



Request for Proposal

DEVELOPMENT OF CIRCULAR CLEVELAND ROADMAP

Issued By:

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

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BACKGROUND

A once vibrant and thriving Great Lakes city – Cleveland, Ohio – is home to world class cultural, educational¹ and healthcare institutions, as well as significant social infrastructure. Yet sadly, Cleveland ranks top in poverty and food insecurity² and is saddled with lead-tainted soils and structures. It ranks 9th in air pollution³. As with other rust belt cities, all of these factors disproportionately affect communities of color and low-income people. The current devastating health impacts of COVID-19 have exacerbated the fragility of Cleveland’s systems, worsening outcomes for Cleveland’s most challenged.

Within that context, some good work has been occurring. In 2005, the City of Cleveland established the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability⁴ and in 2009, began hosting annual Sustainability Summits to engage a wide range of stakeholders to design and advance a variety of citywide sustainability initiatives. In 2013, Cleveland developed a Climate Action Plan (the “Plan”). The Plan⁵ prioritizes energy efficiency and green building, clean energy, sustainable transportation, access to clean water vibrant spaces, more food and less waste. The Plan has several cross-cutting priorities: (1) social and racial equity, (2) good jobs, green jobs, (3) resilience to the impacts of climate change, and (4) business leadership. But it is time to dive deeper into transformative change.

In October 2020, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) was awarded a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Global Ideas (RWJF) for U.S. Solutions grant to help create “Circular Cleveland”⁶, an initiative that will foster resilience in the recycling and waste management sector, bolster local economies, create green jobs for those most in need, and reduce climate pollution by localizing the circular economy. This project draws on inspiration from international circular cities such as Toronto and London.

Project Team

This project will be directed by a team comprising of members from the Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, City of Cleveland and Neighborhood Connections. Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is a place-based community development intermediary whose vision to create thriving communities of choice. CNP has partnered with the Office of Sustainability over the last several to advance multiple sustainability and climate resiliency projects across Cleveland. Neighborhood Connections⁷ is a key

¹ Including programs in STEM through Cleveland State University and Case Western Reserve University and the Bio-mimicry Institute through University of Akron.

² According to Feeding America, Cuyahoga County had the highest number of food insecure residents in the state of Ohio in 2017 at approximately 233,190 individuals. It was also home to the largest number of food insecure children in the state of Ohio, at 57,610 children.

³ <https://www.clevescene.com/scene-and-heard/archives/2019/04/26/clevelands-air-quality-is-pretty-sooty-new-study-finds>

⁴ Mayor’s Office of Sustainability:

<http://www.city.cleveland.oh.us/CityofCleveland/Home/Government/CityAgencies/OfficeOfSustainability>

⁵ https://www.sustainablecleveland.org/climate_action

⁶ “Circular Cleveland” is the name of the initiative that was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as part of its “Global Ideas for U.S. Solutions: Health, Equity and Climate Change” program funding in 2020. See Attachment 1 for details.

⁷ Neighborhood Connections is a non-profit organization whose mission is to ignite the power of everyday people to create, together, an extraordinary world right where they live. www.neighborupcle.org/grants/

community partner on this project. The team looks to the Ellen McArthur Foundation for guidance and thought partnership.

Project Components

This project will include the following project components:

Circular Cleveland Deliverable	Focus and interaction group	Expected long-term outcome	Phase 1	Phase 2
Circular Cleveland Roadmap (including implementation guide)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core team Steering Committee Resident input through 10 workshops 	Circular and distributive policies and programs that increase health and income generation such as reuse, repair, manufacturing and materials innovation	X	
Community small grants through Neighborhood Connections (not exceeding \$5K each)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Circular Cleveland Ambassadors 	10-15 small grants that promote grassroots circular economy projects	X	X
Composting pilot at the Westside Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Cleveland Market Vendors 	Develop a case for additional composting infrastructure to increase equitable access across city	X	X
Economic Development Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small and Medium Enterprises Circular Cleveland Ambassadors 	Provide loans and grants to incubate circular economy entrepreneurship.		X
Expanded education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleveland Neighborhood Progress Circular Cleveland Ambassadors 	Communication strategies to transition to a circular economy	X	X

Circular Cleveland will be structured around two overarching phases- both centered on community engagement and implementation actions that connect assets and opportunities to match resident quality of life priorities. Each phase will last 12-18 months.



THE OPPORTUNITY

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) is seeking proposals from qualified firms/agencies to develop a detailed and implementable circular economy roadmap for Cleveland, Ohio. This roadmap will provide creative strategies and a practical implementation plan based on Systems/Design Thinking for Cleveland's just and equitable transition from a linear 'take, make, waste' model to a newer and bolder regenerative circular economy approach. Cleveland aspires to make a transition to become a circular city: one to offer a new economic model where production and consumption are in balance; one that fosters manufacturing and distributive innovation to support new local wealth generation opportunities; an inclusive city where health and well-being are prioritized while strengthening Cleveland's sustainability and climate resilience goals.

