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Submitted in HCED Committee

Council File No: 10-1451

Item No.: 5

REPORT FROM

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER *Report from the CAO*

Date: June 27, 2012

CAO File No. 0220-01024-2732
Council File No. 10-1451
Council District: 1, 4, 13

To: The Mayor
The Council

From: Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer *MAS*

Reference: Community Development Department Transmittal dated June 20, 2012

Subject: **TRANSFER OF \$2.25 MILLION SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHALLENGE GRANT FROM THE CRA/LA AND RELATED ACTIONS**

SUMMARY

The Community Development Department (CDD) requests authority to accept the transfer of the Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant (Grant), including all related documentation and records, from the CRA/LA, a Designated Local Authority and Successor Agency to the Community Redevelopment Agency. The Grant will fund a comprehensive sustainable multi-party planning Project located along the Los Angeles River in Northeast Los Angeles (NELA Collaborative). The CDD also requests authority to negotiate and execute: 1) an assignment agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assume the \$2.25 million Grant; 2) agreements with the proposed NELA Collaborative Project partners identified in the Grant proposal; 3) agreements with the Project contractors (Tierra West Advisors [TWA] and Historic Resources Group [HRG]); and, 4) a cooperation agreement with the CRA/LA in the amount up to \$263,367 in tax increment funds to be used towards the Grant matching fund requirement. As a condition of the re-assignment of the Grant from the CRA/LA to the City, HUD requires that the NELA Collaborative Project partners listed in the original Grant application be included in the proposed Project. The Project partners include: 1) Department of City Planning (DCP); 2) CDD – Workforce Investment Board; 3) Worker Education and Resource Center, Inc.; 4) University of Southern California; 5) Occidental University; and, 6) Los Angeles Community Studio (previously known as Hollywood Community Studio). If approved, the CDD has agreed to accept the Grant in order to preserve the federal funding for the proposed Project.

We recommend approval for CDD to accept the \$2.25 million Grant and execute the relevant documents with HUD, the NELA Collaborative Project partners and the Project contractors, subject to the following:

1. CRA/LA Oversight Board and the California Department of Finance (DOF) approval of the transfer of the \$2.25 million Grant from CRA/LA to CDD, including the use of the \$263,367 in CRA/LA funds for the completion of the TWA contract and the payments already made by the former Community Redevelopment Agency (Agency) towards the work program to be applied towards the City's matching fund requirement for the Grant;

2. HUD approval of the re-assignment of the Grant from CRA/LA to CDD, a revised Project's scope of work and deliverables (attached is the revised Work Plan dated June 15, 2012), the City match proposal and a revised Project Budget;
3. The final revised Budget to be approved by CDD and HUD to not exceed the available funding for the Project, including the \$2.25 million Grant Funds, the CRA/LA funds to be applied towards the City's matching fund requirement and the City match proposal;
4. There is no impact to the General Fund; and,
5. The review and approval of the City Attorney as to form and legality.

Our Office recommends that the revised Project and Administrative Budget should not exceed the available funds and no additional General Fund monies be used to cover the Project costs. As such, the recommendation is in compliance with the City's Financial Policies in that a one time expenditure of a General Fund department is an adjunct to a one-time source of funds from HUD.

HUD Grant

On February 21, 2011, the former Agency executed a \$2.25 million Grant agreement (which expires February 20, 2014) with HUD for the NELA Collaborative Project. On February 1, 2012, the former Agency was dissolved pursuant to Assembly Bills 1x26 and 1x27. As a result, all Grant-funded work for the proposed Project was suspended. In the recent months, conversations and meetings have occurred with staff from HUD, CDD, CRA/LA, Council District One, City Administrative Officer, DCP and the Project partners regarding modifications to the scope of work, budget and timeline. Due to the condensed Project timeline, the CDD proposes to revise the Project's scope of work to identify project outcomes that can be accomplished within the remaining Grant period, subject to the approval of HUD. On May 16, 2012, HUD issued a formal suspension letter to the CRA/LA. The suspension, effective immediately, provides the City an opportunity to reinstate the Grant as long as it meets several conditions outlined by HUD by July 1, 2012.

On June 21, 2012, the CRA/LA Governing Board, subject to the approval of the CRA/LA Oversight Board and the DOF, authorized CRA/LA to negotiate and execute assignment agreements from CRA/LA to CDD for the following: a) the \$2.25 million Grant; b) the NELA Collaborative partners contracts; c) the TWA contract (which originally was to prepare a redevelopment plan for adoption but will be amended to develop a feasibility study for a riverfront financing district); d) the HRG contract to inventory historic structures (the work has been completed); and e) to enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the CDD for \$263,367 in tax increment funds for the completion of the TWA contract (the contractor started working but did not finish due to the dissolution of the former Agency). The Grant assignment and the CRA match funds are subject to the approval of the CRA/LA Oversight Board actions and the DOF, which is not expected to be completed until the middle of July 2012. Therefore concurrent with the CRA/LA approval process, HUD has agreed to work with the City to finalize the revised scope of work and budget.

The Grant has a 20 percent match requirement which can be met through leveraged resources in the form of cash and/or verified in-kind contributions (or a combination thereof). The former Agency had committed approximately \$1,022,029 in CRA/LA tax increment funds towards the match required by the competitive Grant. If approved, the \$263,367 amount, along with the payments already made by the former Agency towards the work program would be applied towards the City's matching funds for the Grant. The CRA/LA estimates that its contribution in tax increment funds to the Project to be approximately \$615,329 which could be applied towards the City's matching funds for the Grant. The

balance (\$406,700) of the CRA/LA match funds was to pay for in-kind services for CRA/LA staff, but will no longer be available for the Grant match requirement due to the dissolution of the former Agency. In order to meet the City's full match obligation, CDD will submit to HUD an alternate match proposal that includes more than \$1.0 million in City and other investments in the Project area, including existing Program Year 38 Community Development Block Grant commitments to this geographic area and Workforce Investment Act funding. If approved by HUD, the revised City match will exceed \$1.6 million or approximately \$600,000 more than the amount currently approved by HUD.

The CDD Transmittal dated June 20, 2012 (CDD Transmittal) included preliminary estimates of a revised Project and Administrative Budget which total \$2,259,230 but the figures were not to exceed amounts which are subject to change. The \$2,259,230 was comprised of the following:

- \$1,829,500 in Grant funds;
- \$369,730 in CRA/LA funds (out of the \$544,730) for the TWA contract; and,
- \$60,000 in Workforce Investment Act funds for the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation contract.

