

**Application form:  
Community Planning Program and  
Local Technical Assistance Program**

**DEADLINE:** Noon on Thursday, June 26, 2014

This application form is online at [www.rtachicago.com/applications](http://www.rtachicago.com/applications). You may submit the form by email to [applications@rtachicago.com](mailto:applications@rtachicago.com).

Upon receipt of application, you will receive an e-mail verifying that your application has been received.

**1. Name of Applicants:**

**South Loop Neighbors (SLN) and Greater South Loop Association (GLSA)**, membership-based, all-volunteer, 501(c)3 community organizations

**2. Main Contact for Application (please include name, phone number and email):**

Robin Toewe	Josh Ellis
South Loop Neighbors	Greater South Loop Association
312.859.5461	773.910.7552
rtoewe@gmail.com	joshua.nb.ellis@gmail.com

**3. Type of Applicant (please check any that apply):**

Local government

Multijurisdictional group\*

organizations):

Please list the members of the group (including government and nongovernmental

Nongovernmental organization\*

Name of local government partner(s):  
Daniel Solis, Alderman, 25<sup>th</sup> Ward

\*Applications submitted by multijurisdictional groups and nongovernmental organizations must include a letter indicating support from each relevant local government. See the FAQs for more information. Nongovernmental applicants are strongly encouraged to contact CMAP or the RTA prior to submitting their application to discuss their project and the demonstration of local support.

**4. Project Type (please check any that apply):**

Please check all statements below that describe characteristics of your project. (This will help us determine whether your project is best handled by CMAP or RTA.)

- My project involves preparation of a plan.
- My project helps to implement a past plan.
- My project may link land use, transportation, and housing.
- My project may have direct relevance to public transit and supports the use of the existing transit system.
- My project is not directly related to transportation or land use, but implements GO TO 2040 in other ways.

## 5. Project Location:

Dubbed Riverside Park by its former owner, the location is 62 acres of undeveloped land south of Roosevelt Road, between the Chicago River and Clark St. All information points to it being a former rail yard that likely will require environmental remediation. There is currently little to no infrastructure. The parcel is currently privately owned. However, the City has been pressing on the owner to either develop it or sell it to an entity that will, and has threatened use of eminent domain if neither happens soon. If/when the City takes ownership, it will issue an RFQ or RFP for development proposals.

A quick survey of the site (Google map attached separately) makes clear a number of access challenges. These challenges present a variety of opportunities.

- The City's Wells-Wentworth Connector will traverse this site, north/south. *Given that this phase of the Connector is not fully planned, there is the potential to design it to complement the neighborhood, rather have the development accommodate a pre-determined roadway.*
- Metra's Rock Island line runs along the eastern border and the CTA Red Line runs under one corner of the site. *Is there a possibility of adding one or more stations? How does the nature of future development affect this possibility?*
- The Chicago River embankment is crumbling along this site, presenting an opportunity to *consider innovative ways to integrate the River into the site to engage future residents, workers, and visitors, for example, with recreational and commuter river access and naturalized stormwater management.*

## 6. Project Description:

**Please tell us what you would like to do in your community, and what assistance is needed.** If you have more than one idea, please submit a separate application for each project. Please be specific, but also brief (less than two pages per project idea)—we simply want to have a basic understanding of what you want to do. CMAP and RTA staff will follow-up with you if we need any additional information to fully understand your proposed project.

The 62 undeveloped acres represent an unprecedented opportunity to develop an environmentally-forward, people-centric urban community from the ground up. With essentially no infrastructure in place,

new development on this parcel is the perfect opportunity to let Chicago shine as a role model of forward-thinking sustainable urban design practices and theory. Development will eventually occur on the site, either through private development or by means of City intervention. It is our goal to establish a shared vision for desired development that can inform that eventual development. In submitting this application for pre-development technical assistance, SLN and GSLA, with Alderman Solis and other stakeholders, aim to be proactive, and in doing so, set a positive, welcome stage for future development informed by community input.

SLN and GSLA are applying for technical assistance to engage in pre-development support, to facilitate a conversation across a set of diverse stakeholders in order to establish core design and development principles that will inform and guide future development discussions. Our goals in these conversations are to agree on a set of design and development principles that include:

- Maximizing environmental, economic, and societal benefits to all stakeholders and to the City, as a whole;
- Effectively leveraging City, county and state assets (transportation networks, natural resources such as the Chicago River, linkages to tourist destinations, and other community assets);
- Identifying and defusing and/or minimizing barriers and challenges to development, so that future plans are both feasible and achievable, particularly for financing;
- Balancing market potential with community aspirations;
- Promoting greater economic justice by addressing concerns and perspectives of affected underserved communities;
- Obtaining broad-based buy-in so that selected developer and development plan options will experience minimal resistance by the local community;
- And reflecting and embracing the cultural and ethnic diversity of the surrounding communities.

SLN and GSLA want to be clear that we are not seeking to establish a land-use plan for the site's development. Rather, we are seeking to realize consensual outcomes, derived from the above goals, set by our varied stakeholders around core design and development principles. These principles would inform a variety of potential development scenarios, from high rises to townhomes, recreational uses to commercial development. Based on similar planning projects (CMAP LTA help with Harper's Court in Hyde Park, Delta Institute's work on the [Crawford/Fisk Task Force](#)) we expect this kind of collaboration to establish:

- A pre-development framework to inform and guide development discussions.
- Working relationships across diverse stakeholders that will ease future discussions about this location and other possible future community development opportunities.
- A process that will enable stakeholders to vet development proposal(s) against the pre-development framework.

Finally, we would like to mention that the genesis for this application was a conversation on May 12, as part of the Chicago Community Trust's On the Table event. The outcomes of that conversation were an exploration of how any future development on the site could benefit from role-model environmental practices and other sustainable urban design principles, and an agreement that we should pursue

developing a strong, broad-based, community voice in support of these principles, prior to any specific development proposals. With CMAP support, we can extend this conversation into real action, and make a substantial contribution to GO TO 2040.

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Letters of support attached:

- 25th Ward Alderman Daniel Solis
- Friends of the Chicago River
- The Resurrection Project

Letters of support solicited. SLN and GLSA are working to get these submitted by early July.

- Ald. Pat Dowell, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward
- Ald. Will Burns, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward
- McCaffery Interests/Roosevelt Collection CONFIRMED, AWAITING LETTER
- Nicolas Anderson, architect/JAHN (participant in May 12 conversation) CONFIRMED, AWAITING LETTER
- Katherine Darnstadt/Latent Design CONFIRMED, AWAITING LETTER
- Grace Episcopal Church (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop) CONFIRMED, AWAITING LETTER
- Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community
- Chicago Department of Transportation
- Chicago Park District
- Near South Planning Board (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop)
- Columbia College (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop)
- Roosevelt University (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop)
- Spertus Institute (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop)
- Grant Park Conservancy (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop)
- Prairie District Neighborhood Alliance (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop)
- Daystar Center (member, Alliance for a Greener South Loop)

Two organizations declined to offer a letter of support, to avoid conflict of interest, as they hope to be selected by CMAP (if this grant is awarded to SLN and GLSA) to assist in providing technical assistance:

- Delta Institute
- Center for Neighborhood Technology