

**C** Community Development Committee  
Meeting date: November 7, 2011

SW 2011-301

**ADVISORY INFORMATION**

<b>Date:</b>	October 31, 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	Authorization to Negotiate and Execute HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Sub-recipient Agreement with NEXUS Community Partners to Administer Community Engagement Grants and Activities
<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	MN Statutes 473.145, Regional Framework Policies 1, 2, 3
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Allison Brummel, Project Manager, Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, 651-602-1363 Susan Hoyt, Community Engagement and Outreach, Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, 651-602-1330
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Community Development / Planning & Growth Management

**Proposed Action**

Authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a Sub-recipient Agreement with Nexus Community Partners on behalf of the Community Engagement Team for community engagement activities as a consortium partner in the Corridors of Opportunity - Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant (SCRPG), totaling \$ 778,871.44 of which \$720,000 is for engagement grants, \$26,046.44 for engagement education/programs and \$32,825 for administration of engagement funds.

**Purpose**

To allow Nexus Community Partners to act as the fiduciary agent for SCRPG community engagement and outreach funds through a Sub-recipient Agreement.

**Background**

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117) provided funding for a Sustainable Communities Initiative to improve regional planning efforts that integrate land use and transportation decisions and increase the capacity to plan for affordable housing, access to jobs and employment opportunities. HUD’s grant is part of a federal partnership that includes the U. S. Department of Transportation, its Federal Transit Administration, and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. The program made available approximately \$100 million for competitive SCRPGs.

In August 2010 the Metropolitan Council applied for the program on behalf of a regional consortium that includes Minnesota Housing, the Counties Transit Improvement Board, Hennepin and Ramsey counties, the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul and the McKnight Foundation. This consortium is governed by a Policy Board from these organizations as well as from participants in the Living Cities initiative. That are not only partnering on the Living Cities grant.

In November, 2010 the Metropolitan Council was awarded a \$5 million grant to support the planning along the region's network of transit corridors. Nationally, 45 of the 225 applicants received funding. HUD and the Metropolitan Council signed the agreement on February 1, 2011.

The SCRPG runs for three years until January, 2014. It enables the Council, the consortium and its local partners to support voluntary comprehensive development strategies for five transitway corridors - Southwest LRT, Bottineau Transitway, Cedar Avenue BRT, Northstar Commuter Rail, and Gateway Corridor – and support local communities to implement corridor strategies. The grant addresses economic /workforce development, alternative energy systems, housing energy efficiency / affordability, stormwater and green infrastructure in the Central Corridor. The grant will also support technical studies and data collection in corridors.

There are currently over a dozen sub-recipient grant agreements executed between the Metropolitan Council and sub-grantees to do the SCRPG work based upon April 27, 2011 action by the Metropolitan Council. The Community Engagement and Outreach project is one of the 21 projects in the SCRPG being implemented and is the second largest allocation at \$750,000 (with the SW LRT Corridor being the largest allocation at \$800,000). The Community Engagement work is subject to approval by the Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board and is being implemented by the Community Engagement team made up of three members of non-profits, Nexus Community Partners, the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, and the Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing, CURA, U of M. All these entities signed a consortium agreement with the Metropolitan Council.

The actual community engagement is being done through community organizations that will be awarded grants for organizing underrepresented communities along transitway corridors and, in some cases, with their government partners. HUD defines underrepresented communities as low income, communities of color, new immigrant communities and persons with disabilities. On October 26, 2011 the Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board approved ten grants for a total of \$396,786 in the first round of community engagement funding (Attachment 1). A second round is anticipated in spring, 2012. The engagement work undertaken by these grantees will be connected to the government entities undertaking transitway and land use planning along the transitways.

## **Rationale**

The Sub-recipient Agreement with Nexus will allow for the efficient distribution of HUD funds to a number of small non-profit organizations receiving the grants that range from \$ 30,000 to \$60,000. Nexus has a history of acting as a funder to and grant manager for non-profit community organizations working in low income and immigrant communities. It's Governance Council includes representatives of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the McNeely Foundation, the City of Minneapolis Neighborhood and Community Relations Department, the Office of the Mayor of St. Paul, Neighborhood Development Center and Twin Cities LISC.

