



WHITE CENTER

White Center Community Development Association

Focus Communities RFQ

King County Food and Fitness Initiative

White Center
Community
Development
Association

CONTACT INFORMATION

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APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. *History of Food and Fitness Efforts. Describe any current or prior partnerships to promote access to healthy food and safe places for physical activity in your community. For these activities, identify partners and describe how they were or are involved.*

Over the last 4 years, the CDA has played an integral role in listening to the community and pursuing partnerships and projects to reach our shared vision of a vibrant, high quality of life community. By expanding our definition of community development, the CDA has paid attention to such issues as the need for healthy choices in a well-designed neighborhood to support our multi-cultural and diverse community. Therefore, the White Center-Boulevard Park (WC-BP) neighborhood has had a history of food and fitness efforts over the last few years.

- In 2003, the CDA was a runner up applicant to the Robert Wood Johnson **Active Living By Design** initiative to create safe passageways, increase pedestrian safety, enliven open space/parks, and support local produce in WC-BP. This was the start of our interest in food and fitness related initiatives.
- The CDA, through the use of dedicated volunteers, started the first White Center **Farmers Market**, every Saturday during the summer season in both 2003 and 2004. Unfortunately, a deficit in funding and a need to restructure the Market forced us to close the Market in 2004.
- The CDA was the host site for **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** at the Pike Place Market in White Center. For several years, White Center

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residents could pick up their weekly produce at our office. This ended in 2006 when the CSA restructure occurred and no replacement program was offered.

- The CDA and King County Sheriffs Department lobbied and won support for **new sidewalks** in downtown White Center on 16th Avenue SW, installed in 2005 with King County Council member Dow Constantine's support. As part of this effort, the CDA worked with local youth and artists to install public art into the sidewalks for all to enjoy.
- The CDA, along with the Weed and Seed/public safety group, has supported local **"Friends of" Parks groups to support local clean up**, habitat restoration and volunteerism- particularly at N. Shorewood Park, Hicks Lake and the White Center Pond. This continues today, and has occurred annually, in our Spring Clean Day the last 3 years.
- Starting with a planning session in 2005, and continuing today, the CDA has been the community representative with King County in launching the **98th street pedestrian corridor project**- intended to link the new Greenbridge housing project with the shops and services of downtown White Center. The path traverses the local White Center Pond, envisions a safer bridge crossing with a lighted pathway and public art, a small gathering place as the base of the Pond and pedestrian safety improvements/signage guiding residents to downtown. The intent is to support a healthy walking trail system and to encourage the viability of the business district. In 2007, funding was secured for the public art component of the project with 4Culture and comprehensive King County plans called for increased density along 98th street to support increased housing opportunity. In 2008 we look forward to the installation of the public art, ADA accessible ramp and bridge crossing the Pond.
- In 2006, as the fiscal agent of the White Center Arts Alliance, the CDA supported the first ever **White Center Music Nights**, an event encouraging lively music and fun nighttime activity in downtown White Center. Not only was music shared and businesses patronized, but also over 300 attendees walked the streets of downtown White Center in the evening when typically this activity is limited.
- The CDA and the University of Washington Urban Planning School created the 2007 **"We Create White Center"** Neighborhood plan. Over 400 residents were involved in creating the plan, including one section that included in-depth recommendations for **Pedestrian Safety improvements** throughout N. Highline. The CDA intends to work with local jurisdictions to implement the highest priority projects. Additionally, as part of the plan, an **Open Space assessment** e in WC-BP was created to show where open space deficiencies were most prevalent.
- Lastly, in a signature project, in June 2007, the CDA and King County were awarded \$500,000 from Starbucks. Over 400 volunteers worked for 1 week to transform a vacant **White Center Heights Park** into an active, community-designed amenity. The CDA utilized the help from the University of Washington Landscape Architecture School to design the park. One of the exciting elements of the Park is the inclusion of **10 raised community garden beds**, to be maintained by the White Center Food Bank, and

intended to provide free space for local residents to garden and share produce. The park also includes community-desired elements like **open space play areas, wildlife trails, habitat development and natural wildlife preservation.**

- 2. History of Collaboration. Describe the history of collaboration among your community partners and residents, and if possible, as they relate to goals of the King County Food and Fitness Initiative.*

The CDA was formed embracing the values of partnership at the heart of our work. As a relatively small organization, we rely on the coalitions and partnerships that currently exist to involve a broad amount of people and leverage resources. Residents lead our work. In 2002, when the CDA was formed, it was a group of residents that agreed a non-profit vehicle to lead community change efforts in WC-BP was necessary. Not only is our board of directors comprised of local WC-BP residents, we work closely with volunteer committees, supportive resident-led initiatives and other non profit organizations to ensure our work meets the community need best.

