

The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) wants to showcase great cities to host the premier annual international placemaking event. CNU believes in the power of intentional design to advance walkable, diverse, and sustainable urbanism. CNU is the leading national organization committed to these goals. Our mission is to change the practices and standards of urban design and development to support healthy regions and diverse neighborhoods. We advocate for socially just, environmentally resilient, and people centered places.

For three decades, CNU’s annual Congress has attracted thousands of dedicated architects, designers, policy makers, and urban advocates for memorable events. Our annual Congress is more than just a conference — it’s a place of debate, dialogue, and creative connection that has often altered the thinking, priorities, and even careers of attendees. The event began as a convening of visionaries who debated how to challenge placeless suburban sprawl and use the timeless principles of the architecture of community to build places people love. Our founding document, the [Charter for the New Urbanism](#), was adopted with clear and forthright principles, including *“neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population; communities should be designed for the pedestrian and transit as well as the car; cities and towns should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice.”*

The Congress has four general audiences:

- Core CNU members, who view the Congress as our annual family reunion;
- New participants who want to learn more about specific approaches, tools, and strategies for the built environment;
- Local government elected officials and staff, interested in learning about and connecting with the most innovative new urbanist strategies, policies, and implementation trends; and
- Representatives from the broader planning community seeking to deepen their skills and connect with national thought leaders.

CNU seeks cities to host our annual Congress that have compelling stories to tell; places that represent challenges faced by many others, but whose leadership and dedicated advocates are developing creative and innovative approaches to showcase and share. If you love your city, have neighborhoods, parks, streets, and districts that need to be explored by over 1000 passionate urbanists, we invite you to host CNU 32 in the spring of 2024.

Why Host a Congress?

The Congress is more than a conference — it’s a gathering designed to inspire change in the way attendees approach their practice. Being the host city to a Congress can center your growth or development issues in the theme of our event, bring awareness of the importance of design and new urbanism to your community, strengthen or inspire the development of a local Chapter, and showcase the power of design and the architecture of community to local or regional leaders. Additionally, the Congress:

- *Brings people who love neighborhoods and adds value to your local businesses.* The 1000+ Congress attendees contribute mightily to the local economy. Visit Savannah estimated that CNU provided a \$1.8M boost to the local economy during CNU 26.
- *Showcases your city and region to an international audience.* Congress attendees come from almost every state and dozens of counties. For example, CNU 27.Louisville participants came from 50 states and 15 countries and CNU 26.Savannah came from 48 states and 24 countries.
- *Provides assistance on pressing urbanism issues.* We rely on our Local Host Committee to assist in identifying local issues to highlight through the Congress content, including neighborhood design workshops through our annual Legacy Projects.
- *Strengthens or kick starts your Chapter.* Fundraising and communication efforts conducted by the Local Host Committee and the presence of CNU members and leadership provide a unique opportunity to build a network of New Urbanists in your city or region. If you have an existing Chapter, hosting the Congress provides an opportunity to grow membership and strengthen relationships. If you don't have a Chapter, the Congress inspires and facilitates the creation of one.

What Makes a Congress? Places and People.

The primary characteristic of a successful Congress is a great location with a great story. We are seeking cities with explorable neighborhoods that showcase examples of new and old urbanism successfully mixed together with unique character and context. We want to amplify your achievements and challenges as a case study for our curious attendees who are eager to learn and be inspired.

The Congress ideally should be located in a vibrant and walkable neighborhood that is transit-accessible. CNU has found the most success in cities where our presence means something; often mid-size cities where our presence has made an impact on regional CNU members, the broader regional movement, and the city and region itself. Enthusiasm by the place and people for the Congress is also important.

The success of a Congress is also driven by a passionate and well-connected Local Host Committee. We look to our Local Host Committee to help us identify the unique aspects of our host city —the Buffalo grain silos, Dallas's Deep Ellum neighborhood, Detroit's Eastern Market—and to connect us with local leaders and innovators. The Local Host Committee is also responsible for helping to fundraise for the event. The details of which are explained below.

CNU seeks proposals from groups interested in forming a Local Host Committee and hosting the 2024 Congress (CNU 32). Interested groups should compile the information requested below and submit it to the Congress for the New Urbanism by March 15, 2022.

All potential applicants are welcome to contact CNU for advice and general direction.

