

2019/2020 Local Technical Assistance and Community Planning Programs

Application Number: 11

Project Title: City of Chicago Avondale Neighborhood Plan

Applicant: City of Chicago - Avondale Neighborhood Association



Project Description:

This proposal is requesting for technical assistance and resources to develop a neighborhood scale plan for the Avondale community area in Chicago.

The Avondale community area is rapidly transitioning in affordability and in the neighborhood make-up of both residents and businesses while not having a clear vision and plan for maintaining affordability, diversity, and quality of life. The community is attracting development but does not have a comprehensive vision for where and what development is desired and what infrastructure should be invested in such as parks, bike paths, pedestrian safety, and public transit. Avondale is divided across five different wards and aldermen which makes a shared vision and coordinated planning more challenging. The community is physically divided by the Kennedy Expressway, has very low amount of open space, and can struggle with a cohesive identity.

Nevertheless, Avondale has many assets to build upon. The Avondale Neighborhood Association (ANA), a 501c3 volunteer run organization, was formed with a mission of unifying the Avondale community by preserving history, embracing diversity, and connecting neighbors. ANA coordinates with the community on educational events, neighborhood clean-ups, neighborhood socials, creating community murals, attending zoning meetings, planning positive loitering events & running a local art walk (A Day in Avondale). ANA has take the lead to highlight the many public resources, local businesses, art spaces, and social services already active and thriving in Avondale.

ANA through its Zoning Committee has also worked to give thoughtful community input to the five different aldermen as new developments are proposed. The Zoning Committee is now reactively responding to developers' projects as they are proposed rather than working from a shared vision and plan the community developed and supports.

ANA and its partners are asking for support from CMAP and the RTA to develop a plan that:

1. Articulates a shared vision for the community for where and what developments is desired;
2. Promotes the retention and development of affordable housing, maintains a wide diversity of businesses;
3. Promotes safe and sustainable transportation options including pedestrian, bicycling, and mass transit;
4. Addresses issues of stormwater and open space.

Project Location: Avondale community area in Chicago, IL