Subsequent to the release of the CDD Transmittal, our conversations with HUD reflect that these amounts for the Project and Administrative Budget may change. Therefore in recognition of the July 1, 2012 HUD deadline, authority for CDD to negotiate a revised Project and Administrative Budget with HUD, the NELA Collaborative Project partners identified in the CRA/LA Grant proposal and the Project contractors which will not exceed the available funds is recommended. No additional General Fund monies will be used to cover the Project and Administrative costs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor and compliance with conditions set forth in 3a-d below:

1. Authorize the General Manager, Community Development Department (CDD), or designee, to:
 - a. Accept on behalf of the City the transfer of the Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant (Grant) for the NELA Collaborative Project (Project), including all related documentation and records, from the Oversight Board of the CRA/LA, a Designated Local Authority and Successor Agency to the Community Redevelopment Agency, to the CDD;
 - b. Negotiate and execute an assignment agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assume the \$2.25 million Grant for the NELA Collaborative Project, subject to City Attorney approval as to form and legality;
 - c. Enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the Oversight Board of the CRA/LA in the amount up to \$263,367 to be used towards Grant matching funds, subject to City Attorney approval as to form and legality;
 - d. Prepare Controller Instructions, and/or make any technical adjustments consistent with

the Council action on this matter, subject to the approval of the City Administrative Officer, and instruct the Controller to implement the instructions; and,

- e. Negotiate and execute agreements with the NELA Collaborative Project partners identified in the CRA/LA Grant proposal and the Project contractors for not-to-exceed amounts as finalized and approved by CDD and HUD, for a term effective from date of execution to February 20, 2014, subject to: 1) Compliance with City's contracting requirements and, 2) City Attorney review and approval as to form and legality;
2. Instruct the General Manager, CDD, or designee to report back to Mayor and City Council upon HUD approval of the assignment of the Grant with the negotiated scope of work, budget, NELA Collaborative Project partners and the Project contractors that will be included in the revised Project; and,
 3. All recommendations herein are subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The CRA/LA Oversight Board and the California Department of Finance approval of the transfer of the \$2.25 million Grant from CRA/LA to CDD, including the use of the \$263,367 in CRA/LA funds for the completion of the Tierra West Advisors contract and acknowledgement of the payments already made by the former Community Redevelopment Agency towards the work program to be applied towards the City's matching fund requirement for the Grant;
 - b. HUD approval of the re-assignment of the Grant from CRA/LA to CDD, a revised Project's scope of work and deliverables, the City match proposal and a revised Project Budget;
 - c. The final revised Project and Administrative Budget to be approved by CDD and HUD to not exceed the available funding for the Project, including the \$2.25 million Grant Funds, the CRA/LA funds to be applied towards the City's matching fund requirement and the City match proposal; and,
 - d. There is no impact to the General Fund.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There is no impact on the General Fund. Approval of the recommendations will result in the transfer of a \$2.25 million Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant (Grant), including all related documentation and records, from the CRA/LA, a Designated Local Authority and Successor Agency to the Community Redevelopment Agency, to the Community Development Department. The Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will fund the Northeast Los Angeles Collaborative Project. Our Office recommends that the revised Project and Administrative Budget should not exceed the available funds and that no additional General Fund monies are used to cover Project costs. As such, the recommendation is in compliance with the City's Financial Policies in that a one time expenditure of a General Fund department is an adjunct to a one-time source of funds from HUD.

FINDINGS

1. Request for Report

On June 20, 2012, the Community Development Department (CDD) request authority to: 1) accept the transfer of the Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant (Grant), including all related documentation and records, from the CRA/LA, a Designated Local Authority and Successor Agency to the Community Redevelopment Agency; 2) negotiate and execute an assignment agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assume the \$2.25 million Grant and agreements with NELA Collaborative Project partners identified in the CRA/LA grant proposal and the Project contractors; and, 3) enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the CRA/LA in the amount up to \$263,367 to be used towards grant matching funds. This matter was referred to the Housing, Community and Economic Development Committee, which requested a report from the City Administrative Officer.

2. Grant Status

In July 2010, the federal government issued a joint Notice of Funding Availability from HUD's newly formed Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities (OSHC). The OSHC Community Challenge Planning Grant Program offered up to \$3 million per grant over a 36-month period. On October 20, 2010, the former Community Redevelopment Agency (Agency) was awarded a \$2.25 million Grant from HUD. On February 21, 2011, the former Agency executed a Grant agreement with HUD for the \$2.25 million for NELA Collaborative Project. The period of performance for the original Grant Agreement was from February 21, 2011 through February 20, 2014.

On May 16, 2012, HUD issued a formal suspension letter to the CRA/LA. The suspension, effective immediately, provides the City an opportunity to reinstate the Grant as long as it meets several conditions outlined by HUD by July 1, 2012. The primary conditions include:

- Evidence that a successor agency has been formally designated for CRA/LA (herein, the Successor Agency) in accordance with the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB)1x26 and that the Successor Agency is prepared to undertake the deliverables committed to in that certain Cooperative Agreement dated February 21, 2011 (the Cooperative Agreement);
- Evidence that the State Oversight Board established by AB1x26 approves the transfer of administrative responsibility for the Grant and the financial commitments made pursuant to the Grant to the Successor Agency; and,
- The OSHC is provided the opportunity to hold preliminary negotiations with the Successor Agency and has determined that the Successor Agency is eligible to act as the Grantee lead for the Project, has the capacity to achieve the proposed deliverable, has the financial ability to meet the obligations of the Cooperative Agreement, and has developed a viable work plan for completing the Project on an abbreviated timeline that includes a revised budget and proposed program schedule. Upon fulfillment of these conditions, the Cooperative Agreement will be modified to reflect the changes necessary to allow the Project to continue moving forward.

On June 21, 2012, the CRA/LA Governing Board approved, among other things, the transfer of the \$2.25 million Grant from the CRA/LA to the CDD. The CRA/LA Oversight Board will hear this item at its July 12, 2012 meeting. The Oversight Board actions are deemed approved if the California Department of Finance (DOF) does not request more review time within three business days. If the DOF desires to review any items in more detail, the DOF must provide specific objections and return the action to the Oversight Board for reconsideration within 10 days. If the Grant assignment and the CRA match funds are approved by the CRA/LA Oversight Board actions and the DOF (expected mid to the end of July 2012), the CDD proposes the following time line for Plan Completion and Evaluation:

- Complete negotiation of the revised scope and budget with HUD by August 1, 2012
- Complete negotiation of the revised scope with NELA Collaborative Project partners identified in the CRA/LA Grant proposal and the Project contractors by August 15, 2012
- Complete Phase I - Research and Development Baseline Studies by October 1, 2012
- Complete Phase II - Engagement and Education by July 1, 2013
- Plan Completion and Evaluation by October 1, 2014

3. Project Scope of Work

The goal of the NELA Collaborative is to develop a comprehensive approach to linking land use plans and economic development strategies to benefit those that live and work in the area and to implement the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan. The original scope of work for the proposed NELA Project included: establishment of a new redevelopment project area, updates to respective community plans, economic and workforce analysis, preparation of a business plan for a regional food hub, and an innovative civic engagement process to ensure broad participation and input from residents and workers. Due to elimination of the CRA/LA, many of the major milestones for the Project have not yet been initiated, such as updates to the Community Plans; development of economic development strategies; establishment of baselines for civic engagement; and development of the Redevelopment Impact Assessment Tool. However, the CRA/LA states that work has begun on the historic resources survey and the business plan for the Regional Food Hub.

The revised scope of work includes some revisions and modification due to the shortened timeline for implementation. Major project outcomes include:

a) Riverfront Financing District Feasibility Study - Instead of establishing a new redevelopment project area, the revised scope will include a detailed, parcel-by-parcel study to determine the feasibility of a new Riverfront Financing District that will identify the appropriate geography, tax structure, and duration necessary for the Riverfront Financing District.

b) Economic Development Study - Analysis of key/emerging sectors, workforce analysis, historic resources assessment, and a feasibility study and business plan for a food hub.

c) Community Plan Updates - The deliverable is a Master Plan/Vision Document that will establish land use, design and mobility recommendations for the forthcoming update to the Northeast Community Plan. It will not include Environmental Impact Report work as originally envisioned. Instead, the recommendations will go forward to the City Planning Commission,

who can take action to ensure that the detailed recommendations are included in the forthcoming Community Plan update.

d) Civic Engagement - The Grant will continue to fund the civic engagement scope of work as originally envisioned: focusing on promoting citizen participation along the core principles of educating stakeholders and involving them in a consultative process to support and promote a collaborative decision-making effort. Mobile planning units will be designed and dispersed into the NELA neighborhoods to increase participation, awareness, knowledge, and action. Given the local demographics that suggest an underserved and multicultural community, community engagement efforts will be culturally relevant and language sensitive.

e) Documentation - This project will be well-documented to allow it to be used as a case study for future projects (HUD and otherwise). This will include archival documents, maps, videos, photographs, and interviews.

