



Livable Communities Initiative

2026 Technical Assistance Application

Round 3

Region 1 Planning Council (R1) is accepting applications for the **Livable Communities Initiative's (LCI) Technical Assistance Program**. This program provides subarea support for qualifying neighborhoods within the Rockford Region to help advance livability, equity, and long-term sustainability.

Application Deadline:

Completed application packets must be submitted electronically by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, September 8, 2026 to:

Tim Verbeke | tverbeke@r1planning.org

Application Submission Requirements:

Please submit the following materials as a complete packet:

1. **Completed LCI Application Form**
2. **Letter of Commitment** from the chief elected official, pledging municipal staff time and logistical support for the planning process
3. **Letters of Support** from relevant stakeholders (e.g., local agencies, elected officials, or community-based organizations)

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include neighborhood associations or community-based groups within a "middle" neighborhood working in collaboration with their local municipality and elected leadership.

Applicant Information

Applicant Name: _____

Primary Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Neighborhood: _____

Municipal Representative:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Technical Assistance Details

This application is for **technical assistance** through the Livable Communities Initiative (LCI), led by R1. Selected applicants will work closely with R1 to develop a **neighborhood plan** that identifies local needs and recommends strategies and projects to improve livability, equity, and sustainability.

This is *not* an implementation funding award. Instead, the purpose of this process is to provide your neighborhood with professional planning support that results in a clear, actionable plan. If awarded, your organization will receive assistance from R1 in conducting community engagement, analyzing challenges, and identifying opportunities within your study area.

The completed neighborhood plan can serve as a foundation for future implementation. R1 will ensure the plan aligns with municipal priorities, available funding opportunities, and advocate for project support from the city or other partners. This collaboration helps ensure that the neighborhood's needs are understood, documented, and positioned for action.

LCI is guided by six **Livability Framework Principles**, developed through a federal partnership among the U.S. Department of Housing and Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These principles aim to promote more livable, sustainable, and equitable communities by aligning housing, transportation, and environmental policies.

[HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities – Six Livability Principles:](#)

1. Provide more transportation choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness.
4. Support existing communities.
5. Coordinate and leverage investment.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

Technical Assistance Narrative

Using the guiding principles above, please describe what your neighborhood or organization needs assistance with through this technical assistance opportunity. This may include issues such as infrastructure challenges, transportation barriers, etc. Be as specific as possible, and explain how this assistance could strengthen the community and support future implementation efforts in collaboration with the municipality and R1.

Priority Goals

Please indicate up to **four** priority goals you would like this neighborhood plan to address. These selections will help guide the project scope and ensure alignment with community needs.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Increase access to public transit | ☐ Encourage transit-oriented development |
| ☐ Improve walkability and bikeability | ☐ Increase resilience to climate impacts and transportation disruptions |
| ☐ Attract new investment and development | ☐ Create a more age-friendly community |
| ☐ Expand and diversify housing choices | ☐ Promote inclusive and equitable growth |
| ☐ Preserve and enhance existing neighborhood character | ☐ Reduce risk and impact of flooding |

LCI Boundary Details

LCI currently recognizes 18 eligible “middle” neighborhoods within the Rockford Region. These boundaries were identified on a census tract level, so the “LCI Boundary” refers to the identified census tract through the R1 internal data analysis and methodology for the selection process for eligible priority areas.

Please note: If your organization is located within a census tract that is labeled as “eligible”, then you are eligible to apply for this round of technical assistance.

To view the interactive map to check for your eligibility, visit via the QR code or link:

<https://bit.ly/lci-eligibility-map>



Please mark which eligible LCI boundary your organization is located within.

The following is a list of the eligible LCI areas, in alphabetical order:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Downtown | ☐ Northwest |
| ☐ Edgewater | ☐ Northwest Belvidere |
| ☐ Ellis Heights East | ☐ Prairie Hills |
| ☐ Ethnic Village | ☐ Ridge Avenue |
| ☐ Harlem Hills | ☐ Rolling Green East |
| ☐ New Towne | ☐ Rolling Green West |
| ☐ North End Square | ☐ Signal Hill |
| ☐ North Park West | ☐ Southwest Belvidere |
| ☐ North Towne | ☐ Twin Sisters |

Neighborhood Planning Priorities

Please **rank the following priorities** for your neighborhood from **1 (highest priority) to 5 (lowest priority)**.

☐ **Complete Streets** (Streets designed for safe use by everyone, including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and public transport users.)

☐ **Economic Analysis** (Utilizing one of following analysis: economic, equity impact, industry, and forecasting services—across all modes of transportation.)

☐ **Land Use Planning** (the basis for zoning laws that restrict certain developments to protect the environment)

☐ **Redevelopment Planning** (Redevelopment includes all development projects that build new structures and land uses on a previously developed site)

☐ **Road Reconfiguration** (Roadway reconfiguration can improve safety, calm traffic, provide better mobility and access for all road users, and enhance overall quality of life.)

☐ **Other** (please specify):

Community Engagement & Outreach Planning

The success of your project will depend on inclusive, accessible, and well-organized community outreach efforts. R1 strongly encourages neighborhood-led engagement that brings together residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to help shape the future of their communities. Please note that there will most likely be **four community workshops scheduled throughout 2027** as part of the Technical Assistance Program, and it is important to plan outreach strategies that align with this timeline to ensure broad participation.

Please provide responses to the following questions:

Planning & Partnerships

Describe **potential locations where community meetings could be held**, such as public gathering spaces (e.g., schools, libraries, churches, community centers) or local businesses willing to host. Additionally, identify **community-based organizations**, neighborhood groups, faith institutions, schools, schools, advocacy groups, or public agencies that could help support, participate in, or co-host these meetings. Please highlight any existing relationships that would strengthen coordination and participation.

Outreach Strategy

Describe how you believe **outreach for the LCI meetings** should be conducted within the target neighborhood or area. **What methods would be most effective** for reaching residents, businesses, and stakeholders (e.g., flyers, social media, direct outreach, local networks, events, etc.)? Your response should help inform an outreach approach that **ensures strong awareness and participation** at each meeting.

Additional Information

Please share any additional information that would support your application. This may include insights on community needs, barriers to participation, or how your proposed engagement approach will help improve neighborhood conditions and support broader local goals.

Applicant Agreements

By submitting this application, your organization agrees to the following, if selected:

- Execute a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** with R1
- Provide a **local contribution** (if applicable)
- Assist with **presentations and community engagement**
 - *Neighborhood applicants will be expected to present to the CAF on October 22nd (3:30 PM - 5:00 PM)*
- Participate in **regular check-in meetings** and **public outreach efforts**
- Complete **timely reviews** of project deliverables
- Collaborate with R1 to support a successful and inclusive planning process

☐ I agree to the responsibilities above.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Municipal Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____