



INVITATION FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: A CALL FOR PILOT CITIES

Cities of Opportunity: Healthy People, Thriving Communities

Advancing City Leadership to Address Social Determinants of Health

Impetus for Action

In cities across America, the life expectancies of residents who live a few miles apart, and sometimes even blocks apart, vary by as much as five, ten or even 20 years. As illustrated by the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, multiple factors (also known as social determinants of health) influence how long we live and how well we live. Economic, environmental and social conditions — ranging from education, employment, income, family and social supports to community safety, air and water quality, housing and transit — all play a role in shaping health outcomes in our communities.

City leaders are uniquely positioned to improve these local conditions, advancing cross-cutting approaches that address underlying factors of health and well-being.

Invitation to Join

To harness the power of city leadership to address social determinants of health, the National League of Cities (NLC) is piloting *Cities of Opportunity*, which offers an

agenda for action that seeks to improve the health and well-being of city residents. Through the pilot, NLC will help city leaders develop and implement robust, integrated action plans for their communities that are informed by peer learning and engagement with national experts. In the process, participating cities will help to co-create a new national initiative that advances the ability of cities to work across programs and agencies and craft more comprehensive strategies that improve health outcomes for their residents.

The Vision

Cities of Opportunity are places where residents can reach their full potential and live productive, fulfilling and healthy lives as part of a thriving community. In these cities, all residents — regardless of geography, background, age, race/ethnicity, gender or wealth — have access to:

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- **Opportunities** to learn and grow, from early childhood through postsecondary education;
- **Affordable, safe** and healthy housing;
- **Economic opportunities**, including family-supporting jobs and essential income supports;
- **Transportation** and social networks that connect them to jobs, schools and community resources;
- **Safe neighborhoods** that include accessible places to play and maintain active lifestyles;
- **Affordable, healthy foods** and other community and family necessities.

The Opportunity and Goal of the Pilot Project

The pilot phase of *Cities of Opportunity* will focus on a subset of the factors noted above. Informed by interviews with a range of mayors and other city leaders, NLC will begin with **three priority areas** for the pilot and then expand the scope of the project in the future based on our learnings from this first phase of the initiative. The three initial priority areas include:



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The opportunity to work and support a family, plan for the future, and improve one's standard of living.



HOUSING

An affordable, safe and healthy place to call home with access to jobs, schools and community resources.



CITY PLANNING & DESIGN

Land use and transportation decisions that enable residents to be connected to the people, places, resources and services they need.

Simultaneously, the pilot will also include a focus on **aligning resources** to drive change, including by promoting the **effective use of data**, broadening **financing strategies**, harnessing the role of **civic engagement**, advancing **equity** and expanding existing **partnerships** to ensure **sustainability**.

What Cities Can Expect from Participation in Cities of Opportunity

WHAT WE ARE OFFERING:

Cities of Opportunity provides an integrated framework for local elected officials and municipal leaders to improve the health and well-being of city residents by addressing multiple, inter-connected factors that affect how long we live and how well we live. NLC offers an **Agenda for City Action**, supported by **Levers for City Action** to help city leaders drive change.

- **The Agenda for Action** — Initially, NLC will offer a set of strategies for city action, spanning municipal **policies, programs and practices** across economic opportunity, housing and city planning & design, to ultimately improve health outcomes in local communities.
- **Levers for City Action** — In each of these areas, NLC will highlight levers that help cities zero in on **who** to work with, **where** to focus, and **how** to resource and sustain city efforts:
 - CIVIC ENGAGEMENT** to ensure residents have a voice in decisions that affect their lives;
 - DATA** to identify issues and specific populations for focused action;
 - EQUITY LENS** to better tailor and target efforts where they are needed most;
 - FINANCING** strategies to help city leaders stretch value for every dollar;
 - PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION** to align actions, further develop relationships and engage all key stakeholders; and
 - SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS** to ensure that solutions are long lasting.

HOW CITIES WILL BENEFIT:

- **Peer-to-peer connections** among city leaders who share a vision and desire to build healthy communities;
- **Technical assistance** over the course of the pilot effort, including but not limited to a readiness assessment, asset mapping and connections to expert faculty and resources;
- **An in-person convening** of city leaders and national experts;
- **Opportunities to inform** the design of a new national initiative NLC will be working to shape throughout the duration of the pilot, including the development of a city model framework, hub and new approach to NLC technical assistance; and
- **Practical advice and solutions** to guide and inform efforts to work across city agencies and build multi-sector partnerships that improve the health and vitality of cities and their residents.

WHAT ARE PILOT CITIES COMMITTING TO:

Over the course of the next eight months, a cohort of up to 12 pilot cities with similar aims will work together to share ideas and lessons on how they can move forward. City representatives will participate in virtual meetings (both individual and group, about one per month) and one in-person convening to:

- **Engage with leading experts** on strategies to tackle social determinants of health;
- **Participate in peer learning** to share knowledge and promising practices;
- **Co-create solutions** across multiple factors that can be addressed through city action;
- **Take part** in pre- and post-pilot assessments on knowledge/progress from the pilot; and
- **Capture and share** lessons learned with NLC’s larger membership network.

KEY DATES FOR POTENTIAL APPLICANTS:

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
Deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest	Monday, July 16, 2018	Send to Kitty Hsu Dana dana@nlc.org
Announcement of pilot cities	by July 27, 2018	
In-person convening with city teams and faculty experts	Two days, during week of Oct 22nd, 2018	TBD
In-person and group learning, co-creation conversations with NLC staff, select faculty	Once per month — up to 90 minutes per event	Virtual Meetings

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

City leaders (e.g., mayors, city councilmembers, city managers, senior administrators and advisors to mayors) who are inspired to pursue a more integrated approach to advance health and equity in their communities. Eligible candidates are:

- **Experienced** in at least one of the three focus areas: Economic Opportunity, Housing and City Planning & Design;
- **Working with diverse**, multi-sector partners (especially hospitals/health systems); and
- **Reaching across** city agencies to collaborate across issue areas.

HOW TO APPLY — EXPRESSION OF INTEREST:

NLC welcomes cities of all sizes, types (e.g., rural, urban, suburban) and geographic locales to join Cities of Opportunity. Up to 12 cities will be selected for the pilot. Interested cities are invited to submit an Expression of Interest that responds to the following questions (maximum of 1500 words, or no more than three pages):

- **What key initiatives** is your city currently undertaking to spur progress in any one (or all three) of the initial focus areas: **Economic Opportunity, Housing (Affordable, Healthy),** and **City Planning & Design**?
 1. Does your city have a Comprehensive Plan or Master Plan that addresses these issues?
 2. Have you taken specific steps to address equity issues in this work?
 3. Does your work include innovative efforts in areas such as civic engagement, data, financing, multi-sector collaboration and sustainability?
- **Why are you interested** in advancing a more integrated approach to improving health in your community at this time?
 1. Where do you see key opportunities?
 2. What are major obstacles/pain points to aligned, cross-issue work?
 3. What do you want to do better, more of, or less of?
- **What initial results** do you want to see from participation in the pilot eight months from now? What would you like to see two years from now?
- **Who will be on your team** for the pilot? (name 3-5 individuals and positions/organizations)
 1. While the personal participation of the mayor is not required, **a mayoral letter of support** must be submitted with your Expression of Interest.

Please send your Expression of Interest by July 16, 2018 to:

Kitty Hsu Dana, Senior Health Policy Advisor,
Institute for Youth, Education, and Families
dana@nlc.org

Questions are welcome.

For more info:
NLC.org/iyef

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