4. Original CRA/LA Project Budget

The \$2.25 million Grant funds combined with the \$1,022,029 match by the former Agency totals \$3.27 million. The original Grant application listed the NELA Collaborative Project partners and their respective not-to-exceed proposed contract amounts which total \$1,608,500 in Grant funds as follows:

1. Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental University - \$150,000
2. CDD – Workforce Investment Board (WIB) - \$125,000
3. Los Angeles Community Studio (known as Hollywood Community Studio) - \$224,000
4. Department of City Planning (DCP) – \$500,000;
5. Worker Education & Resource Center, Inc. (WERC) - \$224,500; and,
6. Metamorphosis Project at the University of Southern California (USC) – \$385,000.

The balance (\$641,500) of the \$2.25 million Grant funds was allocated for technology, transportation, travel and direct and indirect costs.

Of the \$1,022,029 CRA/LA match funds, the CRA/LA estimates that its contribution to the Project could be approximately \$615,329 as follows:

- \$263,367 is for the remaining revised scope of work to be completed by Tierra West Advisors (TWA). The entire contract amount is \$369,730. To date, the contractor has completed and been paid for only a portion of the work.
- \$234,162 – These costs were incurred to date by CRA/LA for salaries and consultant costs including the TWA contract, Historic Resources Group (HRG) contract and the business plan for the Regional Food Hub. If approved by HUD, the City would receive credit for costs already incurred as part of the Grant's match requirement.
- \$117,800 for the HRG contract. The work has been completed and the contractor will be paid by the CRA/LA. The work product from the HRG contract would be transferred to the City.

The balance (\$406,700) of the CRA/LA match funds was to pay for in-kind services for CRA/LA staff, but these funds will no longer be available for the Grant match requirement due to the dissolution of the former Agency.

5. Revised Project Budget

The \$2.25 million Grant funds combined with the \$1.6 million City match proposal totals \$3.85 million. The alternate City match proposal includes more than \$1.0 million in City and other investments in the Project area, including existing Program Year 38 Community Development Block Grant commitments to this geographic area and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding. The revised budget would include changes to the proposed amount-not-to-exceed contract amounts for the NELA Collaborative Project partners. Some of the proposed changes include:

- A reduction in the contract funding for DCP due to a reduced scope of work and the shortened time line of the Grant. Funding for DCP will be transferred through appropriations in Controller instructions prepared by CDD.
- A reduction in the contract funding for WERC due to a reduced scope of work. The CDD will request HUD approval to accept already committed WIA funds in the amount of \$60,000 for the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) as part of the Grant match requirement because LAEDC will be undertaking work which is duplicative to the WERC original scope of work.
- An increase in the contract funding for USC due to the inclusion of funding for the technology portion of the Project. The contractor funding for the technology portion had not previously been identified. KCET.org would be added as a subcontractor through the USC contract to complete the technology portion.
- The contractor funding for the transportation portion had not previously been identified. As proposed, the Department of Transportation (DOT) would receive funding for the transportation portion of the Project. Funding for DOT will be transferred through appropriations in Controller instructions prepared by CDD.

In the original Grant proposal, a portion of the CRA/LA tax increment match funds was to pay for a Project Manager in the former Agency's Hollywood & Central Region and other associated former Agency staff to coordinate the Grant and handle Grant administration. The CRA/LA had proposed at least 75 percent of a full time equivalent position (FTE) over the course of the 36-month Grant term to Grant activities. As a result of the Grant being transferred to CDD, Grant funds will need to be identified to cover the following costs:

- A Project manager for the Project. An increase in the contract funding for TWA is proposed for technical assistance and coordination on the planning components of the Project to ensure compliance with the long-term planning objectives identified in the Grant application.
- Administration costs to pay for CDD staff to administer and monitor the Grant, process invoices and payments, and review program activities for compliance. CDD's primary role with this Grant will be Project management and program/fiscal monitoring of contractors.

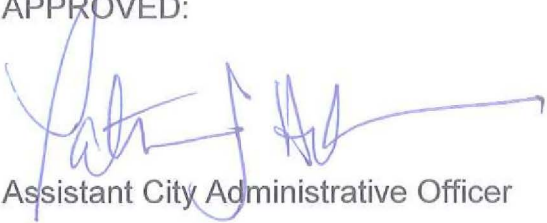
Our Office recommends that the revised Project and Administrative Budget should not exceed the available funds and no additional General Fund monies be used to cover the Project and Administrative costs. As such, the recommendation is in compliance with the City's Financial Policies in that a one time expenditure of a General Fund department is an adjunct to a one-time source of funds from HUD. Therefore in recognition of the July 1, 2012 HUD deadline, CDD will continue to negotiate with HUD, the NELA Collaborative Project partners identified in the CRA/LA Grant proposal

and the Project contractors a revised Project and Administrative Budget which will not exceed the available funds.

by: 

Lisa Johnson Smith, Senior Administrative Analyst

APPROVED:



Assistant City Administrative Officer

MAS:LJS: 02120166

Attachment



**NELA Riverfront Collaborative
HUD Community Challenge Planning Grant Work Plan
June 15, 2012**

INTRODUCTION

From its headwaters in Canoga Park through downtown, the Los Angeles River (River) flows 32 miles in the City of Los Angeles, including neighborhoods in Northeast Los Angeles (NELA). Six decades after the River was first channelized in concrete, the 2007 Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (Plan) establishes a bold vision for transforming the river, reversing the past and re-envisioning the future. This process aims to remake the river into a focal point of community revitalization, diverse recreation activities, environmental stewardship, and economic growth for the City of Los Angeles. The Plan captures the vision of thousands of Los Angeles residents, community leaders, environmentalists, elected officials and others who want to see positive change in their communities. The Plan provides a 25- to 50-year blueprint to restore the River's ecological function and to restore it into a proud amenity for the City and a catalyst for positive change in the neighborhoods through which it flows.

As a vision for revitalization, the Plan aims to restore the river, green the neighborhoods through which it flows, capture community opportunities, and create value. Significant efforts are already underway in NELA to improve the bicycle path along the river, establish a network of parks, and begin efforts towards ecosystem restoration. However, the benefits that this initial implementation of the Plan has brought to NELA could be more fully complemented by comprehensive land use planning around the river to enhance river access, identify community assets, and improve public infrastructure. Additionally, the local population could greatly benefit from both increased access to transportation options, as well as an integrated economic development strategy for the area.