Proposals will be reviewed and applicants may be contacted with questions. All submitters will be notified of their proposal status by April 30, 2022 and have 6-8 weeks to prepare a presentation for the CNU Board summer meeting. During this preparation period, finalists will be asked to complete a number of tasks, including securing a minimum of \$150,000 in sponsorship pledges. CNU's summer

board meeting will take place in Pasadena, CA in June 2022. CNU will notify finalists of the Board's decision no later than June 30, 2022. The selected finalists should be prepared to start planning immediately, which includes being prepared to sign an MOU with CNU, creating a fundraising plan for the remaining sponsorship dollars, and forming the required committees (more information on forming the LHC is below). Responses and questions should be emailed to CNU (moneal@cnu.org).

Requirements

Development of the Local Host Committee (LHC): CNU seeks to hold its Annual Congress in a city with strong CNU connections and a diversity of perspectives. It is important that this committee include representation from a variety of professions and backgrounds. It is crucial that all dimensions of diversity are addressed from the outset and not ignored or added as an afterthought. At least one committee member should have a background in communications, public relations, or journalism, preferably with strong local media contacts, to aid in local marketing and press coverage.

The LHC is composed of CNU members, local nonprofits, local government officials, allied organizations, and major donors or underwriters of the event. The LHC will work closely with CNU staff and others to identify tours, select Legacy Project locations, help identify speakers and venues, market the event locally, and raise funds.

The Local Host Committee will be led by a Chair, or Co-Chairs, who will be responsible for coordinating all LHC efforts from city selection through the production of the event. Additionally, CNU recommends organizing the LHC into committees – Program & Tours, Fundraising, Marketing & Outreach, and Volunteers – with a designated local Chair for each committee.

- LHC Chairs will average 10 hours per month of volunteer time, with more likely in the months leading up to the Congress,
- Committee Chairs will average 5 hours per month in volunteer time, and
- General Committee Members will average less than 5 hours per month in volunteer time per committee that they sit on.

Please provide a list of proposed Local Host Committee members and Chair(s) in your proposal.

Tours, Parks, Neighborhoods, and other unique locations: CNU 32 is an opportunity to show off your city. Please provide a list of the places that will interest CNU members and other placemaking professionals, including a brief description of each location, potential tour leaders, and learning objectives, e.g., why would this place be interesting to Congress participants?

CNU often has portions of the program that are free and open to the public. Are there particular topics you think might work well as a public forum (such as the Suburbanization of Poverty event held at CNU 25.Seattle; public presentation on Savannah Master Plan at CNU 26.Savannah; Public Health and Design Symposium at CNU 27.Louisville)? If so, what are the potential topics? Who might be good partners for such programming? Who might be the audience for the topics and how might we reach them? Are there events that would add value and attract the general public to the Congress location (e.g., a tactical urbanism project Pavement to Park installation, CNU 26.Savannah), pop-up playground (highlighting the need for family housing/amenities downtown, outside the Seattle Museum, CNU 25.Seattle, etc.)

Fundraising: An important component to a successful Congress is fundraising. The LHC assists CNU in targeting local partners and foundations with whom LHC members may have a personal relationship. CNU will raise additional funds from national and past Congress partners. CNU and the LHC will need to coordinate fundraising efforts to avoid overlap and potential conflict. Regardless of who solicits the funds, CNU staff will handle all partnership management logistics (e.g. contacting the partners regarding level selection, benefit fulfillment, thank you, and collecting payment, etc.).

The joint fundraising goal between the LHC and CNU is \$450,000. The breakdown of these funds may occur differently from year to year, but a general guide is 1/3 from local sponsors, 1/3 from national sponsors, and 1/3 from foundations, which can be solicited solely by the LHC or jointly by local and national. The LHC generally raises local funds through:

- Chapter donations
- Local and regional government sponsorships, which are essentially bulk registration packages
- Local Host Committee donations
- Local corporate sponsorships
- Local and regional governments
- Local foundations
- Local nonprofit donations
- Local in-kind donations that offset a pre-approved Congress budget item

Please note, while the Legacy Projects are an important part of the pre-Congress event planning, CNU considers this a separate budget line item with separate fundraising goals. The true direct cost of each project is \$30,000, but CNU recognizes that the communities impacted by Legacy Projects may not be able to meet that goal. The host communities receiving the design assistance are asked to contribute \$15,000 to help cover direct expenses related to the projects, including travel and logistics for the National Project Teams, as well as to demonstrate capacity needed for implementation of the project over time. CNU and the LHC will work together to seek additional sponsors or foundations to raise the additional \$15,000 per project, which is outside of the overall \$450,000 Congress fundraising goal.