This year, the CDA has taken on a new partnership- the management of the Making Connections Initiative of the Annie E Casey Foundation. Combining our interests in family development, neighborhood reutilization and community building, the CDA is basing our future on the partnership of local non-profits, public agencies, private foundations, businesses and residents. In 2008 one of the projects on the agenda of the Early Learning coalitions is a health scan for our youngest residents, age 0-5, to analyze the major issues and resources affecting our children. This analysis would add excellent data to the KCFFI. Additionally, linking KCFFI with the technical assistance and support of the Casey Foundation would be a natural partnership to pursue.

The signature partnership in our Neighborhood Revitalization work is with the Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association (DNDA) in our Strength of Place Initiative (SOPI). Intended to support WC-BP as a mixed-income community, SOPI will build new units of affordable housing that not only serves our workforce population, but also has positive effects on the vibrancy of downtown WC economic development, public safety and community amenities. SOPI encompasses the vision of WC-BP as a healthy, walkable, and diverse community- and sees a window of opportunity now prior to the full effects of gentrification pricing out community-controlled land and development. To date, two parcels of land are currently under site control and will yield close to 100 units of housing near downtown.

Should the Delridge community in Seattle and the WC-BP community in King County be selected as KCFFI sites, the synergy and opportunity to partner, across jurisdictions, would be exceptional and will build off of momentum already created with SOPI.

- 3. History of Community Engagement. Describe how diverse community members have been actively engaged in past projects, including how they were invited and encouraged to participate, and how they have been involved in decision-making. How have you engaged youth? Given this experience, how would you ensure adequate involvement of community members including youth in KCFFI.*

As mentioned above, the CDA, as a grassroots community based organization, relies upon our diverse community members to support our community-change initiatives. Through projects like the Neighborhood Plan, Starbucks Park, Farmers Market, cultural festivals like Cambodian New Year and Polynesian Day, and the planning of the St. James Cultural Center- the CDA values and are shaped by volunteers who care about our community. We actively maintain volunteer committees that create our annual work plan every year: Affordable Housing/SOPI, Public Safety, WC Arts Alliance, Work & Earnings, Asset Building, Early Learning, and many others. We also work closely with neighborhood groups like the WC Chamber of Commerce and the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council.

In 2008, the CDA created a “Community Building” department intended to dive deeper into resident engagement/leadership initiatives projects built around volunteerism, social networks and membership as a way to support our work into the future. This includes the hiring of a 1.0 FTE Community Organizer.

Through the Making Connections Initiative, we have unique partnership with the Trusted Advocates, multi-cultural leaders in the many diverse ethnic groups of WC-BP committed to improving lives for families and placing resident voice at the decision making table as part of a “new normal” way of doing business.

Lastly, our partnership with youth is most seen in our work with local community groups: the Youth Media Institute, The Service Board, New Start and KC Parks youth programs. In each instance, the CDA works closely with the youth volunteers to design community enhancement projects that build skills amongst youth and create long lasting improvements in the neighborhood. For example, the CDA coordinates Service Board volunteer days each season for the 10-15 WC youth/residents. With the Parks youth, the CDA supported creative murals to be installed at nearby parks. And with Youth Media Institute, different media pieces (videos, photoslides and exhibits) depicting the viewpoint of youth growing up in White Center were created and shown at various community events.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to present this RFQ for the KCFFI. We share the vision of creating vibrant communities that support access to locally grown, healthy, affordable food and safe places for physical activity and play- for everyone. We appreciate the recognition of the need in WC-BP and hope you see the value in the assets our community has worked so hard to develop over the years. We'd be thrilled to a part of this unique initiative.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Aileen Balahadia at 206-694-1082 or aileen@wccda.org. Thanks once again.

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Overview

The Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association (DNDA) is enthusiastic about the aims of the King County Food and Fitness Initiative. DNDA's mission is to engage businesses, individuals and institutions in creating and maintaining a thriving Delridge Neighborhood. For eleven years, the organization has served as focal point and facilitator for partnerships to improve the health of Delridge and the broader West Seattle community.

In 2007, DNDA completed the [Three Projects One Community Campaign](#). This capital campaign was a comprehensive approach to significantly impact the West Seattle community. It brought together 20 nonprofit organizations with a common goal: to help families and youth address emergency needs, achieve stability and find their unique voice. Together, it is impacting the lives of more than 25,000 people each year. The largest fundraising effort ever in West Seattle, this campaign will raised \$7.3 million for new community facilities to meet crucial community needs – food, culture & fitness, and housing. Today, thousands of community residents have access to food and other resources through a brand new West Seattle Food Bank and Community Resource Center and participate in dance, theater, and other performing arts at the Youngstown Cultural Arts Center. The King County Food and Fitness Initiative presents a key opportunity at this point in time when DNDA seeks it next large-scale community endeavor.