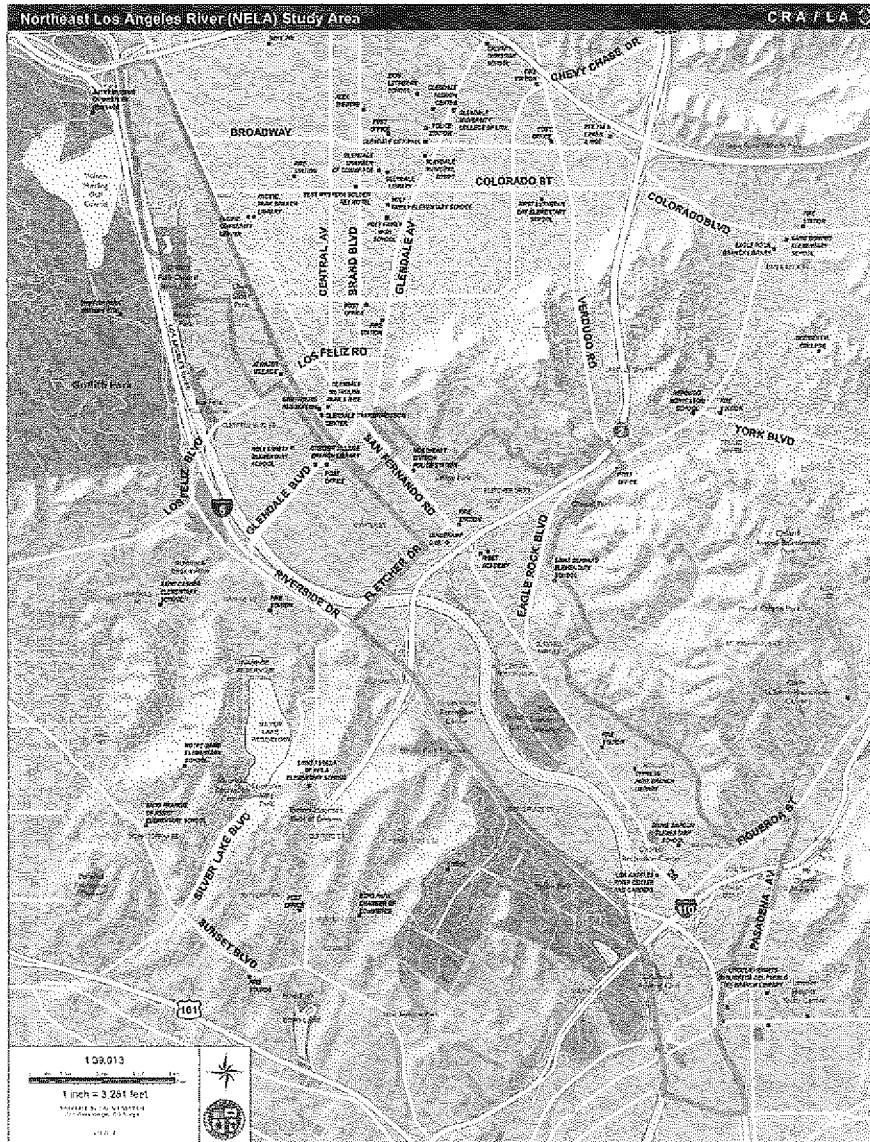
The goal of the NELA Riverfront Collaborative (NELA RC) is to develop a comprehensive approach to linking land use plans and economic development strategies to benefit those that live and work in NELA, using the River as the public catalyst. The NELA RC will engage key personnel from the City of Los Angeles – including staff from the City Council, Community Development Department, Department of City Planning, and the Department of Transportation, among others, in an effort to create an implementation strategy for re-investment that is guided by the policy and vision of the Plan. Together, these public servants, along with community-based partners, will orchestrate a comprehensive riverfront planning effort that includes an update of the NELA Community Plan, a mobility plan and signage program that links residents with accessible transit hubs, identification of safe routes, and green, complete streets, a workforce needs and economic sector assessment, and establishment of a dynamic and robust riverfront identity rooted in community support. The project will have a strong public education and engagement

program with recommendations to track the economic and social impacts of development over time.

The NELA RC aims to remove artificial barriers between agencies and to improve coordination and linkages locally. This project will create an interdisciplinary team of "place and people professionals" from the fields of planning, transportation, community engagement, river advocacy, and community development. Together, the NELA RC intends to integrate planning efforts, coordinate strategic investments and pursue a comprehensive revitalization strategy that promotes sustainable development and helps these NELA riverfront communities thrive.

PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION

The NELA River Corridor Area incorporates portions of the communities of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Lincoln Heights, and Elysian Valley and is located south of the Ventura/Foothill Freeway (SR134) and north of Main Street in Lincoln Heights. It is bounded by the Los Angeles River to the west and the City of Glendale and the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5) to the east approximately (see Figure A).



There are clear signs of disinvestment in the community. The area once had a thriving industrial sector, but today both industrial and commercial areas have experienced high turnover in lease agreements and consistently high vacancy rates. There are concentrations of buildings with serious code violations, evidence of blight and crime, and abandoned and underutilized properties burdened with contaminants. A recent housing

survey conducted by the CRA/LA found evidence of deferred maintenance, illegal garage-to-housing unit conversions and deteriorating conditions throughout the proposed project area. Additionally, the Los Angeles River, a unique feature of the area, has been neglected over the years and is now home to criminal activity which is exacerbated by its lack of appropriate connections to and from the area's neighborhoods.

Nevertheless, renewed interest in the River is evident, and City officials were greatly encouraged by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's July 2010 ruling that the Los Angeles River is considered a "traditionally navigable waterway" worthy of full federal Clean Water Act protection. The City's efforts have been further acknowledged by a visit from President Barack Obama's top environmental advisers, who toured the LA River as part of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. In the last 18 months, this corridor has been designated a priority of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership program, a portion of the US Department of the Interior's National Recreational Trail System, and is in the final stages of a US Army Corps of Engineers Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study that will introduce significant opportunities for changing the River and related infrastructure. These significant steps, combined with public investments in light rail and high speed rail, the area's proximity to Downtown Los Angeles and major freeways, its historic neighborhoods with diverse resources and scales and considerable "walkable" built-form potential, all offer essential building blocks for successful and sustainable revitalization.

THE NELA RIVERFRONT COLLABORATIVE'S FIVE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

I. Planning for Economic and Sustainable Riverfront Development 2.0

As of 2012, The City of Los Angeles no longer operates a community redevelopment agency. The purpose of the new operating agency (the local designated agency) is to complete a fiscal assessment of projects and properties, reassign projects, and return funds to the taxing entities. Many obstacles remain in this historic transition, but what is certain is that the City will not be able to establish new redevelopment project areas within its jurisdiction and that the City must re-envision how it wants to approach economic development in the absence of a dedicated redevelopment agency. The NELA RC project can and should serve as a pilot project that endeavors to establish a new economic development paradigm, while at the same time, maximizing the existing talents within the City, simply by creating a dedicated forum for collaboration. As a laboratory for new ideas and approaches, the City can assess the viability of a deliberate inter-departmental and community-rooted approach to economic development planning and implementation.

In light of these new developments, the NELA RC has formulated an alternative set of activities to meet the HUD guidelines and principles and support sustainable economic development in this area. Central to this work is the notion of creating a discernable "Riverfront District" for the Glendale Narrows area portion of the River through urban design, green infrastructure planning, signage, and development incentives. This effort will include identifying alternative financing strategies (i.e., Infrastructure Finance Districts, Community Facility Assessment Districts, Business Improvement Districts), and conducting an Historic Resource Survey to identify key cultural and architectural assets in the area. The revised scope will include a detailed parcel-by-parcel study to determine the

most appropriate geography, financing structure to support the fiscal health of the affected communities, and anticipated long-term impacts resulting from implementation of the recommended action strategies. Preliminary research suggests expanding the boundaries of the current area to include a portion of the Cornfields Specific Plan Area to build upon industrial and commercial efforts underway in those areas centered around the River in Downtown Los Angeles.

