

Columbus Landmarks Foundation
“The Spirit of Neighborhoods: Culture Walks”
Quarterly Grant Application Narrative

1. What do you plan to do?

Columbus Landmarks Foundation (CLF) in collaboration with Columbus Public Health (CPH) will create a pilot program, “The Spirit of Neighborhoods: Culture Walks,” to supplement their existing Art Walks & Landmark Talks walking program. The Culture Walks will document, interpret, and convey the heritage and culture of four smaller neighborhoods within the larger neighborhoods of Near East, Near South, Merion Village, and Highland West. The Culture Walks will be based on stories and history from local residents. Humanities scholars will help to create a broad framework of nationally significant themes (i.e. Industrialization, immigration, urbanization, migration, etc.), providing context to understand local history and residents’ individual experiences. Both CLF staff and local residents will host the Culture Walks, the culminating activity, for a larger general audience in early fall 2017. Each tour will be 90-minutes in length, as opposed to the regular 60-minute weekday Arts Walk tours and will be held on a weekend afternoon in autumn 2017 at the convenience of the neighborhood.

Each of the four neighborhoods represents a diverse and varied history in the development of the city and because of its geographic location. All are affected by opportunities and displacements, crossroads and boundaries—the National Road, Route 23, railroads, land grants, annexations, redlining or restrictive covenants. Nineteenth and early twentieth century settlement patterns continue to affect neighborhood thinking even after collective memory fails. Immigration, urbanization, industrialization, migration often deals with difficult or painful history, especially in neighborhoods that have been marginalized by segregation and discrimination. Many of these stories are unknown. Other stories of celebrations, family traditions, resolve, faith, and aspirations give life to important, often overlooked, places.

The project will include:

(1) Key stakeholders and residents from each neighborhood invited to form a steering committee for planning purposes (March 2017). They will meet with the project director (Doreen Uhas-Sauer), humanities scholars (Dr. Toni Smith, Susan Keeny), key CLF and CPH staff, and volunteers to establish a framework for story collection for each neighborhood, and they will have opportunity to discuss how larger themes might help focus what they see as the spirit of their neighborhood and its history. They will learn from each other, give feedback on how to reach additional neighborhood residents and historians, and enlist the participation of younger audiences. Evaluator (Cathy Nelson) will attend.

(2) Separate meetings for each neighborhood will be held (April-early June 2017) for the purpose of gathering stories from a wide variety of neighborhood residents and across

generations. They will be held within the neighborhood at a time and place recommended by the neighborhood stakeholders. A humanities scholar, project director, CLF and CPH staff, and volunteers will be there to engage in conversation, record stories and ideas both digitally and in written form, and scan or photograph any documents, photos, artwork, music, literature, or artifacts that are brought to share. Uhas-Sauer will facilitate the discussions and use a variety of techniques to help ensure all have a chance to be heard and no one person dominates discussions. Residents will be encouraged to submit written stories during or after the gathering to ensure they have the opportunity to have their story heard. Uhas-Sauer will be available to meet with anyone who might have a story but cannot attend the community session because of logistical circumstances or go to a neighborhood school to meet with students. Young people also have their stories, often about changes they have seen or experienced; each generation sees the neighborhood through different eyes. Uhas-Sauer will provide maps, artifacts, or photos that may stimulate remembrances to the community gathering. Cathy Nelson will attend a minimum of two gatherings.

(3) Uhas-Sauer and CLF staff will compile the content generated from the community meetings into the four walking tour scripts, meet with stakeholders and/or other interested residents from each neighborhood for revisions/additions, conduct sample walk-throughs, and determine which residents might wish to tell a story along with way. Uhas-Sauer will make revisions and coordinate all logistics (July, August 2017).

(4) Uhas-Sauer will facilitate and coordinate the 90-minute tours through each neighborhood (September/early October 2017), inviting residents who made contributions to the tour script to deliver their portion of the story that was based on their experience. In future deliveries of the tour, beyond the timeline of this project, the entire script would be presented by the project director or other CLF staff. The purpose of the tour will be to facilitate the residents to share a part of their history through the experience of their personal lives and to express the spirit of their neighborhood to those who are visitors on the tour. Each tour, therefore, will take on a slightly different format as it is shaped by the neighborhood and its own unique stories. Local residents and members of the steering committee will also be invited to take the tour. Cathy Nelson will attend a minimum of two tours, and Dr. Toni Smith and Susan Keely will each attend two tours.