This administrative structure has also been approved by HUD.

## **Funding**

The balance of the \$750,000 of Community Engagement funds available are \$746,046.44. These funds are part of the \$5 million HUD award for the SCRPG. The \$750,000 of SCRPG funds for community engagement and outreach is committed to engagement and outreach

activities serving underrepresented communities. \$720,000 of the funds are for grants to community organizations. To date, \$ 3,953.56 has been spent on the Anchoring Equity event and on informational meetings about the engagement grants. The funds are not programmed for administrative costs for administering the engagement funds. Therefore, the Sub-recipient Agreement with Nexus will provide an additional \$32,825 from the Metropolitan Council Community Development Department budget for administering these grants. This represents 4.4% of the total amount of funds to be administered by Nexus. The Sub-recipient Agreement will require that Nexus’s funding requests to the Metropolitan Council be for activities that are approved by HUD, the Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board and in the Community Engagement Workplan. Requests for funds for Policy Board approved engagement grant awards to specific organizations must be accompanied by an agreement between Nexus and the engagement grantee with an attached copy of the engagement grantee’s proposal and budget. The Metropolitan Council will also have access to Nexus’s annual audits.

TABLE 1: Community Engagement Budget

	Source	Budget	Expended	Committed	Uncommitted
Education/Outreach	HUD	\$ 30,000.00	\$3,953.56		\$ 26,046.44
Engagement Grants	HUD	\$720,000.00		\$ 396,786.00	\$ 323,214.00
TOTAL HUD Engagement	HUD	\$750,000.00	\$3,953.56	\$ 396,786.00	\$ 349,260.44
Balance to be administered by Nexus	HUD	N/A	N/A	\$746,046.44	

TABLE 2: Funds covered by Sub-Recipient Agreement

Proposed Administrative Fees to Nexus	Metro Council CD	\$ 32,825.00	\$ 0	4.4% of HUD dollars being administered
Unexpended HUD Funds to administer	HUD	\$ 746,046.44		
TOTAL for Sub-recipient Agreement		\$778,871.44		

### Known Support/Opposition

There is no known opposition.

**Attachment 1:** List of First Round of Engagement Grantees

**Attachment 2:** Project Summaries of First Round of Grantees

**Attachment 1:**  
**First Round**  
**Corridors of Opportunity**  
**Community Engagement Grantees**

<b>Corridors of Opportunity Engagement Grantee</b>	<b>Formal Partner(s)</b>	<b>Corridor</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Dollars</b>
1. New American Academy		Southwest	SW Corridor Immigrant Opportunities Outreach & Engagement	\$30,000
2. Intercongregation Communities Association	Blake Road Corridor Collaborative, Joint Community Police Partnership	Southwest	Blake Road Neighborhood Discussion Circles	\$30,000
3. Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation	Just Equity	Central	Historic Rhondo/Equitable TOD Campaign	\$60,000
4. Advocating Change Together		Central	Advocating Change Together	\$39,700
5. Harrison Neighborhood Association	Heritage Park Neighborhood Association, Lao Assistance Center	Bottineau	Transit Equity Partnership	\$45,000
6. Asian Economic Development Association		Central, Bottineau	Organizing for Transit and Equitable Development	\$45,000
7. West Bank Community Development Corporation	Somali Action Alliance	Central	Don't Pass Us By	\$47,086
8. Asian Media Access		Bottineau	Asian Pacific Community Network (APA ComMNet)	\$30,000
9. African Career, Education, and Resource, Inc.	City of Brooklyn Park	Bottineau	Making Transit Meaningful	\$30,000
10. TBD by CET		Gateway		\$40,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$396,786</b>

**ADVOCATING CHANGE TOGETHER**[Type a quote from the document or the summary of an interesting point. You can position the text box anywhere in the document. Use the Text Box Tools tab to change the formatting of the pull quote text box.]