In its review of economic growth sectors, the team will be assessing this area for vital business industries and target 1-2 of those sectors for business development, workforce assessment, and business attraction strategies. Specifically, the team will also be researching this corridor as a potential site for a Los Angeles Regional Food Hub (RFH); the Urban and Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College (a NELA RC partner) will perform a feasibility study to support its creation. The RFH will be an integrated system to strengthen the "good food economy" by coordinating agricultural production and the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution and marketing of locally- or regionally-produced food products. It will create green jobs in the community and provide access to fresh foods for community residents and organizations. With food distribution and production still a strong sector in the region and its proximity to rail and major freeways, NELA is an attractive location for a thriving RFH.

II. Targeted Community Plan Update

I.a Placemaking

The City of Los Angeles is divided into 35 Community Plan areas, which together form the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan. Community Plans guide the physical development of the City's neighborhoods by designating land for a range of uses, encouraging sustainable growth patterns, and addressing infrastructure, design, transportation and mobility issues. While the City's goal is to evaluate and update Community Plans on a 10-year cycle; most are between 15 and 20 years old. The NELA Community Plan was last updated in 1999.

This project will provide the necessary resources for the Department of City Planning to conduct a targeted Community Plan update that will consider zoning refinements for multiple land uses, neighborhood stabilization, urban design standards, River access points, and mobility linkages that will increase access and recreational opportunities to the River in the Glendale Narrows area. These activities will address the long-standing "obstacle course" conditions that have resulted from adjacent industrial and residential land uses in the area. This will also ensure that land use decisions are made comprehensively and not on a case-by-case basis. Increased predictability in the land development process for residents, property owners and developers is an essential ingredient for successful redevelopment. The City Planning Department will work closely with the NELA RC to deliver recommendations for a more relevant, river-friendly Community Plan that meets contemporary needs and anticipates future demographic trends.

II. b Mobility

Since NELA's last Community Plan update, several significant transit infrastructure projects have been placed in service. Most notably, in 2003, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) opened the second light rail line of their growing transit system serving the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The Gold Line, which runs from Union Station in Downtown Los Angeles to the San Gabriel Valley, is an important commuter connection. It has two station stops that service the targeted area and, though the Department of City Planning has created a transit-oriented development plan for one of the two station areas, a unique opportunity exists to further enhance the existing, compact suburban form in support of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

One of these opportunities includes introducing "integrated mobility hubs" which are intended to address the "first mile – last mile" bridge in service that often discourages potential riders from using public transportation and frustrates the transit dependent without other transportation options. These hubs are expected to include secure bike parking, bike sharing, a fold-n-go bike leasing program, and a car sharing system to establish a unified and comprehensive strategy for transportation service delivery and to better meet the individualized needs of transit users. This project will also provide the necessary resources to analyze the existing street network to support pedestrian and bicycling facilities and enhancements and to identify appropriate locations for integrated mobility hubs and implement a wayfinding signage program that identifies the district and neighborhoods along the river. The Department of City Planning, in coordination with the Department of Transportation and NELA RC will produce site and space recommendations for mobility hubs in the corridor, implement a wayfinding signage program (river and neighborhood identities), and detail urban design guidelines to foster quality visual aesthetics in the targeted corridor.

III. Economic and Workforce Development

In addition to more appropriate land use planning, including safe and diverse circulation and mobility options, a truly sustainable community requires a strategy to support localized job creation and workforce development. The NELA target area is a perfect laboratory for testing a deliberate approach to place-based workforce development because of its central location, access to varied transportation systems, and a local labor force that could be very well-suited for new industrial jobs if the appropriate training and placement systems were provided. The NELA RC, through the Community Development Department and Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board (WIB) will convene a working group of business leaders and workforce development professionals to oversee a workforce and economic needs assessment to support up to three key sectors of the local economy that have demonstrated expansion potential and job opportunities.

IV. Citizen Engagement Practices

Successful urban revitalization requires the participation and knowledge of the multiple publics (often disadvantaged) that live in neighborhoods targeted for reinvestment. This type of democratic civic engagement not only increases participation for participation's sake, but also allows residents to voice their concerns and desires, and encourages participation that is deliberate and directed. The NELA RC will conduct civic engagement based on a social, democratic planning model. We will focus on promoting resident participation along the core principles of educating stakeholders and then involving them in a consultative process to support and promote a collaborative decision-making (or

planning) effort around the areas of economic development, placemaking, land use, community development, and mobility planning that supports the existing and future physical and social infrastructure along the NELA Riverfront corridor.

Together as a team, the NELA RC will create a robust educational, community-based and street-savvy campaign that will engage residents, community and business leaders, and social institutions in the creation of a thriving riverfront district. The Los Angeles Community Studio (LACS), previously known as the Hollywood Community Studio) will develop workshops, charrettes and education sessions around specific planning and economic development issues being tackled in NELA. Acknowledging that many residents may not participate in traditional civic engagement forums processes, such as open houses or town-hall meetings, LACS will work with KCET.org to reach out to residents by coming directly to where they live, work, and worship. They will also create mobile planning units and mobile mapping engagements (with Metamorphosis at the University of Southern California (USC)) that will be designed and dispersed into the NELA neighborhoods to increase participation, awareness, knowledge, and action. This might take the form of a booth to set up at community gatherings, a cart equipped with planning popular education resources that can be transported to residential areas, and mobile mapping engagements around everyday mobile phones and the growing bicycle culture in NELA. Given the local demographics that suggest an underserved and multicultural community, community engagement efforts will be culturally-relevant and language-sensitive.

To further enrich the outreach process, USC Metamorphosis, working with KCET.org and LACS will apply their communication infrastructure and applied social research approach to the project. The communication infrastructure approach is a grassroots approach that identifies two communication components of local communities: 1) the local 'neighborhood storytelling network' consisting of the resident interpersonal networks, community-based organizations, and geo-ethnic media (media aimed at specific ethnicities and geographies), and 2) the communication action context or the communication environment that promotes or inhibits healthy neighborhood storytelling networks. Past Metamorphosis research has shown that a healthy and connected storytelling network can strengthen civic engagement by increasing neighborhood belonging, participation, and collective efficacy. Identifying components of the communication environment provides the place-based social and physical features of local communities that interact with the dynamics of the neighborhood storytelling network. The community-based research, mapping engagements, and media efforts will be based on a place-based approach to the NELA project area by designing the efforts around the five neighborhoods in the project area; Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, Glassell Park, and Lincoln Heights.

The communication infrastructure multi-method research, community-based, and multimedia work will be designed to meet the comprehensive planning and economic development research, programmatic, and evaluation objectives of the NELA RC. The results and media from the work will also be used to inform future grant-making, funding efforts, and policy strategies, as well as evaluate the project implementation that come out of the NELA RC project planning process and engagement.

V. Technology Development

The NELA RC will develop an easy-to-use website that will allow local decision makers and community stakeholders to assess the benefits of revitalization activity and neighborhood change. This site will use both primary and secondary data as well as feedback from stakeholders and marginalized/vulnerable populations to track the impact of neighborhood change. This tool serves as a mechanism to inform stakeholders, foster continual citizen engagement, and to better plan for private and public investments. Embedded interactive Web 2.0 and "crowd-sourcing" tools will enable stakeholders to provide real-time feedback on projects so they can be designed to meet the critical needs of the community. This site will be populated with community indicators gathered from the community-based research and engagement activities, so that the site can act as a report card to help decision makers achieve the community's goals and benchmarks stated in the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, Los Angeles River Implementation Overlay (LA-RIO) District, US Army Corps of Engineers' Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study, Urban Waters Federal Partnership, community plans, and the area's overall vision and needs that will be expressed by stakeholders and marginalized communities during the new outreach and civic engagement activities. An annual review will allow this collaborative of public and private entities to proactively adjust investment based on performance measures, and will encourage frequent input and feedback from the community.

