



Nov. 6, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sustainability Projects in 11 Cities Get a Boost with New Funding from Partners for Places

Nearly one million dollars will fund environmental efforts across the U.S.

Coral Gables, Fla. — Eleven cities across the United States will receive nearly a million dollars for sustainability efforts that largely benefit low-income neighborhoods.

These sustainability efforts will take place in cities both large and small, from a project in Los Angeles that tackles park scarcity in the city's most densely populated areas to an agricultural program in Cary, N.C., that supports women and minority farmers while giving low-income residents greater access to healthy food.

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.

Three of the grantees — Bend, Ore., Lancaster, Pa., and New Orleans — will use the Partners for Places matching grants to help craft a climate action plan, a blueprint that describes the policies and measures that cities will enact to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase their community's resilience to climate change.

"These projects are about fighting the next climate-related disaster," said Darryl Young, director of Sustainable Cities at The Summit Foundation. "Flood, fire, devastation. It's easy to feel overwhelmed, but it's important — especially at the city level — to think proactively, to learn how to adapt, to prevent and respond in order to avoid becoming a cautionary tale."

Partners for Places, led by the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities in partnership with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, will provide \$484,000 in funding to 11 cities through its general grant program, which will be matched by local funders. That means a total of \$968,000 will be leveraged to fund sustainability projects in these selected cities.

The program is supported by five investor foundations: [The JPB Foundation](#), [The Kendeda Fund](#), [The New York Community Trust](#), [The Summit Foundation](#), and [Surdna Foundation](#). This grant

cycle also includes \$127,500 awarded to three green stormwater infrastructure projects, designed to advance water-related sustainability goals, made possible by the support of the [Pisces Foundation](#), the [Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation](#), and the [Turner Foundation](#).

“These types of projects can help cities accomplish so much,” said Nancy Stoner, Water Program director and a senior fellow at the Pisces Foundation. “They not only improve water quality and water supply, but also beautify neighborhoods, create jobs, and help communities become healthier and more climate resilient.”

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

- Bend, Ore (\$50,000): To engage diverse voices to create a community climate action plan with innovative strategies that balance equity, efficiency and meaningful climate benefits. (Matching funder: Oregon Community Foundation Advised Funds)
- Cary, N.C. (\$25,000): To support equitable access to farmland for minority and women farmers and access to food for low-income residents through SNAP EBT, and a double bucks program. (Matching funder: Triangle Community Foundation)
- Cincinnati, Ohio (\$115,000): To enhance sustainability of Cincinnati’s regional food system through strategic, collaborative activities to prevent, recover, and recycle food waste and educate the public on the issue. (Matching funders: The Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Carol Ann & Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation, Interact for Health)
- Lancaster, Pa. (\$30,000): To support an equity-focused, community-wide planning effort resulting in a comprehensive climate action and resilience plan for the City of Lancaster and an initial implementation project. (Matching funders: Lancaster County Community Foundation, The Steinman Foundation)
- Los Angeles, Calif. (\$35,000): To tackle park-scarcity in LA’s densest and lowest-income regions by opening vibrant school playgrounds to the public through its Community School Parks program and empowering low-income residents through enhanced community engagement. (Matching funder: First 5 LA and The Goldhirsh Foundation)

- New Orleans, La. (\$45,000): To engage the community in making equity a priority in implementation of the City of New Orleans' Climate Action Strategy and to help the city meet the strategy's climate mitigation goals equitably. (Matching funder: Greater New Orleans Foundation)
- Philadelphia, Pa. (\$25,000): A data-driven approach to identify Philadelphia populations disproportionately exposed to environmental stressors, and reduce disparities through community-centered decision-making. (Matching funder: Knight Foundation)
- Salt Lake City, Utah (\$31,500): To empower Salt Lake City's low-income and communities of color to engage in efforts to mitigate climate change impacts, improve community resiliency, and ensure social equity. This will be achieved through engagement in the Utah Climate Action Network, coupled with a community-driven energy efficiency campaign. (Matching funders: The George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, The Community Foundation of Utah, Richard K. and Shirley S. Hemingway Foundation, Telemachus Foundation)

This round of Partners for Places matching grants also recognizes three projects that focus on green stormwater infrastructure. The selected projects are:

- Grand Rapids, Mich. (\$51,250): To prepare and implement a plan to fund and install green infrastructure and water conservation practices in low income-neighborhoods. (Matching funder: Wege Foundation)
- Las Cruces, N.M. (\$25,000): To build community resilience and cohesion in a low- to moderate income urban neighborhood as part of a project to design and construct a green infrastructure corridor and engage in community-building activities, combating extreme heat and drought. (Matching funder: Santa Fe Community Foundation)
- St. Louis, Mo. (\$51,250): Will plant trees to manage stormwater, enhance tree canopy, reduce heat island impact, and strengthen community relations by holding community tree-planting events with off-duty police officers and providing

summer youth jobs for tree stewardship. (Matching funders: St. Louis Community Foundation, W.A. Kerr Foundation, Commerce Bancshares Foundation)

To date, Partners for Places has awarded \$5.4 million across North America in this successful matching grant program, leading to nearly \$11 million in philanthropic investments.

Partners for Places will open a new round of funding for the general grant program in December. The program also houses an online Idea Bank, which provides summaries of past project applications. For more information, visit the Funders' Network website at www.fundersnetwork.org/partners-for-places. Funders interested in becoming a part of Partners for Places should contact Director of Programs Ann Wallace at ann@fundersnetwork.org.

About Partners for Places

A joint project of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities and the Urban Sustainability Directors 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.

For additional information and media inquiries, contact: Tere Figueras Negrete, Communications Director at the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, tere@fundersnetwork.org