Please provide a list of proposed fundraising targets and commitments, along with the name of a contact, totaling at least \$150,000 – this can be a list of individuals, companies, local foundations, or other. Note: please provide a realistic list that includes the names of target companies and foundations, points of contact, LHC connection or relationship, and target.

If you are selected as a semi-finalist to give a presentation to the CNU Board, the proposed LHC will be asked to provide \$150,000 in commitments. Semi-finalists will have 6-8 weeks from notification to Board presentation to secure these commitments.

Communications. Critical to the success of any Congress is the ability to get the word out locally, regionally, and in adjacent states. CNU and the LHC work very closely on developing and getting out our message. CNU writes the press releases, articles, and marketing pieces and handles national press placement. The LHC identifies key press contacts and outlets—local and regional newspapers, journals, websites, blogs, listservs, organizational newsletters, and other media—where we can place information to build excitement (and registration) for the Congress.

Please provide a list of possible contacts, newspapers, newsletters, like-minded organizations, and other media outlets that you feel have an audience interested in attending the Congress. Additionally, please describe any partnerships the LHC/Chapter has with other CNU Chapters or potential partners in your

city, region, or adjacent states. For example, CNU 26.Savannah Local Host Committee had extensive relationships with CNU Chapters in Atlanta, North Carolina, and Florida. CNU New York has a strong relationship with Scenic Hudson. These types of partnerships and relationships are critical to helping to broadcast Congress activities and create momentum in the region.

Congress Legacy Projects: In an effort to do more than simply hold a conference, CNU began Legacy Projects as a way to increase the lasting impact of holding a Congress on the host city or region. Working with the LHC, CNU staff execute 2-4 neighborhood design workshops in the months leading up to the Congress, leveraging pro bono design services from nationally renowned member firms. Legacy Projects are designed to be implementation-focused, with results that community members can see within a year. Legacy Projects provide an opportunity for local issues to be addressed by national firms and highlighted at our Congress, as well as for local firms to gain exposure working on these teams.

Successful Legacy Projects require the LHC to identify local or regional issue(s) and one or more measurable statistics on attitudes or policies in the host city/region that are important to change.

Please provide 3 possible local partners that have experience in addressing place-based issues in your city and region.

Logistics: CNU employs a meeting planning and registration consultant to assist with the annual Congress logistics. CNU will reserve hotel blocks, meeting space, and event venues, as needed, to accommodate Congress participants and activities. As local ambassadors, you know the best hotels and venues located in pedestrian-friendly, transit-accessible areas, located near restaurants and shops.

The Congress includes a wide variety of program session types, see Addendum II for a detailed list. CNU typically contracts two to four venues within a 5- to 10-minute pedestrian shed, to accommodate these venue needs. CNU prefers to use hotels, auditoriums, and other small-scale venues over convention centers, although exceptions are always possible. Additionally, CNU reserves a room block for 500-700 room nights at one or two local hotels within the pedestrian shed.

Please provide a suggested list of neighborhoods (with appropriate venues and hotels) where the Congress might be located.

Evaluation Criteria

When evaluating applicants, we consider the following criteria:

- *Application:* Complete and detailed response to all questions, with a strong emphasis on the depth and breadth of the committee and its ability to raise the necessary funds.
- *Travel:* Average travel costs from major US cities.
- *Logistics:* Availability and cost of recommended host venues.
- *Contribution to urbanism:* Perceived desirability and walkable venues in areas that showcase urbanism.
- *Geographic relationship to previous Congress sites:* Does this location contribute to a balanced picture of urbanism in the US?

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: CNU 32

Additionally, CNU is always looking for new ways to broaden the reach of our movement by lowering the barriers to entry for attendees and engaging new and diverse voices in our Congress. CNU strongly encourages applicants to consider how their application contributes to CNU's [strategic areas](#) and our goal of growing and diversifying the movement.

