

GRANT SUMMARY

Vibrant Communities Initiative

The City seeks the Preservation Connecticut grant titled "Vibrant Communities Initiative" to undergo an adaptive reuse study for the former Strong School building at 69 Grand Avenue.

Preservation Connecticut is seeking applications to produce action plans for underutilized cultural and historic assets in their communities. The goal of the our grant application is to produce models to reuse the historic complex, which is currently empty and in deteriorating physical condition. Grant funds will be used to support an ongoing pre-development process involving community stakeholders and representatives from various city departments including LCI, EDA, City Plan and Board of Education. The process will consist of hiring of a consultant firm to conduct a economic feasibility study on potential reuse model. Simultaneously we will form a steering committee that will meet monthly and include different stakeholders to guide and advise the consultants. During the project period the steering committee will also help shape the community engagement process that will include at least two workshop: with residents and business owners. The full research report (to be submitted within 6 months) will help city staff and the community to collaboratively draft and publish an RFQ to get competitive proposals for redevelopment of the Strong School as a community asset.

The project will provide a set of models and practices that can be used in planning for future parcels with similar conditions: historic importance, deteriorating physical conditions, and a passionate community seeking to use the building once more.