**PROJECT TITLE:** None  
**CORRIDOR:** Central  
**AMOUNT:** \$30,000

ACT is a grassroots constituency driven organization, its board makeup is 90% persons with developmental and other disabilities. ACT has been around for over 30 years, established in 1979 as a reaction to organizations that were not identifying persons with disabilities as being capable of making decisions about their lives. ACT has been striving to bring justice to a forgotten community, persons with developmental and other disabilities. We take every opportunity to anticipate and react to society’s absence of inclusion for persons with all disabilities. Our main principle and philosophy comes from the statement “Nothing about us, without us”.

**Project:** This grant will give us an opportunity to bring our information, concerns and issues plus suggestions to the many existing organizations and agencies along the Central Corridor. We will interact with nonprofit groups concerned with disabilities, for-profit organizations that serve persons with disabilities and we will of course address the local organizations not specifically concerned with disabilities but concerned with the housing, economic, and safety of the area. This grant also allows us to monitor and participate in many government decisions that have been made without our input. This process will help individuals to:

- develop skill-building opportunities for people with disabilities through participation and information gathering and distributing information to the broader community and the disability community;
- increase representation of persons with disabilities within the community-based grassroots movement;
- increase disability coalitions and multi-community alliances around shared systems change goals;
- increase persons with disabilities profile as an advocate of resource for local governments making decisions around their ability to participate fully in the benefits of the community in which they live.

This will necessitate a series of meetings after we establish contacts with interested individuals. As a result, we expect to have a greater role in the future development of housing, economic development and safety along the Central Corridor.

**AFRICAN CAREER, EDUCATION AND RESOURCE, INC. (ACER)**

**PROJECT TITLE:** MAKING TRANSIT MEANINGFUL  
**CORRIDOR:** Bottineau  
**AMOUNT:** \$30,000

ACER is a volunteer-driven, community-based organization founded in 2008 to close the resource and information disparities within Minnesota’s communities of African descent and help those communities achieve societal and economic independence. Located in Brooklyn Park, ACER is a subsidiary of Strengthening African Resilience for Excellence, SARX, a registered 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization.

**Project:** ACER’s target population, African immigrants, African Americans and other minorities, residing within the Northwestern suburbs of the Twin Cities, have not participated when mainstream methods have been used to inform stakeholders along the Bottineau Corridor. Through a series of community forums, ACER will partner with the City of Brooklyn Park and its innovative Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) team to identify and engage this population to become actively involved. The goal is to move underrepresented communities from a lack of basic awareness to a state of informed and engaged community action as it relates to community input and impact along the Bottineau Corridor. Specifically, efforts will focus on C, B, and A alternative segment alignments affecting Maple Grove, Osseo, Brooklyn Park, New Hope, Crystal, Brooklyn Center, and Robbinsdale.

**ASIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (AEDA)**

**PROJECT TITLE:** ORGANIZING for TRANSIT and EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT  
**CORRIDOR:** Central, Bottineau  
**AMOUNT:** \$45,000

Created by University Ave. Asian business owners in St. Paul, MN, AEDA is a 501 (c) (3), nonprofit grassroots economic development organization focusing on several priority low-income Asian Minnesotan communities. AEDA provides access to resources, training, advocacy and community-driven planning. AEDA's mission is to cultivate vibrant, diverse communities by creating economic opportunities. AEDA envisions thriving sustainable multicultural neighborhoods with strong community leadership and economic justice.

**Project:** AEDA will create a team of culturally competent "Community Outreach Ambassadors" to organize and engage the Southeast Asian communities along Central Corridor and Bottineau Corridor. The Outreach Ambassadors' cultural skill sets will allow underrepresented Southeast Asian residents who speak little or no English to engage in decision-making and to identify and address issues related to the development of transit in both corridors.

