



## Community Organizing Opportunity Grant

NeighborhoodsNOW utilizes a Community Organizing strategy to help enable residents and stakeholders of participating neighborhoods to address their needs and take charge of changing their conditions. Community Organizers were introduced in Year Two (2007) and their efforts are vital to successfully implementing the Quality of Life Plans in the selected neighborhoods.

The goal of NeighborhoodsNOW Community Organizing is to build a network of relationships that accord community members an effective voice, and to increase the social capital in the neighborhood(s). Community Organizers encourage resident participation in the action items outlined in the neighborhood's Quality of Life plan and bridge relationships between the neighborhood and other relevant organizations. As such, Community Organizers serve as the project manager on any number of related projects. Community Organizers also support the communication strategy for the neighborhood.

Funding is available for full-time staff that would serve as the primary community contact, organizer and/or liaison and perform a variety of duties, including model block organizing, project development and coordination, leadership development of local residents, as well as other duties as needed. Staff supported by LISC funding would work exclusively on NeighborhoodsNOW activities devoted to achieving Quality of Life Plan goals and objectives. Typical Community Organizing activities include (but are not limited to):

- Develop and implement activities to increase resident engagement in NeighborhoodsNOW initiatives. Build relationships and identify new neighborhood leadership. Network with community groups in conjunction with residents as appropriate.
- Facilitate the development of a partnership between neighborhood residents/stakeholders and the Police Department. Take a lead role in establishing and organizing community safety initiatives.
- Organize and lead regular neighborhood meetings/social events and oversee the planning for volunteer projects such as neighborhood clean-ups and social activities.
- Collect and share success stories and recognize volunteers. Submit success stories to the neighborhood newsletters and to Greater Kansas City LISC.

Successful proposals will demonstrate approaches that seek a strong community voice for and broad participation of those with a stake in the neighborhood. Of particular interest is to the extent in which the organization reflects and engages ethnically and culturally diverse communities, low income residents, renters and other constituencies in planning and decision making. Also, proposals that innovatively demonstrate leveraging of resources or partnerships with others to achieve Quality of Life outcomes will be welcomed.

NeighborhoodsNOW Community Organizers will be expected to utilize Greater Kansas City LISC-approved community organizing approaches and attend regular LISC-sponsored community organizer training and NeighborhoodsNOW leadership meetings.

LISC will support Community Organizing projects with maximum grant awards of \$40,000. Applicants must be 501c(3) tax exempt organizations. The term of grants is for one (1) year, beginning January 2009. Upon completion of the initial grant terms, programs that demonstrate timely reporting and that have met and/or exceeded project performance measures will be invited to apply for funding the following year.