

**Applicant (GMS): City of Fargo, ND, Fargo, ND.**

**Project: The Fargo Project**

**Attachment 2: Details of the Project Narrative**

**a. Budget.** This project is requesting \$100,000. Combined with the 1:1 match, the total project is \$260,000. The match is derived from Fargo City General Funds and key staff time from the City Planning and Engineering departments, Executive Director of River Keepers, and Executive Director of Plains Art Museum.

USES Expenses Source

Artist Expenses & Fees: \$55,000 NEA, Local Arts Partners (LAP)

Planning /Tools and Documentation: \$20,000 City & CDBG (HUD)

Planning/Logistics: \$30,000 City & LAP

Pilot – Neighborhood Engagement: \$40,000 LAP & NEA

Project Pilot - Art Installation: \$75,000 City & LAP

Arts Organization Participation: \$40,000 City, NEA & LAP

Total :\$260,000

SOURCES Income Organizations

NEA Our Town Grant: \$100,000

City of Fargo \$25,000: Arts fund, non Fed match

City of Fargo – non Fed match: \$80,000 Engineering & Planning staff

Cultural organizations: In-kind staff time \$30,000 Plains Art, River Keepers

City of Fargo: \$25,000 CDBG, Federal funds

Total: \$260,000

**b. Major project activities.** The Fargo Project will engage our community in an innovative citywide project. The vision is to create a process that connects interstitial spaces, people, public art and infrastructure in a sustainable and creative way. This process will then be tested through the implementation of a pilot project. The process is an exploration that will develop strategies, methods and creative resources for an ongoing public art program to work with other similar public spaces within the city.

This project targets 20 drainage basins that were constructed in 2000 to protect property and

infrastructure from catastrophic rainfall events, in response to disastrous flooding. Unfortunately, there was no consideration given to the aesthetic and functional impacts to neighborhoods in the selection and construction of these basins. The resulting barren basins cut off neighborhoods and disrupt socializing. Many of the detention basins are located in neighborhoods that serve immigrant refugee populations and low to moderate income families.

The Fargo Project provides an opportunity to respond creatively to the existing setting incorporating art based placemaking strategies. With water as the vehicle for connecting people to spaces, the entire process is intended to activate collective creative agency. With this creative capacity, a selected neighborhood will design and implement their project to transform a stormwater detention area into a neighborhood commons through a participatory public art process. The commons might be shaped for festivals, sculpted gardens, amphitheatre, urban agriculture, or as the community decides, while also enhancing its function as stormwater infrastructure. The process is as much a part of the art and as much as part of the goal as the transformed space.

The afterlife of this project will extend its impact as the consortium members take the process developed throughout the pilot to bring public art participation into each of the affected neighborhoods and to the entire city. The project can serve as a model for other communities by developing a procedural template for incorporating public art with public infrastructure projects and good neighborhood design. The process connects artists, infrastructure needs, social and cultural needs.

The Fargo Project is divided into four phases: Analysis, Engagement, Design, and Implementation. Analysis: This is a comparative analysis of neighborhood demographics, social needs and watershed infrastructure to explore how these overlap. 20 neighborhood areas will be analyzed and short listed to three neighborhoods based on specified criteria. Engagement: The project team will hold a charrette with each of the three neighborhoods to appraise the potential visions and capacity for participating in a sustained community process, from conceptualization to implementation, use and care. The winning neighborhood will be selected. Design: The collaborative design process between neighborhood participants and artist partners will focus on the uses of the neighborhood detention basin, its design, and its associated programming. Implementation: This includes the installation of the design through participatory collaborative process and construction by the City.

**c. Outcome(s) and Measurements.** The intended outcomes of the Analysis and Engagement phases are the development of the process, the methodology, and creation of a template to integrate public involvement, public art, and infrastructure decision making. Culturally sensitive to how intimidating impersonal institutional settings can be to new Americans, this project engages these citizens within their own residential neighborhoods.

The Design and Implementation Phases of the Fargo Project create a pilot project which is intended to be the first of several projects transforming neighborhood detention areas into neighborhood commons, to revitalize our communities aesthetically and socially, in order to develop positive relationships between citizens and with the watersheds they live in. A step by step guide will be published for continuation of the project in the City of Fargo and for use by other communities.

Livability Measure 1) Number of public participants will be measured. Social engagement will be quantified by surveying the participants to analyze the process and to ensure that the final outcome meets the goals established. Livability Measure 2) Inventory of neighborhood use will be tracked--both amount and kinds of uses. Stormwater volume will be measured through the comparison of existing infrastructure volumes and post project installation. Learning Measure 3) Educational knowledge regarding healthy water systems and watershed information will be measured through survey of perception and knowledge prior, during and post project.

**d. Schedule/Timeline:** Quarter 1/June 2011 - Analysis of neighborhoods to include visual analysis, demographics, water needs, and watersheds. Quarter 2/October 2011 - Selection of pilot project site based on select criteria with conceptual design development of pilot project. Quarter 3/January 2012 - Final Design documents for art/project installation, including final budget and implementation schedule. Quarter 4/March 2012 - Consortium organizations lead and implement the pilot project, analysis, measurement and final outcomes.

**e. Key Partners:** 1) Ecological Artist Jackie Brookner, New York. Committed to project. Jackie Brookner is an invited artist with whom the City is already partnering. It is Jackie's vision and community consultations that have led the City to the development of this project. Jackie will provide expertise and collaborate through all phases of this project. 2) City of Fargo Planning Department, Engineering Department, and City Administration. Committed to

project. Key staff include a landscape architect, community planner, and engineering specialist to co-lead this project and provide grant reporting responsibilities. The organization will dedicate staff time and technical expertise. 3) River Keepers and local non-profits arts organization (consortium). Committed to project. River Keepers provides expertise and leadership connecting people to the Red River with festivals and cultural learning activities, most recently implementing a past grant award from the American Association of Museums. Other collaborating organizations include The Arts Partnership (non-profit membership organization of area artists), area art education institutions (area universities and colleges) and the Plains Art Museum. Each of the key partners will provide representation to The Fargo Project Advisory Committee. This Advisory Committee will be created to provide feedback, support, connection to community resources, and advocacy for the project and life beyond the project year.

**f. The target community.** The target communities are three specific low to moderate income neighborhoods as identified in the City of Fargo's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development. The project will target the community at-large with the implementation phase. Identified populations include school age, college age, and all adult age groups. The neighborhoods house high populations of new Americans and a broad diversity of cultural and ethnic populations.

**g. NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act requirements:** The key partner organizations have a long history of working successfully with Federal grants that require NEPA and Historic Preservation Review. (Please refer to Attachment 10.)

**h. Plans for promoting, publicizing, and/or disseminating the proposed project.** Promotion will occur through newsletters, an internet blog, brochures, door-to-door outreach and the news media. The project team will also incorporate documentation through the area film schools which are housed within the local universities. It is intended to document this project from start to finish, through multiple media forms in order to provide a procedural template for other communities.

**i. Plans for documenting, evaluating, and disseminating project results.** Plan documentation, evaluation and dissemination of results will occur at all phases, along with the deliverable

activities identified in Section B. Weekly reports and monthly evaluations will be created with attention to detail and consistency, and will serve to highlight sustainable strategies that can be used in future projects.

**j.** This application is not part of a continuing project.

**k.** This organization did not receive a Mayors' Institute on City Design 25th Anniversary Initiative grant.