CNU 32 - Proposal Cover Page:

Proposed City & State:

Point of Contact

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Address:

Company:

Preferred dates between May 1 and June 30 in order of preference, Wednesday to Saturday avoiding major holidays.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Attachments

- The Pitch, including 3-5 bullets on why CNU should come to your city (please explain why CNU should consider your city for the Congress in 2024; you are encouraged to submit photos, videos, and articles in support of your case).
- Proposed Tours List (please provide a list of the great places that will interest CNU members and other placemaking professionals, along with a brief description of each location, potential tour leader, and learning objectives).
- Proposed Host City Day (please describe what major themes would be addressed, who might speak, and how the proposed speakers meet CNU's stated diversity and inclusion goals).
- Proposed Free Programming (please identify specific topics or themes you think might work well as a public forum and who might be good partners for such programming. Please also identify the audience for each topic and how we might engage them).
- Proposed Local Host Committee List (please include name, email, phone number, company/organization, CNU member status, and committee interest. Please identify the LHC Chair(s) and those committed to chairing a sub-committee: fundraising, programs & tours, marketing & outreach, and volunteers.)
- Proposed Fundraising Targets and Commitments (please provide a list of fundraising targets, totaling at least \$150,000, including name, email, phone number, company/organization, target ask/commitment, and LHC connection.)
- Proposed Local Media Targets (please provide a list of possible news and media outlets for targeted Congress marketing and communications.)
- Proposed Congress Legacy Project Partners (please provide a list of at least 3 local partners that have experience in addressing place-based issues in your city and region.)

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- Proposed Location (please provide suggestions of neighborhoods with appropriate hotel, meeting, and event venues and reason for suggesting the neighborhoods.)

ADDENDUM I - Congress History: Date & Location

CNU 31: May 31 - June 3, 2022
Charlotte, NC

CNU XIV: June 1-4, 2006
Providence, RI

CNU 30: March 23-26, 2021
Oklahoma City, OK

CNU XIII: 2005
Pasadena, CA

CNU 29: May 19-21, 2021
Virtual

CNU XII: 2004
Chicago, IL

CNU 28: June 10-13 2020
Twin Cities, MN / moved online because of COVID-19

CNU XI: 2003
Washington, DC

CNU 27: June 12-15 2019
Louisville, KY

CNU X: 2002
Miami Beach, FL

CNU 26: May 16-19 2018
Savannah, GA

CNU IX: 2001
New York, NY

CNU 25: May 3-6, 2017
Seattle, WA

CNU VIII: 2000
Portland, OR

CNU 24: June 8-11, 2016
Detroit, MI

CNU VII: 1999
Milwaukee, WI

CNU 23: April 28-May 2, 2015
Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX

CNU VI: 1998
Denver, CO

CNU 22: June 4-7, 2014
Buffalo, NY

CNU V: 1997
Toronto, ON

CNU 21: May 29-June 1, 2013
Salt Lake City, UT

CNU IV: 1996
Charleston, SC

CNU 20: May 9-12, 2012
West Palm Beach, FL

CNU III: 1995
San Francisco, CA

CNU 19: June 1-4, 2011
Madison, WI

CNU II: 1994
Los Angeles, CA

CNU 18: May 19-22, 2010
Atlanta GA

CNU I: 1993
Alexandria, VA

CNU 17: June 10-13, 2009
Denver CO

CNU XVI: April 3-6, 2008
Austin, TX

CNU XV: May 17-20, 2007
Philadelphia, PA

ADDENDUM II – Typical Program Session Types

Program Session Type	# People	Days	Quantity	Duration
202 Workshops	25-100	Wednesday	6-8 sessions	3 hours
Art Room	50-75	Wed - Sat	6-8 sessions	75 minutes
Book Presentations	5-25	Wed - Fri	varies	60 minutes
Book Signings	5-25	Wed - Fri	varies	60 minutes
Breakout Sessions	50-200	Wed - Sat	30-40 sessions	75 minutes
Charter Awards	300-500	Friday night	1 session	90 minutes
City as Platform	25-50	Saturday	2-10 sessions	2-3 hours
Core	300-500	Wednesday	5-6 sessions	60 minutes
Debates	25-50	Friday night	1 session	90 minutes
Exhibit/Bookstore		Tues - Fri	n/a	n/a
Member-Led Sessions	5-50	Wed - Fri	3-10 sessions	60 minutes
New Urban Research	50-75	Thurs - Sat	2 sessions	75 minutes
Open Innovation	50-75	Thurs - Sat	6-8 sessions	75 minutes
Plenary (Tues/Sat)	300-500	Tues/Sat	1 each day	90 minutes
Plenary (Wed - Fri)	1500-2500	Wed - Fri	1 each day	90 minutes
Podcast	3-20	Wed - Fri/Sat	varies (3-10)	varies
Shoulder Events	varies	Tuesday	varies	varies
Tours	25-50	Tues - Sat	15-30 sessions	varies