in action.

Community calendar function

Goal: To establish effective modes of communications, both online and direct, and to learn what methods are most effective.

Match: Congress Park newsletter; website and web-server products that come with CPN subscription; Twitter feed; Green Team e-newsletter; next-door.com; SurveyMonkey (thru INC) or Lime survey tool; CPN ad (\$100); YouTube CongressPark Channel; Volunteer hours for meetings, managing online resources, contributed content and surveys (at least 100, probably 240 (20hrs/month))

Need: communications consulting fee: \$350, advertising & graphic design (e.g., annual GT Postcard w/ Calendar): \$200;

2) The second component of our project involves **identifying the “green assets” available within the neighborhood and making them visible to all**. These include both assets that are shared and used by the community (e.g., community gardens, food-producing trees, alternative transportation options such as bus & bicycle routes and carpools, Little Free Libraries, parks, community space) as well as assets that reduce our collective carbon footprint (e.g., solar installations (home and business), energy efficient homes, local green businesses, recycling drop-offs, etc...) Once identified (thru surveys and volunteer time to research), we’d like to make public versions of these asset maps visible to our community (e.g. using ESRI’s StoryMap app) through our website for neighbors use. Knowing this baseline inventory of neighborhood assets will also be important as we plan events (e.g., home energy workshops, alternative transportation workshops) to increase our neighborhood’s green assets. Green Team members will collect data on assets and, using a GIS-based tool, will either create the asset map and StoryMap app, or supervise an undergraduate intern to create the maps.

Goal: To determine a baseline of “green assets” within our community, for use by neighbors and to identify opportunity for additional green assets.

Match: Volunteer hours collecting data (50) and creating maps/StoryMap app (40)

Need: ArcGIS Online subscription (\$100), Printing (for maps at events) (\$200)

3) Our third component, a **Sustainability Matters Series**, focuses on helping raise awareness of sustainability themes in our community. Many neighbors are unaware of issues related to sustainability themes and would be interested in learning more, including ways to take action. This Series would be a way to raise awareness and promote community discussion on important topics. The format could be large (i.e., renting a venue, advertising) or small (e.g., Salons either in a neighborhood business or in neighbors living rooms). Green Team members could then follow-up with interested neighbors after the event for specific action around the theme. The CPGT has already identified several initiatives that are of interest to multiple members of the community, along with Partner organizations that provide various resources, and potential talk titles and film or videos for each initiative. The current list of initiatives/ crews and the associated partners are:

1. Pollinator-Friendly Neighborhood Crew
 - with support from People & Pollinators Action Network and Denver Pollinator Highway
 - Talk: National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators
 - Tours:/Open house: Visit 3-4 gardens in the neighborhood
 - Film: Wings of Life, or TED talk by Louis Schwartzberg
2. Gardening and Composting Crew
 - with support from Denver Urban Gardens
 - Talk: Urban Agriculture and Victory Gardens
 - Talk: Gardening for Wildlife through NWF’s Habitat Program
3. Recycling Education Crew
 - with support from Denver Municipal Waste
 - Talk: Purging Plastic - the Good, Bad and Ugly
 - Film: TED Talks on Plastics (there are currently nine talks)
4. Home Energy Crew
 - with support from Denver Energy Challenge
 - Talk: Solar and Wind Gardens - alternative ways to buy alternative energy
 - Tour: 3-4 homes with solar in Congress Park
 - Film: Solar Power Revolution - Here Comes The Sun
5. Sustainable Businesses Crew
 - with support from Certifiably Green Businesses
 - Talk: Circular Economies
 - Tour: Green Businesses around Congress Park
 - Film: TED talk by Ellen MacArthur on Circular Economy
6. Alternative Transportation and Mapping Crew

- with support from Community Active Living Coalition
- 7. Alley Clean-Up and Get Together Crew
 - with support from Beautiful Denver
- 8. Green School Crew
 - with support from DPS Teller Elementary

We anticipate hosting 4-5 talks and/or films/videos annually through our Sustainability Matters Series, selected depending on interest of the community. In some cases, TED Talk videos may be shown. Ideally the talks/film/video would generate a buzz around topics. Green team members would facilitate follow-up discussions, and serve as neighborhood ambassadors on different topics. We will also survey participants for feedback on what they learned, what they found valuable, what they want more information on, and what we can improve. Our budget includes funding for honoraria for speakers and/or film screening fees, and venue fees. We would use all elements of our communications channels to advertise the events. We may also record these events and post links on our website so that others can view later. Want to identify and cultivate good venues for long-term. Add the goal of surveying neighborhood venues and partnerships.