### **ASIAN MEDIA ACCESS**

**PROJECT TITLE:** ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITY NETWORK (APA ComMNet)  
**CORRIDOR:** Bottineau  
**AMOUNT:** \$30,000

Led by Asian Media Access, the Asian Pacific American Community Network (APA ComMNet) coalition has worked together since 2005, and consists of many partners (see below table for a list of partners, roles and responsibilities), as well as youths, parents and community members, to actively challenge the existing cultural and linguistic barriers regarding engagement on state and local initiatives, and access to information and services for health and well-being issues in the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

**Project:** The project will utilize media and technology for engaging communities, institutions, and businesses, especially under-represented Asians along the Bottineau Corridor, in voicing their opinions and needs related to the line and livability in the area, which will improve analyses, plans and designs processes, fostering economic and civic vitality for marginalized communities.

### **AURORA ST. ANTHONY NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (ASANDC) & JUST EQUITY**

**PROJECT TITLE:** HISTORIC RONDO/EQUITABLE TOD CAMPAIGN  
**CORRIDOR:** Central  
**AMOUNT:** \$60,000

Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation (ASANDC); ASANDC was founded in 1980 to serve and organize residents of the Aurora/St. Anthony neighborhood to bring neighbors together to address issues of crime and neighborhood nuisances through the organization of powerful block clubs, resident-led neighborhood watch groups, and large, successful protests of unwanted businesses. It is located in Saint Paul in the historic Rondo community between I-94 and University Ave. In 2001, ASANDC further expanded to include the entire Summit-University and Frogtown neighborhoods in its area of service. ASANDC has been responsible for the development or rehabilitation of 180 units of quality affordable housing and continues to create affordable developments to serve our community. Its mission is to foster positive relationships within and between the neighborhoods we serve and to support their members in effecting the quality of life in their communities.

JUST Equity: A regional network of African-American racial equity proponents who analyze the underpinnings of race/ethnicity and class within development dynamics to organize and advocate an improved quality of life for an African-American constituency historically excluded from development benefits. Disparities across multiple sectors (i.e. housing, jobs, economic development, transportation, land use...) are examined to craft innovative development strategies that support community well-being and wealth building.

**Project:** ASANDC’s long established **Power of 1 + 1 Resident Leadership Program** and JUST Equity’s supported **Preserve and Benefit Historic Rondo Committee (PBHRC)** will partner to launch the **Historic Rondo/Equitable Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Campaign**. Our campaign will train low-income and African American resident leaders residing throughout St. Paul’s ward 1 to leverage transit oriented development projects to further advance a **Rondo Renaissance** vision that allows for the **preservation, enhancement, restoration and healing** of our community’s cultural economy and longstanding neighborhood fabric into the future of University Avenue and the surrounding area.

Within this grant, the role of ASANDC is to incorporate the Power of 1 + 1 resident leadership program into Central Corridor related work and provide development expertise to our an overall Equitable TOD strategy.

Within this grant, the role of JUST Equity is to support a culturally centered development perspective and grow the efforts of the PBHRC through the Power of 1 + 1 leadership expansion.

**HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

**PROJECT TITLE:** TRANSIT EQUITY PARTNERSHIP  
**CORRIDOR:** Bottineau  
**AMOUNT:** \$45,000

Harrison neighborhood is a racially diverse community consisting of 40% African Americans; 28% White; 17% Southeast Asian (Lao and Hmong); 9% Latino and 5% Somali and other. The median household income is a little more than 25,000. Heritage Park is 35% Somali, 30% African American, 11% Native American, 5% Ethiopian, 4% Latino, 6% Asian and 3% White. The median household income is approximately \$16,000. There are 25,000 Lao in Minnesota, 70% live in Hennepin County of which 30% live in North Minneapolis.