(5) All participants, scholars, staff, and volunteers will be invited at the conclusion of the tours to participate in a final sharing and evaluation of the project for feedback and celebration. Neighborhoods that wish to pursue the spirit of their neighborhood will be given ideas—and encouraged to create their own ideas—as to how they might do this through archiving, engaging with schools, doing oral histories, neighborhood festivals, and/or public art. Results of any surveys to-date will be shared. Cathy Nelson will attend the project evaluation. CLF and CPH have collaborated on similar projects previously.

In conjunction with CLF, CPH has created and maintains the Columbus Art Walks & Landmarks Talks which highlight public art and architecture in 14 Columbus neighborhoods through printed maps and audio site descriptions. In 2013 and 2014 Columbus Art Walks was funded by

generous grants from Ohio Humanities, including a 2014 grant at the Major level. CLF staff currently leads the Columbus Art Walks & Landmark Talks tours of those 14 neighborhoods. Participants on these tours have expressed a desire for more personal stories and interactions beyond art and architecture. The proposed Culture Walks pilot will allow us to pursue a more humanities-based approach to neighborhood history and development. CPH and CLF will build on their exemplary collaboration to improve individual health and neighborhood health through both physical activity and increasing community awareness and engagement around the history and spirit of neighborhoods. A healthy city requires all its residents to understand and appreciate the diversity of its neighbors. CLF has found that Art Walk & Landmark Talk participants, when exposed to the history and stories of residents in addition to the architecture of the area, tend to follow news about an area more, ask questions about the area's needs, are more apt to express empathy and concern, and are not judgmental about circumstances.

2. How do the humanities inform this project?

The humanities inform this project by situating the stories and experiences of current Columbus residents into the historical perspective of the city's development more broadly. By examining the forces that shaped these four neighborhoods over time, the current lived experience of residents can be validated, expanded, or enhanced by sharing and understanding that history.

The "Spirit of the Neighborhoods: Culture Walks" will inform participants by enhancing the understanding of how history and place tell us about how our neighborhoods have shaped and continue to shape the present-day city geographically and socially. Why did segregation patterns appear and shape streetcar neighborhoods in early 20th century and not in the 19th century? What was the role of music and visual arts in giving identity to one segregated neighborhood but not in another? How deep and how disparate are Columbus's neighborhood cultural roots? Did the city's role as a "crossroads" (from 1850s National Road to 1950s distribution center accessible to ¾ of the nation's population in 9 hours on highways) ultimately enhance or divide the city? Which neighborhoods are the result of unacknowledged or invisible migrations? Do neighborhoods today reflect these influences and even national themes in their layout, architecture, history in the arts and literature, or values? The pilot centers on four small neighborhood pockets in four different corners of the city on a very large quilt of urban fabric (there are almost 300 distinct neighborhoods in Columbus) and will create a curiosity in both resident participants and the tour audience for learning more about others through the Culture Walks.

The humanities is ultimately about thoughtful analysis and conversation. Each neighborhood is an archive; each resident can be a Walt Whitman who "sings the body electric." We are listening.

3. Who are the humanities professionals and what are their roles on the project?

Doreen Uhas-Sauer is a historian and author, as well as the Education and Outreach Coordinator for CLF. She holds multiple degrees from Ohio State University in history, political science, and literature. She is 40+ year classroom teacher in Columbus City Schools. She continues to work at Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center on grants, where she helped to establish the high school. She is a former Ohio Teacher of the Year, and still works in international civic education in Central and Eastern Europe with Bowling Green State University. She directed federal Teaching American History grants and the Annenberg (Foundation) Civic Education Initiative, working with 18 Columbus high schools, often using neighborhood history to help students problem-solve on civic issues. She has authored publications on the city's history, historic preservation, neighborhoods, and contributed content to many of the Art Walks. She currently works with WOSU's neighborhood series, co-chairs an advisory board for changes to the Social Studies curriculum at the state level, participates in a foreign newspaper digitalization project and a local history grants program at the Ohio History Connection, and is authoring a chapter on teaching Civil Rights.

As the project director and primary humanities professional on this proposal, Uhas-Sauer will help capture stories from neighborhood residents and refine them into a concise and compelling script for the Culture Walks, in collaboration with stakeholders, CLF and CPH staff, and two humanities scholars. Uhas-Sauer has led many CLF tours and Art Walk & Landmark Talk tours for CPH. She is an expert in providing engaging, enjoyable, and informative tours according to CLF's survey results. Uhas-Sauer will work with two humanities scholars on this pilot.