Goal: To raise awareness of key sustainability themes in our community, to begin conversation around these themes, and where there is interest, to engage neighbors in action around these themes.

Match: Volunteer hours to organize events, invite/advertise, and facilitate follow-up discussions (15 hrs/event X 5 events=75 hours)

Need: Honoraria (\$100x2); Film screening fee: (\$200x1), Venue (\$200X3)

4) The fourth component of our project is **Connecting Our Community through Earth Day Festivals**. Earth Day is an annual event observed worldwide with activities dedicated to celebrating and supporting our environment. As part of our project, we envision a new tradition of Congress Park Earth Day Festivals where we get together as a neighborhood to celebrate our sustainability-themed efforts, share stories with our neighbors, and invite their participation. In 2016 we are already hosting our first Earth Day Festival, bringing together our community around a variety of sustainability-themed activities and surveying their interests in these topics. For this grant, we plan to host a second annual Earth Day Festival in April 2017, building on the momentum and connections being established through our 2016 Earth Day event.

Our 2016 Earth Day event is being held at a neighborhood community church. Demonstrating what our nascent Green Team volunteers are already able to our organize, the event is bringing together school children from neighborhood schools, gardeners, landscape architects, city planners, faith communities, and Certifiably Green Businesses. In the outdoor space, we will have planting activities, composting demonstrations and tree walks. Indoors, we'll have activities for neighbors to learn about energy efficiency, recycling, solar energy, biking and walking options, and the chance to purchase nature craft items made by homeless artists. We will also have presentations and music, concluding with Music for Regeneration, a community music creation experience. Many of our crews are partnering directly with City of Denver and other organizations to bring more resources to our neighborhood and build longterm relationships between neighbors, City government programs, and nonprofits. We are also collecting data during intake and exit, to measure the impact as in the number of people that attended, what they learned, what they found valuable, what they want more information on, and what we can improve in coming events. The Green Team anticipates that this event will be a great success in raising awareness and engaging neighbors around sustainability themes, and will become a tradition that we will want to continue year after year. Add something here that summarizes what we've done in hours and donations, for 2016.

For purposes of this grant, we seek funding to support the 2017 Earth Day Festival, based on our experience from 2016.

Goal: To promote community through an annual education outreach and celebration event - our Congress Park Earth Day Festival

Match: Food donations (\$200), Volunteer hours (120 minimum based on what we've done in 2016), Business contributions/donations (\$300)

Need: Advertising (\$150); Venue fee (\$350)

Community benefit and social impact (How the project will enhance sustainability)

Describe how the project will enhance the environmental and social strength of the community.

Our project is designed to promote neighbor-to-neighbor solutions. There is a wealth of knowledge waiting to be tapped within our community. Where one neighbor may know about solar energy, another knows how to build a coldframe. A third neighbor knows how to use the bus and bike, while another is a homeless person that makes nature art. Schoolchildren teach us how to recycle and compost, then learn how to make music that inspires change. Our education and outreach events, and crew initiatives each provide neighbors a chance to learn from and with each other, and more importantly how to take actions.

Our project builds the capacity to empower each neighbor to both learn and teach how to make sustainable choices.

**Neighborhood Involvement and Community Partnerships
(How the project will involve others)**

Congress Park Neighbors, Inc. (CPN) has a strong history of positive neighborhood work (e.g., helping feed low-income students and their families through Teller Back Pack Program) and neighborhood involvement. CPN brought the Congress Park Green Team to life as a committee focused on environmental issues, and from the beginning, has embraced and nurtured the CPGT with:

- strong support from the Board
- access to customizable webpages hosted as part of the CongressParkNeighbors.org website
- use of the MailChimp email newsletter
- customized email address of sustainability@congressparkneighbors.org
- online survey support
- shared drive for document storage
- private Facebook group
- offering a one-time free advertisement in the newspaper for Certifiably Green Businesses

Beyond the technical support, the Board is supportive of the Green Team's mission and the zing that it brings to CPN. The Green Team further strengthens CPN by bringing new neighbors interested in sustainability initiatives into the fold.

