Application form:
RTA Community Planning Program and
CMAP Local Technical Assistance Program

DEADLINE: Noon on Thursday, June 29, 2017

This application form is online at www.rtachicago.org/applications. You may submit the form by email to applications@rtachicago.org. Upon receipt of application, you will receive an e-mail verifying that your application has been received.

1. Name of Applicant

Greater Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce

2. Main Contact for Application

Name: Megan Bunimovich
Title: Executive Director
Phone number: 773-975-2088
Email: megan@ravenswoodchicago.org

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

____ Local government

____ Multijurisdictional group* Please list the members of the group (including government and nongovernmental organizations):
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

_X_ Nongovernmental organization* Name of local government partner(s):
47th Ward Ald. Ameya Pawar

*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.

X My project involves preparation of a plan.
____ My project involves updating an already existing plan.
____ My project helps to implement a past plan.
X My project links land use, transportation, and housing.
X My project has 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. Local Match Requirement (please initial to indicate you are aware of the local match requirements)
I am aware that a local match will be required for most projects, and understand that if my project is selected it is up to the project applicant to contribute a local match. (See the program guide for further details on local match requirements.)

X Yes, I understand that applicants will be required to contribute a local match.

6. Project Location
Please provide a brief description of the location of your project. You may include a map if that helps to describe location, but this is not required. If your project helps to implement a past plan, please include a link to that plan.

The study area for the project is the Lawrence Avenue corridor in the Ravenswood neighborhood of Chicago’s North Side. The study area would fall within the boundaries of the Greater Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce and its Special Service Area, SSA #31, which includes adjacent parcels between Leavitt Street and Clark Street. The corridor is located entirely in the 47th Ward (Clark Street is the dividing line between the 47th and 46th wards). The area west of Ravenswood Avenue is in the Lincoln Square community area, and the area to the east is in the Uptown community area.

7. 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. For plan updates please tell us how you will be building upon (or replacing) the previous work. Program staff will follow-up with you if we need any additional information to fully understand your proposed project.

For years, the Lawrence Avenue corridor running through the Ravenswood neighborhood struggled with vacancy, inconsistent land uses, and a blighted appearance. Following the completion of a streetscape redesign and road diet along Lawrence in 2013, the corridor began to attract new development. As more proposals are made, residents in the area have voiced interest in developing a master plan for Lawrence Avenue (see DNA Info articles here and here).

The Greater Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce (GRCC), with support from the 47th Ward, seeks assistance in conducting a corridor study to produce recommendations related to economic development, land use, and quality of life improvements. As the corridor changes, GRCC wants to understand the demographics of the area and the retail market demand so our organization can assist in the redevelopment of Lawrence Avenue and recruit appropriate types of businesses and housing units to the corridor. We would like to produce recommendations about the appropriate amount of density for the neighborhood, given its great access to public transit, including the number of units, parking spaces, and building heights.

A market analysis and recommendations for future retail growth would assist GRCC in its efforts to fill vacancies and bring new business to the area. Additionally, GRCC and its Special Service Area would like to produce recommendations about how these organizations can capitalize on the redevelopment of the corridor to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives, works, or shops in Ravenswood. This includes recommendations for activating the street and providing more public space, and also how to continue improving the atmosphere for pedestrians and bicyclists following the streetscape redesign.

We believe the Ravenswood community has many strengths, including an active resident base and access to transit, but as Lawrence Avenue redevelops we want to make sure there is a vision for the entire corridor that fits what the community wants and what makes sense given market trends and demographics. With a corridor study, GRCC and the community will have a tool to advocate for a specific, community-driven vision, instead of approaching each parcel and proposal in a vacuum. Ultimately, this plan will help the community achieve greater livability and economic resilience.

8. Previous Plan Implementation Efforts
Please describe actions you have taken to implement previous plans in your community – whether your efforts were successful or not – to achieve infrastructure improvements, development investment, policy changes, advocacy, volunteer involvement, or other actions. If you do not have experience implementing previous planning work, please describe what you will do to make sure that your plan is implemented. Illustrating a commitment to implement plan recommendations is very important to both agencies as we consider new planning projects.

While GRCC does not have experience implementing previous plans, it does have a record of implementing projects through its Special Service Area (SSA). Each year, a commission of property owners in the SSA decides a budget and the services they want to provide, and GRCC staff handles the day-to-day management of those services. This includes issuing requests for proposals and reviewing bids to make recommendations, executing contracts, and ensuring the work is being done by communicating with vendors and the community. The SSA and GRCC staff are also familiar with implementing programs that require specific budgets, city permits, and consensus-building among many partners. Examples include installing bicycle racks throughout the community, operating a façade rebate program, and sponsoring/installing public art.
9. Additional Strategic Partnerships
Please list any additional partners you may want to include in this planning project. Please specify if you have made contact with them in advance of submitting this application.

(Please include any additional information that is relevant, preferably by providing links to online documents.)
27 June 2017

Tony Manno
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606

RE: Greater Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce application for LTA Program

Dear Mr. Manno:

I fully support Greater Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce’s (GRCC) application for the 2017 Local Technical Assistance Program. The LTA program will help GRCC with a corridor study of Lawrence Avenue, N Clark to N Leavitt, in preparation for SSA #31 reconstitution.

Sincerely,

Ameya Pawar
Alderman, 47th Ward