The Transit Equity Partnership consists of three organizations controlled by underrepresented communities committed to creating a transit system that equitably benefits the diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups that have been harmed by a century of discriminatory planning decisions that have marginalized and isolated our communities in North Minneapolis. Harrison Neighborhood Association (HNA) is the lead organization in the partnership. Both HNA and Heritage Park Neighborhood Association (HPNA) are place based organizations that have multi-cultural leadership, working on multiple issues. Loa Assistance Center of Minnesota (LACM) is a refugee organization serving primarily Lao community members throughout the State but geographically concentrated along the Bottineau line.

**Project:** The Transit Equity Partnership is an effort to overcome a century of discriminatory urban planning that has resulted in disinvestment, lack of opportunity, isolation and marginalization of those living in North Minneapolis. TEP will do this by using a racial justice framework to build a common understanding between diverse communities. The project will utilize workshops, presentations and community story-telling to build the capacity of grassroots leaders to engage and speak for themselves and their communities, co-create community positions that reflect the hopes and needs of all constituents and ensure that decision-makers are responsive to the community. Specifically, project participants will work to ensure the equitable redevelopment of a 30 acre parcel of land, owned by Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, next to the Van White LRT Station Stop on Olson Highway. The TEP will also work ensure a high level of community participation in the Bottineau DEIS using the gathered input and the positions developed and approved by community.

**INTERCONGREGATIONAL COMMUNITIES ASSOCIATION**

**PROJECT TITLE:** BLAKE ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD DISCUSSION CIRCLES  
**CORRIDOR:** Southwest  
**AMOUNT:** \$30,000

The Blake Road Corridor Collaborative (BRCC) is a partnership of community and governmental organizations including: the city of Hopkins, Hennepin County and the Hopkins School District. Key partners include the Intercongregation Communities Association (which is the lead agency and fiscal agent of the BRCC), Twin Cities LISC, the Hopkins Police and Community Development departments, several local businesses and social service

agencies. The BRCC engages with neighborhood residents and local business owners/managers to undertake projects related to improving safety, supporting positive activities for youth, and improving neighborhood infrastructure, all aimed at improving the quality of life in the Blake Road neighborhood.

The Blake Road neighborhood is a mile by one-half mile area in the northeast portion of Hopkins. The neighborhood contains approximately 1,400 housing units, which are primarily rental, and the population has become increasingly diverse. It is estimated that approximately 40% of the residents are foreign-born. There are close to 40 languages spoken in the Hopkins School District which is indicative of the diversity of the Blake Road neighborhood with residents from countries such as Somalia, India, and Mexico.

**Project:** The Blake Road Corridor is slated to be a station area for the Southwest LRT line, and is in close proximity to the new Cargill Corporate Campus, which will house over 3,000 jobs. Featuring largely medium density housing that serves low-income families, the area is positioned for dramatic redevelopment and gentrification. Some of the policy decisions that will unfold in the near future, include: preservation of affordable housing; investment in infrastructure for alternative transportation (transit, bikes and pedestrians); strengthening natural amenities (Minnehaha Creek and park systems); and designation of land uses.

This project will address the disconnect in communications between immigrant communities, mainstream residents, and government representatives through the use of discussion circles, community-building projects, shared governance within the Blake Road Corridor Collaborative (a public private partnership in Hopkins), and ties with the Joint Community Police Partnership.

### **NEW AMERICAN ACADEMY**

**PROJECT TITLE:** SW CORRIDOR IMMIGRANT OPPORTUNITIES OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT  
**CORRIDOR:** Southwest  
**AMOUNT:** \$30,000

The New American Academy (NAA) is a 501 (C) (3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization founded in 2008 that provides multi-programs and services to immigrants in the Twin Cities, predominantly Eden Prairie residents. NAA's immigrant clients/beneficiaries help determine the programs and services that the agency implements for them on their path toward self-reliance and economic self-sufficiency. NAA is located in the City of Edina, but serves as the only Somali led institution operating in the southwest area of the Twin Cities' region including Edina, Eden Prairie, Hopkins, and Saint Louis Park. The organization is dedicated to serving the East African population in this area through a combination of programs including: work in education, citizenship, housing, mentoring and tutoring, employment, civic engagement and citizen participation. In addition, NAA opens its space to the community, serving as the only Somali based community space in the neighborhood.