1. History of Food and Fitness Efforts.

Fitness: Delridge is located in the east side of the distinct peninsula that is West Seattle. The neighborhood and peninsula are blessed with some of the city's and Puget Sound's most remarkable natural features, including the West Duwamish Greenbelt the city's largest forested area at 181 acres, and miles of shoreline. DNDA has worked with a number of partners to enhance and expand the network of trails connecting the community and to increase use of those trails by community members.

[Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail](#) is a community-based effort to plan and build a four-mile continuous trail from Yancy Street in the north to Roxhill Park in the south. This trail offers opportunities for recreation, environmental education, and transportation alternatives, and is creating tremendous community pride. A Steering Committee made up of Delridge neighbors received a City of Seattle grant in 2001 to create the Legacy Trail master plan, and to integrate already existing and planned sections of trail into the plan. Significant portions of the trail

including p-patch gardens, a sensory garden, outdoor classrooms, bridges and creek access have been built with tons of volunteer effort!

[Dells and Ridges](#) is a DNDA-sponsored project to survey and map all of West Seattle's trails and walking routes in order to increase community awareness and use of the network and to establish community priorities for improvements in trail connections. Over the past two years, community volunteers have gathered the data to produce a map which will be printed and distributed in 2008.

Other Fitness Partnerships: A number of DNDA's partners are working on related endeavors that will fit well with the Food and Fitness Initiative. [The Austin Foundation](#) has led 2-week fitness programs for young residents of DNDA's properties through our Youth Development Program. [The Nature Consortium](#) is working with [Seattle Parks and Recreation](#) on the restoration of the [West Duwamish Greenbelt](#); this is a [Green Seattle Partnership](#) project, in partnership with [Earthcorps](#). [Feet First](#) is working in partnership with schools and crossing guards and the [West Seattle Blog](#) to identify safe walking routes in West Seattle. The [West Seattle Chamber of Commerce](#) is working with local businesses to enhance infrastructure for local urban ecotourism businesses. The [West Seattle YMCA](#) and the [Fauntleroy YMCA](#) are conducting active outreach to engage in community partnerships.

Food: DNDA has been partnering for years to help establish community-led vehicles for access to healthy, fresh, locally-grown food.

High Point CSA: DNDA worked in partnership with the [Seattle Housing Authority](#) and an ethnically diverse set of residents at High Point to develop a community garden to be operated as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Garden operation continued through the Hope VI redevelopment of the [High Point](#) housing community.

West Seattle Food Bank: More recently, DNDA partnered with the West Seattle Food Bank to acquire land, raise funds, and steer the construction of the new [West Seattle Food Bank and Community Resource Center](#). This was one aspect of the [Three Projects One Community Campaign](#).

Other food partnerships: [Solid Ground's Operation Frontline](#) has led several classroom series for residents of DNDA properties about developing healthy local diets. Neighbors operate four P-Patch Gardens ([Delridge](#), [Marra Farm](#), [Longfellow Creek](#), and [Lincoln Park](#)) in addition and three Seattle Housing Authority site gardens in addition to the High Point Community Garden. The Pigeon Point Neighborhood Council organizes an annual Community Fruit Tree Harvest. The [West Seattle Farmer's Market](#) is one of only two markets in Seattle open year-round. Finally, neighbors and developers in Delridge and High Point have been working for years to identify an appropriate site and business partner to make a fresh grocery available to residents of the southern portion of West Seattle.

2. History of Collaboration

DNDA's history of and approach to collaboration can be illustrated by three initiatives: The Three Projects One Community Campaign, the Youngstown Cultural Arts Center, and the Strength of Place Initiative.

Three Projects One Community Campaign: the campaign brought together [20 committed nonprofit partner organizations](#) with a common goal: to help low-income families address emergency needs, achieve stability and find their unique voice. Together through the campaign, these organizations, we improve the lives of 25,000 people each year. DNDA's leadership of this three-year, 30-million dollar campaign exceeded all expectations of the fundraising potential in the community of West Seattle. Further, it broke down a generations-old barrier separating two halves of West Seattle – east and west of 35th Ave SW, haves and have-nots.

The Youngstown Cultural Arts Center: The Campaign resulted in the 2005 grand opening of the Youngstown Cultural Arts Center. In addition to maintaining a theater, movement studio, recording studio, media lab, and shop for use by community members, Youngstown is home to a dynamic collection of non-profit organizations that share a commitment to the empowerment of young people through arts and education.

