



Concept Paper Brief: Community Center in the Park Avenue District

Description of Project

Neighbors United and its nonprofit supporting partner, inCOMMON Community Development, seek funds to assist in developing and staffing a community center in the Park Avenue area. The primary objective of community center is to address community and economic development needs of the Park Avenue Area. The focus is on nurturing and supporting the growth and development of low income, homeless and special needs individuals and families in Omaha's Park Avenue area.

The community center is a coordinated response to unmet needs identified through a structured planning process undertaken by members of Park Avenue's faith community during January-June 2008. The results of this needs assessment process and additional insights gained during the past 12 months were profiled in the previous section.

The proposed project would assist in establishing a storefront to house the community center. The Center would work through its partners—the 18 faith community members of Neighbors United—as well as through appropriate community organizations. inCOMMON Community Development would serve as the administrative and fiduciary agent for the initiative.

The community center will concentrate its efforts on the four work areas depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual Overview of the Community Center



Social Services

Case Management and Referral would work with Park Avenue area residents to assess their individual circumstances, prepare developmental plans, including referrals to supportive agencies and resources. These plans and accompanying data will be coordinated with other social and

human services providers, including the Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (MACCH). A part-time supervising social worker (MSW) will work with graduate and undergraduate students and a faculty coordinator from UNO's School of Social Work. This team will assist in providing case management, referral and related services. Building and developing long-term relationships through the 18 faith community partners is expected to be a critical part of this effort.

Many Park Avenue residents have indicated their inability to meet or access *Basic Needs*. Through church and community partnerships, community center staff and volunteers will be able to assist individuals in addressing many of these expressed needs, one of the most critical being food security. The community center, in conjunction with the existing community meal, anticipates the opportunity to reduce food insecurity - and at the same time develop community relationships - through the integration of community gardening and food co-ops. Whenever possible, the community center will utilize strategies for need provision that promote the involvement and ownership - and, thus, affirmation and empowerment - of residents themselves.

Basic Need programming:

Food Co-op (weekly)

AccessNebraska (online benefit application service) (weekly)

Haircuts (monthly)

Medical Screenings (monthly)

Social and Economic Development

In addition to providing a location for private, personalized assessment and case management, the community center is expected to *Spur Social and Economic Development* in the Park Avenue district. As a staffed, multi-purpose facility with the capacity to host meetings, provide a place for the self-employed to connect with wireless and other individuals, the presence of the community center can serve a vital social and economic development role in the Park Avenue area.

Building Community Capacity and Connections would assist area organizations with their community development work needs. Services would include a place for hosting a meeting, facilitation with difficult dialogues, and promoting connections between organizations to better address the area's challenges. It is envisioned that capacity building and connections activities will extend to working with local developers to ensure maximum benefits to all. Finally, the community center is expected to be a site from which area universities and colleges could stage many of their community outreach endeavors. For example, several units of UNO's College of Public Affairs and Community Service are likely to use the facility for community engagement activities. UNO's Service Learning Academy would also use the location for projects that team students and the community.

Building Community and Support Networks for individuals will expand upon the relational successes of the weekly meal program, which was described in previous sections. The experience of Neighbors United and inCOMMON shows that it is critical that Park Avenue's residents have a community, including new support networks, to assist with their development.

Education and Personal Development

Job Readiness and Personal Development Workshops will be essential in assisting individuals requiring services toward self-sufficiency. Through an already established commitment from a local church partner, a job readiness course will be made available free of charge to all Park Avenue residents. Furthermore, personal development workshops, covering a variety of life-skill topics, will be offered on an ongoing basis. Additional support groups will also be regularly held out of the Community Center.

Administration

All fore mentioned goals will be supported by a well-developed *Administration* component within the community center. Professional administration will ensure that goals stated are met and data is recorded. Data collected for homeless individuals served will be maintained and professionally shared using the Homeless Management Information System (HIMS) ServicePoint.

Itemized Project Budget

Facility

Rent (Standard lease Agreement to include utilities and maintenance) Approx. 1,000 - 1,2000 sq/ft space to be leased near intersection of Park Ave. and Leavenworth St.	\$12,600
Minor Painting and Improvement to Lease Space Paint supplies, floor covering, minor modifications (\$1,500) Labor (\$750)	\$2,250
Office Furniture Furniture (\$4,000) Labor to pick up, assemble and move in (\$750)	\$4,750

Operating

Office Equipment (2 desktop computers, 1 laptop, 1 laser printer, 3 telephones)	\$2,750
Phone/Internet (Cox Business Phone = \$24.74/month, Internet =\$86.94/month)	\$1,934
Office Supplies and Operating Expenses	\$1,800
Insurance (Professional Liability Ins., and Business Renters Ins.)	\$2,020
Marketing (Neighborhood Outreach, Outreach to nonprofits and Organizations in Park Ave. area, Outreach to residents re: available programs and resources)	\$4,500
Partnership/Organization Fees (Homeless management Information System)	\$1,000
Contingency Fund (Unexpected costs of programming, facilities, inflation, etc.)	\$6,000

Personel

Project Director and Neighborhood Advocate (1 FTE @ \$15/hour X 2,080 hours/year)	\$31,200
Case Management Supervisor (.33 FTE @ \$15/hour X 693.33 hours/year)	\$10,296

Total **\$81,100**

Itemized List of Cash Contributions and Pledges

Mammel Foundation matching grant (grant received 12/30/2009)	\$18,000
Matching funds from church donations and private individuals (money raised from 6/15/2009 to 12/15/2009)	\$18,000
Countryside Community Church's annual Christmas Offering (commitment made 10/15/2009)	\$12,100
Peter Kiewit Foundation (Challenge grant to be awarded after (additional \$23,000 is raised by Sept 30 th 2010)	\$10,000

Total **\$58,100**

Remaining Balance to be Raised **\$23,000**