Over its years on a sustainability journey, Cleveland has been home to several programs that fit the circular model. Some examples include Upcycle Parts Shop, a small creative reuse hub; Rust Belt Riders, a food-waste composting company; and the establishment of 157 community gardens⁸ that are tended to by residents of Cleveland and located in food insecure communities that can benefit from healthy, living soils. From a systemically broken waste management stream impacted by world-wide recycling struggles to recent investments in innovation and material/industrial manufacturing, several opportunities lie waiting for this transition to a circular economy.

The circular economy initiative will be managed and overseen by various teams and committees:

1. **Core Project Team:** Key partner organizations responsible for the RWJF grant. This team includes staff from the City of Cleveland, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) and Neighborhood Connections. The Core Project Team is responsible for management of all deliverables. CNP is the RWJF grantee. This team meets weekly. Total members: 8
2. **Circular Cleveland Steering Committee:** Stakeholders engaged in or closely associated with circular economy-based work, including representatives from institutions, community partners, business leaders, and others. Members will serve an advisory role on all aspects of this project including the roadmap development, project planning, implementation, and evaluation. The Circular Cleveland Steering Committee will include voices from all stakeholders, including local industry, low-income communities, communities of color, circular economy community partners, and the public sector. This group will also include Circular Cleveland Ambassadors, engaged members of the community who can serve as leaders in various aspects of a transition to a circular economy. Total members: 60-75
3. **Circular Cleveland Working Group:** Following the development of the Circular Cleveland Roadmap, a separate Circular Cleveland Working Group will be established to directly oversee the implementation of the roadmap. The Circular Cleveland Working Group will be smaller than the Steering Committee and will likely comprise select members from the Steering Committee, newly formed interest groups that evolve from the roadmap, and community members, including Circular Cleveland Ambassadors. Membership on the Circular Cleveland Working Group will require completion of an application. The Working Group members will share project

⁸ Latest count of [Ohio State University's Summer Sprout community gardens](#) in 2020

and program designs, as well as other innovative ideas to make Cleveland circular. Total members: ~40

4. **Circular Cleveland Ambassadors:** Engaged community residents will serve as leaders in various aspects of a transition to a circular economy. Ambassadors will be compensated for their time and will help to serve as conduits with the community throughout the roadmap development and during implementation through the Circular Cleveland Working Group. Total members: 10-12

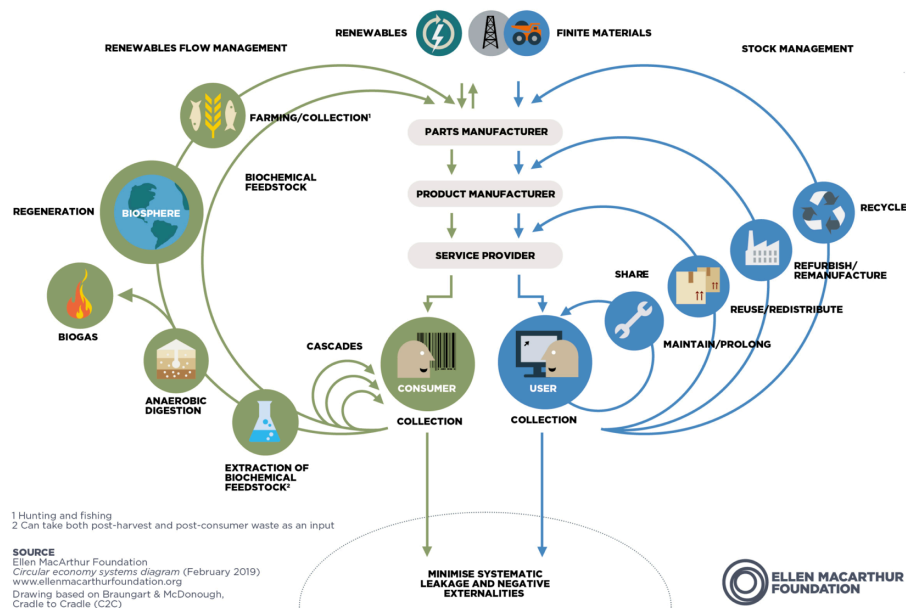


Figure 1: [Butterfly Diagram - Explained](#)



DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

Scope of Services

- ***Data Collection, Disaggregation, and Analysis, such as but not limited to those mentioned below*** Conduct a regional Flow Analysis of various sectors and streams (e.g., plastics, organics, water, waste, construction, healthcare, etc.)
- Analyze and synthesize the soon-to-be released report of City of Cleveland's recycling and waste streams, and the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste Management Plan
- Analyze data pertaining to the flow of commodities and flow of sectors interacts with Cleveland's socio-economic data to capture and synthesize the impacts on communities
- Create a baseline of circular economy type projects and programs within Cleveland
- Identify barrier and opportunities and analyze existing policies, practices, procedures within the city to be enhanced, updated or reversed
- Perform a gap analysis of systems and opportunities
- Identify other new local and regional data sets that will inform the analysis and development of opportunities
- Identify appropriate tools and platforms to engage local agencies and small/ medium size businesses to identify priorities for circular economy roadmap strategy
- Scan various circular cities for learnable and adoptable strategies
- Scan regional, national and international circular cities for best practices

- 1. *Interaction with Circular Cleveland Steering Committee and subcommittees (As needed)***
 - Advise the Core Team on Steering Committee membership
 - Interact with Steering Committee as needed to tap for data/ information
 - Prepare presentations and other appropriate content for Steering Committee meetings as needed
 - Collect feedback from Steering Committee on the direction of the roadmap
 - Share timely progress with members of the Steering Committee
 - Guide the Steering Committee structure and process around the selection of subcommittees (organic waste, manufacturing, workforce development, etc.)
 - Provide timely and appropriate feedback to industry sectors based on peer city scans

- 2. *Community Engagement through the neighborhood workshops***
 - Support the facilitation of 10 community engagement workshops
 - Work with the Core Team to identify the framework for each of the workshops
 - Based on learning and expertise, advise the appropriate engagement strategy to maximize inclusion of voices traditionally not heard
 - Propose creative tools for neighborhood assets and infrastructure mapping
 - Follow state and local COVID safe protocols for engagement

- ***Develop Circular Economy Roadmap and Implementation Guide for the City of Cleveland***
 - Identify barriers and opportunities to the implementation of a circular economy
 - Propose ways to leverage existing strengths and partnerships to advance a circular economy in Cleveland



- Propose circular economy approach to deliver City services to residents
 - Identify up to 12 focus area options based on local data, analysis and review of peer cities
 - Coordinate various teams, committees and engagement processes to prioritize 6 focus areas for a first phase of implementation
 - Recommend actions, strategies and initiatives in each focus area
 - Create a process to strengthen existing circular economy projects and sectors
 - Based on a strategic analysis, recommend key partners, collaborators and stakeholders for representation on the Circular Cleveland Working Group
 - Design an implementation process
 - Create an implementation framework that fosters collaboration for successful establishment of programs and that advance Circular Cleveland initiatives
 - Make policy recommendations to ensure programs and projects that emerge are truly implementable
 - Develop key performance indicators to ensure the successful implementation of the effort in each area
 - Create and develop a pathway for regional collaboration across public, private and social sectors to best advance the Roadmap implementation
 - Run the Roadmap components through a racial equity and inclusion lens to ensure a truly equitable transition
- 3. Assist in developing guidelines for Neighborhood Based-Circular Economy projects through Cleveland Climate Action Fund grant**
- Assist Neighborhood Connections with establishing achievable guidelines for funding eligibility for the small grant program that align with the roadmap
 - Advise Neighborhood Connections on ways to foster collaboration and partnership among grantees
- 4. Assist in developing guidelines for Cleveland Economic Development Small Business Incentives**
- Assist the City's Department of Economic Development in creating an application for the Economic Development Incentive Program for small businesses
 - Design key performance and evaluation metrics
 - Assist in developing a platform that provides longer term support for the small businesses beyond the incentive term
 -
- 5. Project coordination and report (As needed)**
- Work closely with Core Project Team to satisfy all grant requirements, reporting and documentation associated with grant criteria and guidelines
 - Attend bi-weekly meetings with Core Project Team to provide status updates, including written reports documenting tasks performed, actual and milestone dates, performance/completion issues and next steps associated with future work
 - Provide meeting minutes and document any/all other meetings held related to this proposals project scope



Anticipated Project Meetings

- Project Kickoff with Core Project Team
- Ongoing Core Team Meetings (reporting out bi-weekly)
- Steering (and sub-committee) Committee Meetings (to be held monthly)
- Community Workshops 10 in total (one per month for the first two months, 2 per month in June, July, August, September)

Project Deliverables

If selected, the consultant/firm is expected to produce the following:

1. ROADMAP
2. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, including specific strategies to enable transition to a circular economy

Upon selection, the agency will provide a detailed WORKPLAN. This document will include:

- a. Detailed explanation of stages and steps, methodology and approach for the roadmap process.
- b. An explanation of how the project team will complete the scope of work in a methodical and timely fashion, including a timeline chart/table.
- c. Roles and responsibilities of the consultant, including specific named resources for key roles for partners in the project.
- d. Explanation of roles and stages of interaction of partners, community groups, and other committees with the consultant to aid a smooth process of roadmap development.
- e. COVID safe practices.
- f. A detailed budget for each task/stage identified.