- [The Nature Consortium](#) is a grassroots, community-based organization whose mission is to teach environmental lessons through the creative arts and hands-on conservation projects.
- [Arts Corps](#) is a non-profit arts education program in Seattle and King County that recruits and places experienced Teaching Artists in a variety of after-school programs for young people in grades K-12.
- [The Southwest Interagency Academy](#) is an alternative school program of the Seattle Public Schools serving middle and high school students. The school's philosophy is that all students can learn and be successful, and its curriculum is relevant and purposeful.
- [Twelfth Night Productions](#) is a non-profit arts organization dedicated to providing performing arts experiences to members of the community. This collaborative effort brings together artists and professional educators to enhance and support the community through the power of the arts.
- [The Power of Hope](#) unleashes the positive potential of youth through arts-centered intergenerational and multicultural learning programs that value self-awareness, leadership, community and social change.
- [The Service Board](#) instills in high school-age youth a deep sense of life purpose based on an ethic of public service and a conviction in their abilities to shape the future.
- [Youth Media Institute](#) strives to empower youth to become powerful leaders and artists by using media technologies to transform images about their communities, cultures, and themselves.

Youngstown also engages a broad range of Program Partners on an ongoing basis to enhance our offerings: [Theatre Puget Sound](#), [Southwest Youth and Family Services](#), [The Cambodian Cultural Museum & Killing Fields Memorial](#), [Phffft! Dance Theater Company](#), [Youth Speaks](#), [Seattle Symphony's ACCESS Project](#), [KBCS](#), [Eleventh Hour Productions](#), and [Red Llama](#). Although these organizations entered Youngstown as tenants and conduct their business independently, DNDA's open approach is fostering a much more dynamic collaboration and promulgating a wide range of collaborative efforts at Youngstown, including a new effort to develop a youth-run record label – All Access Records – and joint investment in training and facilitated discussion around issues such as race and cultural diversity.

Strength of Place Initiative: DNDA's newest initiative is founded on a partnership with the White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA). Together, the organizations are

leading the Strength of Place Initiative (SOPI). Intended to support White Center as a mixed-income community, SOPI will build new units of affordable housing that not only serves our workforce population, but also has positive effects on the vibrancy of economic development, public safety and community amenities. SOPI embraces the vision of White Center as a healthy, walkable, and diverse community- and sees a window of opportunity now prior to the full effects of gentrification pricing out community-controlled land and development. The ambitious vision of SOPI will only be possible through an unprecedented set of community partnerships to build a shared vision and to carry it out together. The DNDA?WCCDA partnership presents a unique opportunity for the KCCFI to have an enormous impact in neighboring communities in the City of Seattle and in south King County.

All of DNDA's partnership work has depended on excellent relations with public entities, corporate sponsors, and foundation support.

3. History of Community Engagement

DNDA was born out of community engagement. In 1990's the city of Seattle supported community involvement in the development of the [Delridge Neighborhood Plan](#) (which was adopted in 1999). Hundreds of neighbors participated in a series of dialogues that informed the plan. The leadership of grassroots community leaders like Vivian McLean, Paul Fischburg, Larry Kingen, and Allen Stowers not only ensured a dynamic engagement in the planning process, but prompted discussions about the development of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to carry out the plan. Those discussions led to the founding of DNDA.

When the founding board held its first meeting at the new Delridge Community Center, its members looked at the boarded up school across the street – the very symbol of a blighted community – and envisioned its rebirth. The eventual Youngstown Cultural Arts Center resulted from a series of community meetings and even a neighborhood vote at the end, to decide among three competing operating models.

DNDA continues to engage with and seek direction from its community, through doorknocking neighbors prior to moving forward with projects, to sponsoring an annual Delridge Day and Housing Fair, to assuming the leadership of West Seattle's highly acclaimed Gathering of Neighbors, which attracts dozens of local businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Young people not only participate in our activities, but exercise leadership. The Youngstown Programming Committee is a group of a dozen young leaders from a wide range of backgrounds that meets weekly to identify new directions for the program at the Cultural Arts Center. Young residents of our buildings meet regularly, organize work parties to restore habitat, and raise funds to support community activities they decide on. All Access Records will be a youth-led record label housed at Youngstown.

Conclusion

If Delridge/West Seattle is chosen as a target community for the King County Food and Fitness Initiative, the Initiative can count on a partner that will successfully build on past efforts to overcome barriers to food and fitness, and that will do so with a dynamic and energetic set of partners and deep engagement of community members. Thank you for your consideration.