

Strong School Adaptive Reuse Preservation Connecticut grant Vibrant Communities Initiative

Synopsis:

The City Plan Department hope to apply to Preservation Connecticut for a Vibrant Communities Initiative grant of \$27,000. The goal of the grant is to produce plans to reuse the former Strong School building at 69 Grand Avenue, which is currently empty. The process will consist of hiring a team to conduct an economic feasibility study on potential reuse models, guided by a steering committee of community stakeholders. The deliverable of this project is a set of guidelines for the reuse of the Strong School. The study will also yield a set of economic tools that will make it feasible for developers to redevelop the site. A bundle of creative financing methods should make the currently-empty property appealing to potential investors. The result will be an equitable model for redevelopment, taking into account community desires and market possibilities. The study's conclusions will be incorporated into an RFP for developers on the site, as well as design guidelines, financial mechanisms, stewardship, PPP agreements, and community outreach strategies for future projects.

Budget: Total amount: \$27,000

- Consultant fees (conduct study): \$20,000
- Printing and copying: \$1,000
- Translation of outreach materials, website and meetings: \$3,000
- Compensation for participation in steering committee meetings(6 meetings* 10 public members participating* 50\$ gift card per meeting): \$3,000
- This grant does not require a match.

Key Dates:

- August 14, 2020: Application review by Preservation CT
- By November 1, 2020:
 - Hire a consultant firm
 - Notify and present the project to the relevant city commissions, agencies and community management teams
 - Forming a steering committee to meet monthly and advise the consultants
- By May 1, 2021:
 - Consultants file a full draft of their report after conducting two workshops: one for residents and one for business owners
 - Project team publish the report in different online platforms
 - Project team present the final report in different forums: CMT meetings, ad hoc resident meeting, relevant commissions and city agencies meetings

After the project period is over: Publish RFQ based on reports aiming to get competitive proposals for redevelopment of the Strong School as a community asset.