



RFP now Open!

CNU35 Twin
Cities

Legacy Projects

APPLICANT GUIDE

Legacy Projects

Pre Proposal Call: July 22 2026

Applications due September 4, 2026
Congress for the New Urbanism

What Is a Legacy Project?

Each year, CNU brings the power of professional urban design to communities that would not otherwise have access to it — working alongside residents, not around them.

CNU recruits nationally recognized design firms to work directly with local partners in the host region.

Projects prioritize neighborhoods shaped by historic disinvestment or overlooked by conventional planning — turning long-stalled needs into buildable plans.

\$150,000+

in pro bono professional design assistance
leveraged per project

The Charrette: Design in Real Time

Every Legacy Project centers on an intense, hands-on workshop where the design team and community solve problems together.

1

Research

Months of preparation, data-gathering, and mapping before the team arrives.

2

3–4 Day Workshop

Designers interview residents, walk the streets, and draw solutions live.

3

Implementation

Implementation strategies aim for visible change within 6 to 18 months.

Program Goals

What every Legacy Project sets out to achieve.

1

Model Solutions

Tackle difficult local, regional, or national development issues with replicable answers.

2

Equity & Voice

Increase participation of historically underrepresented and underserved communities.

3

Access to Expertise

Bring placemaking and design skill typically out of reach for local communities.

4

Advance Implementation

Overcome the barriers to building great places and move projects forward.

Who Should Apply

Lead applicant: a local government agency, or a non-profit working with local government. If a non-profit leads, a letter of support from the local government(s) is required.

Strong candidates bring:



A well-defined scope A clear, implementation-ready need or opportunity in planning and design.



Strong community support Engaged residents and organizations behind the project.



Engaged public partners Local government ready to provide data, venues, and publicity.



An enthusiastic champion Someone who will organize, advance, and see the project through.

What Your Application Must Include

No more than 5 pages. Maps, photos, and visuals may be added as attachments.

1

Project Title & Community

2

Problem Statement & Vision

3

Connection to CNU Goals

4

Community Impact

5

Stakeholders & Partners

6

Site or Area Details

7

Readiness — why now

8

Community Engagement plan

9

Anticipated Outcomes

Key Dates



Jul 10, 2026	Call for applications distributed
Week of Jul 20	Pre-submittal meeting
Sep 4, 2026	Applications due — 5:00 PM CST
Oct 2, 2026	Notification of selection
Dec 2, 2026	Agreements & \$7,500 match due
Early Spring 2027	Legacy Project workshops
Jun 15–18, 2027	CNU 35 & public presentations

If You're Selected

Up to four projects are chosen. As a local partner, you agree to:

\$7,500 match

Fundraise to cover direct charrette costs, due Dec 2, 2026.

Secure a venue

An accessible space in the focus area, with Wi-Fi and wall display.

Coordinate

Stakeholders, data, maps, and A/V — with the design team.

Engage & present

Lead outreach and present results at CNU 35.

Submit by Sep 4, 2026, 5:00 PM CST to lmayer@cnu.org



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Questions?

EMAIL: Lauren Mayer, Associate Director of
Resources

Subject line: "CNU 35 Legacy Project RFP
Response"