



# Livable Communities Initiative

## 2025 Technical Assistance Application

### Round 2

Please Note: This is a **SAMPLE application** provided for reference only. All information included is intended solely to serve as a guide for completing your own application. This example is a tool to support applicants in understanding the application process and to illustrate recommended best practices.

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 Monday, August 4, 2025 to:

Tim Verbeke | [tverbeke@r1planning.org](mailto: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

Organization Name: [Keith Creek Neighborhood Association](#)

Primary Contact Name: [Jane Doe](#)

Phone: [\(815\) 555-1212](tel:(815)555-1212) Email: [janedoe@keithcreek.org](mailto:janedoe@keithcreek.org)

Neighborhood: [Keith Creek](#)

#### Municipal Representative Contact (if applicable):

Contact: [Alderman John Doe](#)

Phone: [\(815\) 555-1313](tel:(815)555-1313) Email: [johndoe@rockfordil.gov](mailto:johndoe@rockfordil.gov)

#### 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.

The Keith Creek neighborhood is a close-knit community, but we face several ongoing challenges that we hope to address with technical assistance from R1. Our primary concern is reducing the impacts of frequent flooding, which threatens homes and businesses in the area. We're seeking support in identifying effective strategies to manage flood risks and enhance overall resilience. Additionally, we want to improve pedestrian safety by enhancing crosswalk visibility and installing clearer signage.

There is strong community interest in making the neighborhood more walkable, bike-friendly, and connected, while also becoming more age-friendly. Beautification efforts—such as planting greenery and enhancing our community garden—are also key priorities.

With R1's support, we aim to create a realistic, community-informed neighborhood plan that will guide future improvements and help us collaborate with our local municipality to secure funding and bring these initiatives to life.

### 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.

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

## Study Area Details

The following is a list of the identified middle neighborhoods, or eligible priority area, in alphabetical order:

- Midtown
- North Towne
- Ridge Avenue
- Rollin Green East
- Signal Hill
- South Gate
- Southeast Belvidere

To view a map of the designated areas, visit: [r1planning.org/planning/livable-communities-initiative/](http://r1planning.org/planning/livable-communities-initiative/)

**Is the project located in an area designated by R1 as a Livable Communities Initiative priority area?**

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

### Study Area Boundaries:

Please describe the geographic boundaries of the proposed study area. Use well-known streets, landmarks, jurisdictions, or other identifiable features.

*Example: "Main Street to the north, Wall Street to the south, Broadway Blvd to the east, and 42nd Avenue to the west."*

Note: The boundary proposed here is a starting point. It may be adjusted by R1's LCI team in collaboration with the selected applicant as the project is developed.

The proposed study area outlines the Keith Creek neighborhood.

- **North Boundary:** Charles Street
- **South Boundary:** Woodruff Avenue & Broadway
- **East Boundary:** 20<sup>th</sup> Street
- **West Boundary:** 7th Street

This proposed boundary includes Churchill Park and the Redeemer Lutheran Church, and is situated near facilities and amenities such as the SwedishAmerican Hospital, Schnucks at Rockford Plaza, commercial corridors, multiple residential blocks.

## Neighborhood Planning Priorities

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

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

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

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

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

**5 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):

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## 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 2026** 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:

### Workshop Organization

How would your organization help plan and organize public community workshops? Please describe the approach to organizing these events, including any ideas for formats (e.g., open house, facilitated discussion, listening sessions, mobile, outreach, etc.).

We would organize each workshop with a specific theme to ensure a comprehensive discussion. The first could follow a presentation style, where R1 staff will explain the importance of this opportunity and provide an overview of the project. A discussion can then be facilitated to help guide participants/neighborhood residents share initial ideas. The second could be structured as an open house, where residents could review display boards and participate in one-on-one conversations with R1 staff. The third could be a facilitated discussion session, where participants would be divided into small groups to discuss challenges and opportunities in the neighborhood. The fourth workshop could be a “listening session,” allowing residents to share their thoughts or concerns directly with local officials and experts. Each session could also include interactive elements, such as polls or community mapping exercises, to gather input on key issues.

### Workshop Locations

Identify potential community-accessible locations that could host these workshops (e.g., schools, libraries, churches, community centers, or other public spaces). Please note any existing venue relationships.

We plan to host the workshops at accessible, well-known locations within the neighborhood. The workshops could be held at the *Redeemer Lutheran Church*, which has a large meeting room and adequate parking. This church offers a large neighborhood meeting room with plenty of space for community workshops and engagement. This location is already known amongst neighborhood residents as a familiar meeting spot for re-occurring neighborhood meetings and offers a comfortable, familiar environment for residents to share their thoughts.

### Invited Organizations

List community-based organizations, faith groups, schools, neighborhood groups, advocacy groups, or public agencies that would be included in workshop invitations. Ensure diverse and representative participation is accounted for.

We would invite the following organizations and groups to ensure diverse participation:

- The *Rockford Housing Authority* to provide insights into current affordable housing options, ongoing challenges, and community needs.
- The *Northern Illinois Land Bank* to contribute further housing-related expertise, particularly regarding vacant properties, redevelopment efforts, and neighborhood revitalization.
- Members of the *Redeemer Lutheran Church*, by engaging with the church pastor – to bring forward perspectives from Keith Creek residents who are actively involved in neighborhood organizations and regularly attend community meetings and events.
- Representatives from the *Rockford Park District* to share perspectives on local recreational amenities, green space planning, and how park access intersects with neighborhood health and equity.
- Representatives from *Rockford Public Works* to provide insight into infrastructure needs, ongoing or planned public works projects, and their impact on local neighborhoods.

### Outreach Support from Local Businesses

Identify local businesses, service providers, or public agencies in the neighborhood that may allow flyers, posters, or other outreach materials to be displayed on their premises. Please include business names and locations if known.

Several local businesses have expressed interest in helping promote the workshops by displaying outreach materials. These include:

- *Vincenzo's Pizza* (1513 Charles Street) – A locally-owned pizza restaurant.
- *Culture Shock* (789 Maple Drive) – A locally-owned record store.
- *Charles Street Laundromat* (2125 Charles Street)
- *Katie's Cup* (502 7<sup>th</sup> Street) – A local women-owned coffee shop.

### Additional Information

Please use the space below to share any additional or supporting information for the application. Describe how the proposed plan will improve neighborhood conditions, address specific community needs, or support broader municipal goals.

We believe that technical assistance from R1 through LCI will help bring long-term, positive change to the Keith Creek neighborhood by providing a clear roadmap for future investment and improvement. The planning process will allow us to engage residents meaningfully, identify shared priorities, and develop actionable recommendations that reflect local needs – such as safer pedestrian infrastructure, community gathering space, public transit infrastructure, etc. A well-developed neighborhood plan will also position us to work with the City of Rockford and other partners to pursue funding and advance implementation in a coordinated and strategic way.

### 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 23<sup>rd</sup> (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: [\[SIGN\]](#) Date: *August 1, 2025*

Printed Name: [Jane Doe](#)

Municipal Representative Signature: [\[SIGN\]](#) Date: *August 1, 2025*

Printed Name: [Alderman John Doe](#)