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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sustainability Projects in 15 Cities Get a Boost with New Funding from Partners for Places

\$1.7 million will fund environmental efforts across the U.S.

Coral Gables, Fla. — Fifteen cities across the United States will receive more than \$1.7 million for sustainability efforts as diverse as supporting urban agriculture and reforestation, providing green jobs for low-income workers, and ensuring all residents benefit from their community's environmental progress.

The funding is through the Partners for Places matching grants program, which pairs city governments with philanthropy to support sustainability projects that promote a healthy environment, a strong economy, and well-being for all residents.

These sustainability efforts will take place in cities large and small, from South Florida to the Pacific Northwest, with most benefiting low-income neighborhoods. They include: Columbia, Mo., where an under-used 10-acre site in a low-income neighborhood will be turned into an urban farm and agriculture park; Newark, N.J., where efforts to promote healthier, more energy-efficient homes include a pilot program targeting 6-year-olds exposed to lead; and Boulder, Colo., which will work with Latino-owned landscaping businesses to convert to eco-friendly equipment and develop workforce training programs in renewable energy and efficiency.

“Climate issues are people issues,” said Darryl Young, director of Sustainable Cities at The Summit Foundation. “At the city scale, there’s meaningful work to be done jointly in the public and private sectors. These Partners for Places proposals are where people are rolling up their sleeves and building strong, sustainable towns that strengthen communities and improve lives.”

Partners for Places, led by the Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities in partnership with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, will provide \$455,000 in funding to eight cities through its general grant program, which will be matched by local funders. The program is supported by six investor foundations: Bloomberg Philanthropies, The JPB Foundation, The Kendeda Fund, The New York Community Trust, The Summit Foundation, and Surdna Foundation.

Also today, seven additional cities received \$405,000 in funding from the Partners for Places Equity Pilot Initiative, providing financial and technical support to a cohort of cities and their place-based foundation partners to develop local approaches for prioritizing equity in sustainability and/or climate action. They are also learning together and sharing their insights with each other to advance their work. This two-year pilot program is supported by the generosity of The Kendeda Fund and The Kresge Foundation.

“Low-income communities and people of color are disproportionately harmed by environmental hazards and the effects of climate change,” said Diane Ives, fund advisor for The Kendeda Fund’s People, Place and Planet program. “We need to put equity at the heart of community-based sustainability efforts to ensure that everyone has a chance to live in a vibrant, healthy, resilient community regardless of their zip code.”

The latest Partners for Places general grant recipients and their matching funders are:

- Boulder, Colo. (\$50,000): To build stronger and deeper representation of underserved communities in climate and energy decisions by facilitating dialogues with diverse stakeholders on community-defined priorities; piloting a renewable energy and energy efficiency workforce development program; supporting regional coordination on climate and equity, and generating metrics to guide data collection and evaluate progress. (Matching funder: Philanthropiece Foundation)
- Broward County, Fla. (\$25,000): To support a sustainability education and youth leadership afterschool program in a distressed portion of the county that will teach high school students STEM skills, empowering them to become climate sustainability stewards and advocates to address their own neighborhood’s environmental challenges. (Matching funder: Community Foundation of Broward)
- Chicago, Ill. (\$75,000): To better connect low- and moderate-income residents more easily to all of the “green” programs offered by the city, such as recycling, transportation, and energy efficiency, ensuring they can take advantage of the many tools and resources available to make their lifestyles more sustainable and help their household budgets go farther. (Matching funder: Chicago Community Trust)
- Columbia, Mo. (\$100,000): To turn an under-used, 10-acre site in a low-income neighborhood into a multi-use agricultural park that will feature a farmers market, urban farm, outdoor classroom and green space. (Matching funder: Boone County Community Trust)

- Lincoln, Neb. (\$75,000): To implement sustainability elements of a multi-year neighborhood planning process in a low-income neighborhood, such as improving walkability and pedestrian safety and providing green infrastructure, landscaping and urban reforestation, as well as increasing the size, number and potential of community gardens. (Matching funder: Lincoln Community Foundation)
- Newark, N.J. (\$60,000): To develop and implement scalable strategies for promoting healthier, more energy-efficient homes in two target neighborhoods through a pilot program, targeting children under 6 years old exposed to lead. (Matching funders: Victoria Foundation; Greater Newark LISC; United Way of Essex and Hudson Counties; Essex Equities; PSEG Foundation)
- Syracuse, N.Y. (\$25,000): To design and implement a comprehensive and inclusive outreach campaign that creates a unified vision for protecting and growing Syracuse's urban forest. (Matching funder: The Gifford Foundation)
- Tacoma, Wash. (\$45,000): To create an equitable and healthy food system that promotes healthy communities and people, supporting community members' research and giving them the tools and resources to implement resilient food system ideas and projects. (Matching funder: The Russell Family Foundation)