NAA forms active, working relationships not only with its resident stakeholders, but other nonprofits, businesses, school districts (such as the Eden Prairie School District), philanthropic sector (such as the Eden Prairie Foundation), and government entities (such as Hennepin County and the City of Eden Prairie).

**Project:** Eden Prairie and cities along the Southwest LRT Corridor are experiencing a growing and vibrant population increase of new immigrants from East African and other ethnic immigrant community members who are resettling from other cities in our region and across our state.

NAA plans to conduct workshops and community forums to educate the Somali community in the southwest area about the pending Southwest LRT line and to sustain the organization's work in other areas such as affordable housing, economic development and workforce development as it relates to the rail's development and implementation. The organization also intends to use the funds to alleviate any concerns or misconception people may have about the construction and operation of the line.

NAA has been actively engaging local public leaders in the past few years by conducting meet and greets and voter forums with the city mayor, county commissioners and other city council members. The organization continues to negotiate community benefits with the city at every opportunity and has placed and plans to continue working with



the city to place leaders of color on key city committees and councils. The leaders within NAA are widely recognized by public officials in Eden Prairie and Edina.

NAA's next steps are to outreach to, identify and recruit low income as well as disenfranchised but resolute immigrant participants who will assert leadership and civic engagement roles for this project. The project intends to form a Southwest Corridor Immigrant Council to formulate and implement specific goals, visioning, and long-term strategies that will benefit the NAA constituencies living along the southwest corridor.

### **WEST BANK CDC & SOMALI ACTION ALLIANCE**

**PROJECT TITLE:** DON'T PASS US BY PROJECT  
**CORRIDOR:** Central  
**AMOUNT:** \$47,086

West Bank CDC (WBCDC) has a real investment in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood (467 units of affordable housing). It has broad experience in organizing grassroots campaigns – it brings a technical expertise in community development activities along with years of organizing experience using an inclusive process. Three major goals for the organization: preserve affordable housing, community based economic development, and organizing residents to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood

Somali Action Alliance (SAA) was formed to expand racial and social justice and to build power in the Somali community through collective action. SAA, a Somali-led organization, has extensive experience organizing their community on education issues, civic engagement, and in Central Corridor planning issues. Three primary focuses are: community organizing, voter engagement, and leadership development

The process for community engagement under this grant request was developed over a six month period in weekly meetings among the Dania Partners (a broad collection of organizations that represent tenants, businesses, immigrant and other cultural constituencies in this Minneapolis neighborhood). Underrepresented communities will take the lead in the implementation process, with SAA managing the outreach and engagement process.

**Project:** The project partners recognize that there is a continued need for a coordinated community response to the coming economic and logistical changes related to Central Corridor LRT development. 12 developable parcels have been identified in the Washington Ave. "trench" surrounding the new Central Corridor West Bank station. The parcels have government "site control," meaning that community groups will have ample opportunity to influence planning and development decisions. One of the most pressing concerns among members of the community relate to gentrification and displacement pressures that might follow completion of the Central Corridor line, particularly for immigrant owned businesses. This project will focus on exploring how a portion of the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan can be directed to mitigating these impacts. A creative "value capture" initiative could help finance new neighborhood assets such as a new youth center or to secure affordable new retail space for immigrant businesses. Other goals of the project include exploring land banking strategies; jobs programs related to corridor construction, and joint development opportunities (public/non-profit).

A Road Map of the engagement process has been developed, with several phases which will include 15 localized info/outreach sessions at places people naturally congregate in the community. There will also be at least 5 more highly structured information/listening sessions held in local institutional meeting places. A video documentation strategy will also be deployed in the recognition that story telling is a more traditional form of communication among many cultures, and because in some cases community elders may not be literate in their native languages. The project intends to establish a representative Community Round Table that unites the neighborhood around community-based planning for Central Corridor development.