The NELA RC's civic engagement activities across multiple partnerships at the government, community, university, and public media scales are innovations in civic renewal and social technologies. In order to properly disseminate the civic engagement model and lessons learned from project implementation, the NELA RC will create evaluation reports and a civic engagement toolkit for place-based sustainable community initiatives that can be applied nationwide.

WORK PLAN

Grant Activity: Planning for Economic Development

Goals: Foster sustainable, responsible development and neighborhood revitalization. Research and recommend financing strategies to support affordable housing production, river revitalization, open space, economic development, and real estate development.

Objectives:

- Create a discernable "Riverfront District", through urban design and infrastructure improvements.
- Evaluate various financing structures to implement the "Riverfront District" plan and make specific recommendations for the area .
-
- Conduct an historic resource survey to identify neighborhood assets and establish priorities for preservation/social/cultural projects.

Major Activities (TEAM- Subcontractor: Tierra West and Historic Resources):

- Formulate **scope of work** for "riverfront district".
- **Coordinate "riverfront district" project** with goals, timeline and efforts of community plan update and street standards revision and other aspects of NELA Collaborative work program
- Coordinate an **historic resource survey** to inform land use planning, identify local assets, and support citywide SurveyLA project.

Products and Outcomes:

- Prepare a "Riverfront District" plan with new geographical boundaries.
- Identify methods and specific recommendations for financing "Riverfront District" plan
- Create data map profiles for each of the communities that surveys opportunities and obstacles for economic revitalization of the corridor
- Prepare an historic resource survey

Grant Activity: Economic Development (Program Partners):

Goal: To develop a vision, feasibility study and business plan that assesses the possibility of a Regional Food Hub in NELA. A Regional Food Hub is the centerpiece of an alternative approach to food distribution that grounds the good food economy. It is an integrated system that coordinates agricultural production and the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and marketing of locally or regionally produced food products. While supporting a strong regionalized food system, a Regional Food Hub in NELA will also increase access to "good food" (nutritious, just, green) and develop living wage jobs in the community.

Objectives: Through the creation of a Regional Food Hub in NELA, develop a strategy to:

- Improve access to “good food” for all community members as well as local retail businesses and institutions (i.e. schools, hospitals, restaurants, corner stores etc...)
- Streamline local food purchasing or provide an accessible way for customers of all sizes to purchase source-verified local foods.
- Create good quality green jobs throughout the regional food chain (specifically in sales and processing).
- Provide community spaces and food access resources for those in need.

Major Activities (with responsible party):

- **Convene Regional Food Hub working group** consisting of food systems and community economic development stakeholders, and representing a range of perspectives from these fields. (UEPI)
- **Research regional food system best practices and internal needs** corresponding to each proposed component of the Regional Food Hub. (UEPI)
- **Produce Los Angeles Regional Food Hub vision document** drawing from information gathered from the working group and best practices research. (UEPI)
- **Hire consultant** to conduct Regional Food Hub feasibility study and business plan based on the vision document. (UEPI/sub)
- **Produce final feasibility study and business plan for Regional Food Hub** working with consultant and incorporating continued working group input. This document will identify a site, assess the project’s feasibility, and propose a viable business plan. (UEPI/sub)

Products/Outcomes:

- **Form or join larger Regional Food Hub working groups**, as a means of gathering input from a range of stakeholders to create a comprehensive vision for the Los Angeles Regional Food Hub.
- Create **Regional Food Hub Vision Document** that proposes a strategy for creating living wage green jobs, assesses job opportunities and career track opportunities, increasing food access, supporting the local food economy, and providing community spaces through the development of a Regional Food Hub in NELA. This document will guide the development of the feasibility study and business plan. This work will be coordinated with the City of LA’s Food Policy Council and local efforts to support food hub systems.
- Produce a **Feasibility Study and Business Plan** for the Los Angeles Regional Food Hub.

**Grant Activity: Targeted Community Plan Update and Street Standards Revision
(Program Partner: DOT/DCP/TEAM)**

Goals: Foster sustainable, responsible development and neighborhood revitalization by undergoing a targeted update of the local community plans. Support green infrastructure planning by recommending revisions of area street standards and creating a wayfinding signage program. Enhance area mobility by strengthening neighborhood connections to transit, improving pedestrian facilities, and creating linkages to and through the Riverfront District.

Objectives:

- Determine the scope of a targeted community plan update
- Conduct public outreach to inform the plan's preparation
- Identify sites for integrated mobility hubs to support area light rail stations and signage program
- Formulate recommendations to revise street standards where necessary to implement the "green" streets concept for River connectors and to emphasize and support multi-modal travel.
- Conduct charettes for wayfinding signage program
- Implement signage program per community supported sites

Major Activities (with responsible party in blue text):

- Review the existing Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan, the Silver Lake – Echo Park – Elysian Valley Community Plan, the LA River Revitalization Master Plan, Army Corps Ecosystem Feasibility Study, and any other relevant plans and studies. (DCP)
- Conduct a field survey, and begin to **identify issues and opportunities**, through a combination of interviews and data analysis (DCP--Team)
- Organize and implement **community outreach activities**, such as neighborhood council presentations, open houses, and design charettes, for targeted zones (DCP, TEAM)
- Formulate the vision for areas identified for changes and articulate key concepts for the plan, and recommend policy changes. (DCP)
- Conduct an area needs assessment to determine the existing population of cyclists and transit users that would be served by an integrated mobility hub. Activities would include review of the City's citywide bicycle plan, field survey and public engagement exercises. (DCP, DOT)
- **Identify potential sites for mobility hubs** through the field survey and public outreach. (DOT, TEAM)
- Review the existing street standards for all highways, collectors and local streets within the targeted area. Activities will include field survey and mapping. (DCP, DOT)
- Formulate recommendations to **revise street standards** where necessary to implement the "green" streets concept for River connectors and to emphasize and support multi-modal travel. (DCP, DOT)

- Formulate recommendations that specifically **support pedestrian and bicycle access** to the LA River and the LA River bikepath. (DCP, DOT)
 - Coordinate, design, and implement wayfinding signage for river access and appropriate neighborhood entry points to the "district".

Products/Outcomes:

- A targeted community plan update that emphasizes and supports sustainable development for a riverfront district.
- Produce recommendations for street standard revisions that support multiple modes of transportation and stormwater BMP's.
- Locations for integrated mobility hubs that support area light rail stations.
- Signage program design and implementation

Grant Activity: Economic and Workforce Development (Program Partner: CDD-WIB/WERC)

Goal: Build partnerships with employers of key economic sectors in Northeast Los Angeles and assess the local workforce needs; develop strategies to connect the local workforce to employment opportunities in those key sectors.