RFP GUIDELINES

Important Project Dates

Action	Date
RFP release	Jan 20 th 2021
RFP Info session	Feb 9 th 2021
RFP response submission	Mar 1 st 2021
RFP evaluation and selection period	Mar 2 nd – Mar 17 th
Selection Interviews	March 24 th -31 st
Announcement	Apr 1 st 2021
Final Roadmap and implementation guide	Oct 8 th 2021
Announcement of Circular Cleveland Roadmap	Nov 1 st 2021

**Dates are subject to change*

Submission Requirements

1. Cover page on your agency/firm letterhead entitled “Request for Proposals for Roadmap for Circular Cleveland”. Include the date, name, title and contact information of the person who prepared the submittal, and the telephone, email address, web address and physical address of your office.
2. Description of your understanding of the scope and nature of the project and services to be provided to achieve the objectives described above.
3. Detailed description of your approach and the methodology proposed for the project, including ensuring racial equity and inclusion throughout the process.
4. Company profile and background information for the project manager and key consultants on the project team. Provide the name and title of each staff person including subcontractors that will be assigned to this project. Please include a chart of organization structure for project assignments.

(NOTE: Cleveland Neighborhood Progress will accept submittals from agencies that have chosen to partner on this project, with one agency submitting this proposal as the lead.

If the consultant is not local to Greater Cleveland, demonstrate qualification of the consultant to identify Cleveland specific data. Including a local partnership is encouraged.)

5. Project schedule and name of personnel assigned to each step in the project.
6. Detailed project budget outlining phases of delivery, including travel to Cleveland if not local.
7. Description of previous experience with creation of roadmaps for cities and large entities. This document should reflect the scope of engagement and services requested pertaining to the project similar to the scope requested in this RFP. Experience creating a circular economy roadmap for any sector may be elevated. This RFP considers experience in equitable community engagement critical, and racial equity and inclusion as a top priority in developing the roadmap. This response requires any such work to be highlighted for careful consideration.
8. Description of previous experience in recommending and developing models requiring a collaboration of public, private and not-for-profit funds and/or organizations.
9. Minimum of three current references (no later than 2017).



Questions and Clarifications

Consultants interested in applying to be considered are encouraged to attend an hour-long pre-proposal info session at 11:00 am on February 9th, 2021 via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 673 467 4350

Password: RSVP to Dsridhar@Clevelandnp.org join the info session to receive password

*(*Please check the [Cleveland Neighborhood Progress website](https://www.ClevelandNeighborhoodProgress.org): for the most updated pre-proposal info session)*

All additional questions and clarifications should be submitted latest by Feb 19th, 2021, in writing, via email to Divya Sridhar at: Dsridhar@Clevelandnp.org

Submission Instructions

All proposal materials should be **emailed** to Divya Sridhar at: Dsridhar@Clevelandnp.org by March 1, 2021.

General Provisions

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress shall not bear cost associated in the preparation of the qualifications submitted to this request. Cleveland Neighborhood Progress reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals received.

Funding Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 2020 Global Ideas for U.S. Solutions Grant. No additional funds have been allocated to this project at this time.

COVID-19 Contingency: Due to the many uncertainties associated with the global COVID-19 pandemic, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress reserves the right to extend the submission deadline for this request for proposals, modify the project award and start date as needed, and adjust the project scope to accommodate all necessary health and safety protocols issued by state, local, and federal public health officials.



SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals shall be evaluated based on (but not limited to):

- Understanding of the project objectives/outcomes and vision based on Circular Cleveland Grant Narrative (20 pts)
- Quality of the proposal with attention to detail to Scope of work to arrive at project's highest and best desired outcome. (25pts)
- Responsiveness to the requirements of the RFP based on Circular Cleveland Grant Narrative (20 pts)
- Experience and expertise of applicant's ability to complete the work in accordance with the schedule with attention to detail (25 pts)
Proposed budget that is reasonable, demonstrates flexibility and maximizes CNP's investment towards the project (25 pts)
- References (15 pts)
- Interviews (20 pts)

ATTACHMENTS AND RESOURCES

1. PDF of Proposal Narrative for RWJF Grant
2. [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#)
3. [Cleveland Neighborhood Progress](#)
4. [Cleveland Climate Action Plan](#)
5. [Sustainable Cleveland](#)
6. [Circular Charlotte](#)
7. [City of Toronto's Circular Economy initiative including Long-term Waste Management plan and the Working group](#)
8. [Cleveland Climate Action Funds](#)
9. [Cuyahoga County Solid Waste Management Plan](#)
10. [Circular London](#)