



February 7, 2019

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www.civicedesigncenter.org

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Talia Lomax-O'dneal
Metro Nashville Director of Finance
Metropolitan Courthouse
Nashville, TN 37201

Dear Ms. Lomax-O'dneal

I am writing to request continuation of financial support of the Nashville Civic Design Center (NCDC) from the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County for the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget.

NCDC's mission is to elevate the quality of Nashville's built environment and promote public participation in the creation of a more beautiful and functional city for all. NCDC has been a proactive and passionate partner with Metro Government since our founding in 2000. We are excited to continue to expand this partnership to improve quality of life for all Nashvillians.

As requested, answers to the following questions are provide below.

What services does your organization provide to the residents of Davidson County?

NCDC offers a wide variety of programming and projects that support fulfilling its mission. Central to this work is the promotion of the Ten Principles of *The Plan of Nashville* and *Shaping the Healthy Community: The Nashville Plan*, both are community-based vision plans conducted by NCDC that included intensive citizen engagement and participation, research and writing, and design and policy recommendations to positively impact our city.

Other essential services provided by NCDC include:

- Educating the public about civic design through lectures by prominent speakers, presentations on the history and practice of urban design, educational curriculum taught in Metro middle and high schools, and continuing education opportunities for design and development professionals.
- Providing professional staff and highly qualified design fellows to consult on civic and other community development projects.
- Facilitating public dialogue about civic design and its impact in Nashville through various different programming and events offered frequently throughout the year, including our Urban Design Forum, CityThink, Pecha Kucha Night, Park(ing) Day, Young Urbanists and Design Your Neighborhood youth education program.
- Researching and publishing reports on various civic design issues that play a prominent role in design and policy decisions in Nashville.
- Coordinating community-based infrastructure projects with various different Metro Departments to help incorporate public participation, citizen engagement and high-quality design solutions for new and existing projects.
- Fostering partnerships, collaboration, and innovation amongst a wide array of nonprofits, neighborhood groups, professional organizations, educational institutions, private businesses and departments of government, to produce better quality outcomes for all.



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Additionally, NCDC prepares and presents video and information of its programming to be made available to all Nashville/Davidson citizens.

How many residents are you currently serving and how do they benefit?

The mission of NCDC indirectly impacts all of the residents of Davidson County – through our focus on improving the quality of life for all Nashvillians.

NCDC estimates that our work has a direct impact with over 15,000 individuals during our current fiscal year. This includes attendees and participants of all our programs, events, public meetings, forums and educational trainings. In addition, NCDC programming is featured on Metro Channel 3 for several of our signature events, allowing us an even wider audience than those who are were able to attend in person. This past year NCDC’s Design Your Neighborhood youth educational initiative was featured on NECAT, providing further coverage of this critical partnership and impact for youth in Metro Nashville Public Schools.

How much funding are you requesting from Metro?

NCDC is requesting continued support of \$125,000.00, which represents approximate 10% of our FY2019 annual budget. NCDC has greatly expanded the work that it does directly with Metro Nashville in the past several years, primarily through stronger partnerships with Metro Nashville Public Schools, Planning, Public Works, Transportation, and Parks Departments. In addition, we also have working relationships with Metro Public Health, Arts, Historic, Fairgrounds, Farmers’ Market and the Mayor’s Office. This request is consistent with the direct appropriations that NCDC has received from Metro over the past four years. We are requesting continued funding to help support our ever-increasing services across Metro Nashville – to continue to have a direct impact with the residents of Davidson County.

If funding is awarded, how many additional residents will be served and how will they benefit?

Innovation and creativity are at the core of our work. Over the past year two years, NCDC has expanded its role in creating “quick wins” for public space through “tactical urbanism” efforts in Nashville. NCDC accomplishes much of this work through its interaction with numerous neighborhood associations in the realization of small-scale projects that have a quick and positive impact for communities. We have also now have close partnerships with Metro Planning, Public Works and Transportation to ensure that these efforts are coordinated and whenever possible, lead to long-term changes.

Our goal, through leveraging with foundation grants and other sources of funding, is to continue to expand this tactical urbanism work to a larger number of neighborhoods, engaging directly with even more residents. Our goal over the coming year is to work in five additional neighborhoods, representing an additional 5,000 citizens.

In addition to serving more residents, are there other community benefits Metro funding would help you achieve?

For FY20, NCDC anticipates the release of a long-awaited report on the topic of affordable housing to help educate the residents of Davidson County of the increasing need for a diversity of housing types. We plan to start work on a new study focused on design and policy recommendations for the creation of Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADU). Additional continuing work will be accomplished in communities centered along Jefferson Street in North Nashville, Gallatin Pike in Madison, and in the Donelson community. We also continue to partner with the University of Tennessee College of Architecture and Design to bring the talent and expertise of design students to address various different subjects and sites that are impactful for Davidson County and residents.



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How would you use this funding to help create a more equitable Nashville, where all residents have an opportunity to participate in the city's success?

2020 will mark the 20th anniversary of the creation of the Nashville Civic Design Center, and a major goal in the upcoming year is to continue to diversify the neighborhoods and communities in which we work across Davidson County.

For the 2018-2019 school year, NCDC’s Design Your Neighborhood (DYN) initiative expanded to accommodate STEAM curriculum in 7th and 8th grade Metro Nashville Public Schools – to develop and implement cross-curricular, design-oriented projects that fit state standards. The projects have students problem solve transportation and affordable housing issues in their school’s neighborhood. This school year, DYN is reaching approximately 2,000 students and 30 teachers in 18 MNPS Middle Schools. NCDC is supporting teachers through training and providing volunteers from the community to support student projects and give career talks. We have recruited 60 volunteers from careers related to community development and civic leadership. Giving students the opportunity to engage with professionals about real world issues is empowering them to play an important role in positively shaping our city.

To measure the impact of the curriculum on students, we are partnering with a research team at Vanderbilt University who are measuring the impact that a design-based educational curriculum has on improving educational attainment, civic engagement, and well-being for youth participants.

We look forward to another productive and exciting year ahead in making Nashville an even better place!

Sincerely,

Gary Gaston
Chief Executive Officer

cc., Dennise Meyers, Vaughn Wilson