Through its efforts to organize its first Earth Day Festival, the CPGT is developing relationships with several important community partners (e.g., Denver Municipal Waste, Community Active Living Coalition, Denver Urban Gardens), organizations dedicated to sustainability-related efforts that reduce our carbon footprint. We anticipate seeing many of our neighbors continuing to work with each of these organizations beyond Earth Day as the Green Team promotes relevant initiatives.

In addition to the organizations mentioned above, we are honored to have already reached out and connected with: Teller Elementary's Green Team, Good Shepherd Catholic School and EarthLinks. Each of these organizations helps by increasing the inclusivity of our efforts to include a broader socioeconomic range and age range. With EarthLinks, we welcome our neighbors that are homeless or in transition. We have also reached out to neighborhood businesses for inclusion in our Earth Day Festival, promoting a "buy local" theme, and have received generous donations for the event. Lastly, we have also strengthened ties to area farms/CSAs, bringing these resources to more neighbors in our community.

Project Readiness

(Timeline, budget, fundraising skills) our focus is VOLUNTEER TIME dedicated by the CPGT and on neighbor to neighbor interactions and their participation contributions of time, rather than fundraising.

Event Timeline

Month	Event (possible theme?)
April 2016	Host Earth Day 2016 Festival (Kickoff) Green Team crews work on sustainability initiatives, for SNN application
May 2016	Host Community Cleanup and Recycling, May 21
June, October, December 2016	Host talk, film, tour and/or workshop (e.g., Gardening & Pollinators, Certifiably Green Businesses, Denver Energy Challenge)
August 2016	Host table at Ice Cream Social (e.g. Transportation)
January 2017	Begin planning meetings for Earth Day 2017
April 2017	Celebrate 2017 Earth Day Festival

Asset Mapping Timeline

Month	Task
April 2016	Gather data before and during Earth Day Festival.
May 2016	Collect neighborhood asset data
June 2016	Acquire mapping software.
September 2016 – March 2017	Mapping crew work together to populate map with initial data. Also identify areas of opportunity in map.
April 2017	Share data map with community and City.

Communications Timeline

Month	Task
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May 2016 Launch Let's Talk Neighbor to Neighbor program	Conduct brainstorming training, invite Green Team members to reach out to # neighbors, capture interested neighbors info
May 2016 Survey Neighbor Interests	Conduct online (and door-to-door) survey of interests around proposed initiatives
Monthly May 2016-April 2017	Congress Park Green Team meeting CPGT Steering Committee meeting
July 2016, October 2016, January 2017, April 2017	Write article for CPN newspaper, Sustainability Corner.
Monthly	Write newsletter for Green Team.
Monthly	Track volunteer hours and other matching resources.
March 2017 – April 2017	Write and submit final report

Project Budget

**(Proposed budget of project expenses and anticipated donations)
need to use template provided. for now, fill in detail in each section**

Project Outcomes

(State goals and define metrics)

Our overall Connecting Community Project goal is to build the capacity to empower Congress Park neighbors to become a connected community working towards a common goal of sustainable living, and to become a Sustainable Neighborhood. More specifically, this includes:

- 1) Establishing effective modes of communications, both online and direct, and learning what methods are most effective.
- 2) Determining our baseline of "green assets" within our community, for use by neighbors and to identify opportunity for additional green assets.
- 3) Raising awareness of key sustainability themes in our community, and beginning a community conversation around these themes, and where there is interest, engaging neighbors in action.
- 4) Promoting community through an annual education outreach and celebration event - our Congress Park Earth Day Festival

Project success will be measured ultimately through the number of neighbors participating in events and more importantly in the number that engage in follow-up sustainability-related activities in their own lives. These metrics will be obtained through counts of events, counts of participants at events, number of community partners working with us, event feedback surveys, number of outreach activities, and neighbor interest/action surveys.