Objectives:

- Identify and analyze up to five key sectors in the Northeast Los Angeles Area, with a recommendation of the 1-2 key sectors upon which to focus energies.
- Identify, form partnerships with, and convene key sector leaders. Create strategic partnerships to support the riverfront district concept and business attraction strategies.
- Conduct assessment of local workforce needs and propose solutions to overcome barriers to employment, specific to the Northeast Los Angeles workforce.
- Develop sector and workforce development strategies to strengthen targeted sectors

Major Activities (CDDWIB/WERC):

- Review and conduct research to **determine the key economic sectors** where growth and new job opportunities can be anticipated in Northeast Los Angeles; identify up to five opportunity sectors in Northeast Los Angeles (CDD,WIB)
- **Recommend the 1-2 sectors** upon which to focus work in convening sector leaders and assessing local workforce needs, based on sector growth, strength in Northeast Los Angeles, and employment, etc. (WIB)
- **Identify leaders** of the chosen key sectors. Engage these leaders the process of developing the sector strategy, through methods including but not limited to meetings, focus groups, interviews and hearings.
- Conduct **assessment of local workforce needs** by evaluating demographic composition, educational attainment, and general level of work experience of local population in the Northeast Los Angeles area. **Propose solutions** to overcome barriers to employment, specific to the NELA workforce. (WIB)

- **Develop sector and workforce development strategies** to strengthen targeted sectors and connect them to local workforce.(WIB/WERC)

Products/Outcomes:

- Report on the analysis of up to five key opportunity sectors, with recommendation of the 1-2 sectors upon which to focus energies.
- List of sector leaders and report summarizing the engagement work with sector leaders.
- Report on local workforce needs and proposed strategies to overcome barriers to employment.
- Key sector and workforce development strategy document.

Grant Activity: Civic Engagement/Communication Infrastructure/ Neighborhood Storytelling Network

Goal: To increase the understanding, participation, and decision-making of the existing and marginalized communities in the project area by making information accessible and ensuring urban revitalization and development is transparent, place-based, communicative, and accountable in order to support existing communities, coordinate planning, inform policy development, and leverage investment.

Objectives:

Design and apply a multi-method ‘communication infrastructure’ community-based research protocol and multimedia platform to study and engage the NELA RC area and project goals.

Through community-based research and story share within the 5 NELA neighborhoods, inform multiple publics (including stakeholders and marginalized communities) on the impact of urban revitalization and change, riverfront opportunities, and river linkages, and ensure that policy-makers are being informed by neighborhood research and desires from the local community.

Involve local stakeholders and marginalized communities in the feedback and dissemination practices of the research design, analysis, and reporting.

Engage in research and evaluation practices leading to a citizen engagement manual, policy reports, and knowledge to be published in multiple venues that include community meetings, policy circles, conferences, multimedia sites, and journals.

Major Activities (with responsibilities in blue text)

- Establish civic engagement research and development committee out of key stakeholders. (USC Metamorphosis and KCET)
- Develop and finalize the communication infrastructure and community-based research design. (USC Metamorphosis and RC team)

- Develop and finalize community-based resident and small business surveys to engage the local community and gather community indicators to inform the program elements, project planning, and report card. (USC Metamorphosis)
- Co-administer 500 resident (100 each for the five NELA river neighborhoods in the project area) and 100 small business surveys in the field through face-to-face engagements. (LACS and USC Metamorphosis)
- Neighborhood Profiles of each neighborhood supported by historical research and archival photographs. (KCET and USC Metamorphosis)
- Five story-collecting events organized by neighborhood to capture video interviews with community members. (KCET)
- Ethnographic fieldwork to study the project implementation and civic engagement process, and produce on-the-ground locally contextual accounts of the NELA collaborative project. (USC Metamorphosis-- KCET)
- Research and establish key socio-economic baseline demographics of the project area to track change. (USC Metamorphosis)
- Analyze data collected from the multiple research methods applied to the communication infrastructure and civic engagement components of the grant. (USC Metamorphosis)
- Research, design, and publish manual for urban development civic engagement strategies. (USC Metamorphosis--KCET)
- Publish evaluation, academic, policy implication reports, and public media on civic engagement program elements of NELA collaborative. (USC Metamorphosis- KCET)

Products/Outcomes:

- A functioning civic engagement research committee of key Metamorphosis research team members and key stakeholders involved in the NELA River Collaborative.
- Finalized research and public multimedia design and protocol for the multi-method (surveys, focus groups, ethnography, mapping) communication infrastructure and community-based multi-lingual civic engagement research work to be conducted in the project area.
- Design, field administration, analysis, and dissemination of 500 resident and 100 small business surveys from the 5 NELA neighborhoods
- Historical/ Archival Neighborhood Profiles and Five Story-Collecting Events from each NELA neighborhood.
- Databases, archives, notes, and methodologies for all the data produced and research methods employed.
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data collected from the multi-method communication infrastructure and civic engagement research.
- Civic engagement research and planning practices manual/website for replication in other community planning and economic development project areas.
- Dissemination reports and publications for multiple venues including community meetings, public policy meetings, conferences, journals, and public media online platforms.

Grant Activity: Civic Engagement—Popular Education

Goal: Increase participation and decision-making by communities historically left out of the planning process on issues surrounding economic development and planning through developing relationships with community members and organizations and increasing stakeholder capacity through popular education. Allow for this process to be replicable in other communities through the development of a planning education/advocacy training manual.

Objectives:

- Develop and implement a relationship-building and outreach strategy for a riverfront district plan
- Create and implement popular education strategies on issues surrounding economic development and planning.
- Allow for the replicability of the project by creating a planning education and advocacy manual for use in other communities.

Major Activities (with responsible party in blue text):

- Conduct survey of community, communication assets, and organizations in NELA (i.e. parents' groups, churches, local media, neighborhood watches, etc.) as possible loci of outreach. (LACS, USC Metamorphosis, and KCET)
- Create an outreach committee with local stakeholders. (LACS)
- Hold one-on-one meetings with community leaders and organization representatives to develop relationships to help promote popular education and outreach process. (LACS)
- Develop an outreach strategy to engage communities historically left out of the planning process on issues surrounding redevelopment and planning. These communities may include low-income renters, recent immigrants, English language learners, youth, small business owners, etc. (LACS)
- Research best practices in popular education and civic engagement, focusing on efforts to engage those historically left out of the planning process. (LACS)
- Research concerns around economic development and planning in Los Angeles, specifically in the NELA study area, and create popular education strategy to address these concerns. (LACS)
- Recruit and train community members, especially those historically left out of the planning process, on issues related to planning and development. (LACS)
- Create a NELA internship program (building off of LACS' program in Hollywood) that brings together planning and journalism students from local universities and colleges and trains them in real-world outreach and advocacy around the NELA Riverfront Collaborative. (LACS, KCET, and Metamorphosis)
- Create a youth program with NELA-area high school students to train local youth about economic development and planning issues and get them involved in the outreach and education process. (LACS)

- Host local discussions that provide interested stakeholders with the opportunities to ask questions and discuss economic development, planning, and the NELA collaborative. (LACS, KCET)
- Develop, plan, and coordinate a mobile urban mapping event to produce a NELA River Bike Tour Map that integrates everyday cell phones to crowdsource the map; and produce an online and print map. (USC Metamorphosis, LACS, and KCET)
- Develop "mobile planning lab" that consists of information about the NELA Collaborative/study area, as well as a variety of quick data collection tools and engagement tools that can be used in large community event settings (fairs, school events, etc.). (LACS, KCET)
- Conduct community, communication asset mapping with NELA Collaborative and stakeholders. (LACS, USC Metamorphosis, and KCET)
- Create a NELA Planning Education and Advocacy Curriculum and Toolbox that NELA stakeholders and others can access post-project implementation. (LACS, Metamorphosis, and KCET)

Products/Outcomes:

- **Asset maps** of community organizations, leaders, local media, and points of contact for outreach.
- Up to eight discrete **popular education curriculum** elements on topics of land use, economic and workforce development, and other planning issues.
- Up to six **charrettes, walk audits, asset mapping or other community events** to address planning popular education.
- A **mobile planning lab** that visits community events and engages stakeholders on issues surrounding planning and economic development
- A **NELA River Bike Tour Map** in print and online form that is crowdsourced from everyday mobile phones and bicycle engagement of local community.
- **NELA internship and youth programs** that train local students about planning issues affecting NELA and give them on-the-ground experience in outreach, community-based research, and community engagement.
- The creation of **NELA Planning Education and Advocacy Curriculum and Toolbox** that NELA stakeholders can access for post-project implementation.