The latest Partners for Places Equity Pilot Initiative grant recipients and their matching funders are:

- Berkeley, Calif. (\$30,000): To develop a "racial equity lens" tool that will include a set of questions that guide city policies and programs. The tool would be first used to incorporate racial equity into a community land-use planning process, and ultimately be applied to a broad range of programs and services. (Matching funders: The San Francisco Foundation; The East Bay Community Foundation)
- Charlotte, N.C. (\$75,000): To create an accessible "smart city" platform where residents and government can kick-start collaboration on meaningful projects in categories that include healthy communities, neighborhood transportation, technology training programs,

and smart homes and neighborhoods. (Matching funders: Knight Foundation; OrthoCarolina Foundation)

- Cleveland, Ohio (\$60,000): To help improve outcomes in health, access to green jobs, and resiliency through equitable climate action planning and implementation, including workshops in 10 neighborhoods previously under-represented in sustainability efforts. (Matching funders: George Gund Foundation; Cleveland Foundation)
- Dubuque, Iowa (\$50,000): To ensure city departments and partners learn strategies and have the tools needed to put climate-vulnerable communities at the center of decision-making and planning. The project will engage partners throughout the Washington Neighborhood to build non-profit capacity and social resiliency. (Matching funder: Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque)
- Minneapolis, Minn. (\$75,000): To work with community members and organizations to implement a Green Zone pilot project that will address racial equity, improve health, and support economic development using environmentally conscious efforts in a community that faces the cumulative effects of environmental pollution and social, political and economic vulnerability. (Matching funder: McKnight Foundation)
- Providence, R.I. (\$55,000): To incorporate racial equity as a core pillar of the city's sustainability efforts, including additional training and tools that will support long-term goals specific to environmental and racial justice. (Matching funder: Rhode Island Foundation)
- Washington, D.C. (\$60,000): To establish an equity advisory group of community residents from the Watts Branch neighborhood in order to bring equity and social cohesion into planning and implementation of the District's climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives through a community-driven process. The project will produce a replicable model for authentic community engagement to be used in future planning efforts. (Matching funders: The Prince Charitable Trusts; Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation)

To date, Partners for Places has awarded more than \$5 million across North America in this successful matching grant program, leading to more than \$10 million in investments.

Partners for Places will open a new round of funding for the general grant program during the first week of June, with proposals due in late July 2017. To attract additional interest in urban sustainability projects, the program also houses an Idea Bank on the Funders' Network website, which provides summaries of past project applications.

For more information on Partners for Places, visit the Funders' Network website at <http://www.fundersnetwork.org/partnersforplaces/>. Funders interested in becoming a part of Partners for Places should contact Ann Wallace at the Funders' Network.

About Partners for Places Partners for Places

A joint project of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities and the Urban Sustainability Network, Partners for Places is a successful matching grant program that improves U.S. and Canadian communities by building partnerships between local government sustainability leaders and place-based foundations. National funders invest in local projects developed through these partnerships to promote a healthy environment, a strong economy and well-being for all residents. Through these investments, Partners for Places fosters long-term relationships that make our communities more prosperous, livable and vibrant.

About the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities

The Funders' Network is a mission-driven network of grantmakers across North America, working to inspire, strengthen and expand funding and philanthropic leadership that yield environmentally sustainable, socially equitable, and economically prosperous regions and communities.

About The Urban Sustainability Directors Network

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) is a peer-to-peer network of local government professionals from cities across the United States and Canada dedicated to creating a healthier environment, economic prosperity, and increased social equity. Our dynamic network enables sustainability directors and staff to share best practices and accelerate the application of good ideas across North America.

Contact: Tere Figueras Negrete, Communications Director at the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, tere@fundersnetwork.org; (305) 667-6350 ext. 212