

# NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN CENTER

## Application for Project Assistance--Information



The Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) was founded in 1968 by Baltimore's leading architects to help communities rebuild from years of urban decline. Over the subsequent decades, NDC has provided pro-bono planning and design services to over 1,400 community initiatives in Baltimore that have helped communities build new playgrounds, reclaim vacant lots and abandoned buildings, revitalize commercial districts, create community master plans, and beautify their neighborhoods.

The pro-bono services that the Neighborhood Design Center provides are tools for community engagement, empowerment, and investment – fulfilling NDC's mission to strengthen citizen participation in neighborhood development initiatives, educating the public about the value of good design, planning and preservation as community revitalization tools, and increase investment in the sensitive rebuilding of neighborhoods.

Also, NDC is “going green!” Since Spring 2007, NDC has begun encouraging our clients and volunteers to incorporate green design elements and sustainable practices into their projects wherever possible through our newest program *greeNDC*. For more information, visit our website at [www.ndc-md.org](http://www.ndc-md.org) and click on projects and programs, or contact greeNDC Program Coordinator, Kristen Humphrey, at: 410.233.9686 ext 103 or [khumphrey@ndc-md.org](mailto:khumphrey@ndc-md.org).

### **Types of Projects / Assistance**

NDC recognizes that the physical environment plays an important role in create livable and viable neighborhoods. Thus, we provide design and planning assistance for the following types of projects:

- Parks, Playgrounds, and Community Open Spaces
- Building and Site Development, including Interior Space Planning
- Neighborhood Business Districts
- Adaptive Re-Use of Existing Facilities
- Community Planning

Within these project types, NDC provides a range of services that meet neighborhood needs and help communities prepare the necessary plans and drawings to secure support and apply for funding, including:

- preliminary feasibility studies
- conceptual interior space programming and architectural plans for the renovation/adaptive re-use of buildings
- conceptual site and planting plans
- illustrative drawings and preliminary cost estimates
- strategic action plans
- illustrative master plans and reports
- safety plans - community control through physical design changes

Once NDC accepts a project, it is our role to recruit the necessary volunteer(s), develop the work outline and schedule and facilitate volunteer and community/client meetings. We ask you, the community group or non-profit organization, to actively guide our work at every stage, to seek feedback from and involvement of residents and other stakeholders, and to work diligently to find and secure funding to implement your project.

## Application Process

NDC's Baltimore office has two application cycles per year. Project schedules may vary given the nature and scope of the individual project; however, the basic schedule including application deadlines for Summer and Winter is as follows:

### SUMMER CYCLE:

JULY 1 - Application deadline

AUGUST 1 - Applicant status announced via letter

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER - NDC volunteer(s) recruited and preliminary meetings with recipients and site visits occur. Scope of project drafted and agreed upon.

### WINTER CYCLE:

DECEMBER 1 - Application deadline.

JANUARY 1 - Applicant status announced via letter

FEBRUARY – MARCH - NDC volunteer(s) recruited and preliminary meetings with recipients and site visits occur. Scope of project drafted and agreed upon.

## Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate project applications (not listed in order of importance):

- The sponsoring organization's commitment to participate in the planning, implementation and **ongoing stewardship** of the project.
- The degree to which the project is **supported by** community residents and/or members of the applicant organization.
- The **need** for the project in the community and the **benefit(s)** it will provide.
- **Readiness:** degree to which the applicant organization has "done its homework" -- researched similar projects and begun activities such as community organizing, general budget projections, and/or fundraising.
- **Appropriateness** of the project location in terms of visibility, safety, and convenience for neighborhood use and compliance with city agencies' plans and intentions.
- Degree of **site control:** either actual site ownership or documentation of lease or other type of agreement with site owner.

***(Note: staff resources and volunteer availability will also be taken into account when considering project applications)***