Grant Activity: Citizen Media and Technology Tool Development

Goal: To increase the participation and decision-making by marginalized communities by making information accessible through accessible citizen media and technology that ensures revitalization is transparent and accountable in order to support existing communities, coordinate policies and leverage investment.

Objectives:

- Review existing technology, communication, media, and mobile tools that monitor change and encourage action by stakeholders, and quantify the community's vision as stated in planning documents and plans.

- Inform stakeholders and marginalized communities on the impact of revitalization and change, hold public agencies and officials accountable, and ensure transparency.
- Involve marginalized communities in the development, feedback and assessment of the technology tool in order to adequately meet the needs and technological capabilities of the community.

Major Activities (with responsible party in blue text):

- Review existing technology, communication, media, and mobile tools that focus on project tracking, livability and economic indicators, and promote civic engagement using traditional and multimedia formats—and make recommendations on what tools can be applied to the civic engagement and popular education activities for the project (KCET)
- Identify baseline data indicators from primary and secondary socio-economic datasets and quantify the objectives in community plans and planning documents to track over time. (USC Metamorphosis, LACS, and KCET)
- Create an 'immersive website' that presents data, process, research, and policies supported by rich media content that includes, but not limited to video interviews, photo slideshows, and an interactive mural. (KCET)
- An online feedback portal for community engagement that collects NELA resident survey responses and supports a social media campaign to drive responses. (KCET and USC Metamorphosis)
- Visual design and mapping of data-driven content that include community resources, urban development projects, policy data, and community-based research from NELA RC project implementation. (KCET)
- Visual branding of the NELA River Collaborative. (KCET)
- An online public media blog for LACS, USC Metamorphosis, and KCET to provide real-time documentation of the project implementation and process. (KCET)
- Creation of QR Codes (quick response codes) for tagging of interests triggering mobile data in physical spaces and mobile mapping of NELA neighborhoods and engagement events such as NELA River Bike Tour Map. (KCET)
- Publish content from the website in physical media form such as a newspaper for the purposes of quick-distribution during engagement activities in local places within the community. (KCET and LACS)
- Publish first annual performance report card that measures the progress in the development of community indicators and benchmarks that meet the communities interests and needs. (KCET and USC Metamorphosis)

Products/Outcomes:

- Review, recommendation, and implementation of multimedia tools and mobile tools that can be applied to the NELA RC project implementation and civic engagement activities.
- Public 'immersive' web site that contains easily accessible and downloadable tools (curricula, etc.) created and public data collected (asset maps, results of any community research done, etc.) over the life of the project.
- Visual Branding of NELA RC project and visualization of data, mapping, and information for public dissemination.

- Online tools and strategies for citizen feedback and a social media campaign that increases citizen participation in the project.
- Content dissemination through multiple media formats including print, mobile, and online.
- An annual performance report card to provide updates on project impact and benefits to the community, as well as hold public agencies and officials accountable.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

The NELA Riverfront Collaborative is a multidisciplinary team of public and private sector professionals whom together will orchestrate the planning and program activities outlined above. The “public” team is comprised of seasoned personnel from “place-based” professions, the Community Development Department, Los Angeles Departments of City Planning, Transportation and other City departments (as needed) with talents and experience in the areas of community planning, TOD, Brownfield redevelopment, river revitalization, traffic engineering, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, community economic development, workforce development, and citizen engagement.

Due to the dissolution of the CRA, the Community Development Department (CDD) has agreed to accept this grant, and HUD has indicated that they are willing to work with CDD. CDD already manages federal grants such as the Community Development Block Grant program and Worker Investment Act funding, and is an ideal entity to accept this grant. Extensive conversations about scope, budget and timeline have been held between CRA/LA staff and CDD staff to ensure a seamless reassignment. **CDD will oversee all administrative duties and will hire a program manager to serve as the day to day project manager. This program manager will lead, coordinate, and manage the team and meet with the team as needed to troubleshoot, monitor, and guide the implementation of the grant work.**

They are joined by “people-based” professionals in the following organizations:

Los Angeles Community Studio (previously known as Hollywood Community Studio) is a community-based research and civic engagement project launched in late 2008 with funding from the Ford Foundation. HCS studies the physical and social changes taking place in Hollywood using a variety of research tools it has developed, including asset mapping, focus groups, case studies and annual business and resident surveys. Through these research instruments, HCS is able to both assess the changes brought about by redevelopment, as well as better understand the needs of the community. It then shares the results of its research with the community, as well as local decision makers, with an eye towards encouraging equitable development in Hollywood.

The City of Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board develops policy and strategy to ensure that business has access to a trained workforce and workers have access to quality jobs. All of the WIB's services operate on the premise that upward mobility for workers impacts and elevates the prosperity of cities, counties, states, and the country.

WIB programs are available to workers and businesses through "WorkSource Centers" located throughout the Los Angeles Area.

The Workforce Education and Resource Center (WERC) was established in 2002 as a non-profit entity to collaborate with the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Service Employees Interantional Union (SEIU) on the Healthcare Workforce Development Program (HCWDP). The goal of this partnership is to provide educational opportunities to improve personal and technical workforce competencies sustaining a positive work environment. They recently expanded their programming to include workforce development for green jobs related to water efficiency and building retrofiting. (**new role as reviewer**)

The Urban and Environmental Policy Institute functions as a social change oriented academic center with strong community ties, and as a community-based organization with research and policy development capacity, addressing regional and community development, work and industry, food and nutrition, migration, pollution prevention and environmental justice, housing, transportation, land use, and the urban environment.

The USC Metamorphosis Project is an ongoing research effort designed to analyze new and traditional communication flows that sustain and transform the social fabrics of place and cyberspace. The project advances a communication infrastructure perspective on urban community and its everyday life interface with global communities. From 2009-2011, Metamorphosis is funded by The California Endowment (TCE) to conduct communication infrastructure and health research for TCE's 14-site 'Building Healthy Communities' initiative. USC Metamorphosis will be joined by **KCET.org**, a public non-profit and the nation's largest independent public television station. On air, online and in the community, KCET plays a vital role in the cultural and educational enrichment of Southern and Central California.

Working together, these partners with the City agencies will set the stage for successful community revitalization by reconciling/consolidating goals and objectives from several key planning documents, engaging the public in a dialogue about how revitalization efforts should be prioritized and what type of indicators should be developed to track changes in the community over time. The 17-month project will, for the first time, actively engage three influential agencies, which have historically "worked in silos", in an exercise of comprehensive land use, mobility and human capital planning to advance the City's vision for a revitalized Los Angeles River while helping neighboring communities thrive.

For more information, please contact:

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