Dr. Toni Smith, an arts education specialist, and Susan Keeny, an architect working in a variety of neighborhoods on a historic preservation program. Dr. Toni Shorter Smith has a BA in American Studies from Miami University, a Master's in Black Studies, and a Ph.D. in Art Education from Ohio State University. She has worked in private industry, non-profit, and government organizations. Smith's work often connects her to community, from the Outreach Liaison position with Opera Columbus to the King Arts Complex as development director. Smith is a playwright who has received recognition for her work, including an "artistic excellence" nomination from GCAC for her adaptation of *To Be a Drum*, a children's book authored by Evelyn Coleman and illustrated by Aminah Robinson. Smith has received a national "innovation outreach" award from Opera America for her "Reach to Teach" model for audience expansion utilized by Opera Columbus. Her most recent freelance project, managing the African American Landmarks Preservation Initiative, brought together more than 30 volunteer researchers over a two-year period to document the history of African American settlements in Central Ohio, funded by OHC for CLF, and is currently utilized in a 76-page book distributed to schools and libraries in Columbus.

Susan Keeny is a graduate of Yale University with a Master's in Architecture. Her professional career as an architect and LEED AP equipped her to work with many neighborhood groups and developers on complex and controversial projects. Keeny has a dedication to working with

many of the diverse neighborhoods in Columbus as the director of a historic preservation program funded by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The project, housed at and working with CLF, seeks to preserve neighborhoods and strengthen opportunities for those who wish to stay in their homes and neighborhoods. Keeny's work takes her into many neighborhoods to learn their visions for the future.

4. How will you publicize the project?

In order to promote the program, CPH and CLF staff will lead a publicity campaign that will include social media, local print media, and printed flyers or posters. In the first phase of publicity, we will be recruiting for the community gatherings. Promotion for the community gatherings will require a more focused effort using targeted means including "snowball recruitment" where key neighborhood stakeholders are asked to spread the word and personally invite others in their area to participate. We will advertise in small print media outlets on the neighborhood level, including the Westside Messenger, the Southern Gateway and church bulletins targeted to specific churches in each area. We will also utilize the online presence and email lists of local neighborhood associations or civic groups, including the Olde Towne East Neighborhood Association and Partners Achieving Community Transformation (Near East), the Merion Village Association, the Highland West Civic Association, and the Old Oaks Civic Association, All Things South, Southside Columbus Alumni Facebook group, and Driving Park Civic Association (Near South).

The second phase of the publicity for the project will be directed at increasing participation in the walking tours, especially to bring participants from across Columbus, and to expand our audience beyond the usual participants in the existing Art Walks & Landmark Talks program. In order to reach a broader audience, we will post the Culture Walks events to community calendars hosted by the Columbus Dispatch, 10TV's Commit to Be Fit program, Columbus Underground, and Experience Columbus. Printed flyers and posters will be distributed through Columbus Recreation and Parks Community Recreation Centers, Central Ohio YMCA branches, and Columbus Metropolitan Library branches throughout the city. Finally, we will send direct mail in two of the four neighborhoods (Near East and Merion Village) to ensure that local residents are aware of the program and have the opportunity to participate. We have selected these two neighborhoods in order to pilot the use of direct mail and determine its cost effectiveness as a recruitment tool, since the budget for this program would not cover direct mail to all four neighborhoods. We are confident that recruitment will be strong in the Near South and Highland West neighborhoods without direct mail, due to their active civic associations, existing connections to Columbus Landmarks Foundation, and local newspapers.

Columbus Public Health will use its social media network to promote the project throughout (4,500 followers on Facebook and over 3,000 followers on Twitter). Columbus Landmarks Foundation will promote as well: (2,950) followers on Facebook, 4,800 followers on Twitter, and another 635 followers on Instagram). Columbus Landmarks Foundation also maintains an email list of 5,500 individuals that will be used to share project updates and its rollout.

5. Who is the intended audience?

This program has two related but distinct audiences. First, the residents of the neighborhoods where the Culture Walks are being held will be encouraged to not only participate in the community gathering to develop content, but to attend the walks. The second audience is residents of Columbus or visitors to Columbus who are not residents of the neighborhoods toured.

The Art Walks & Landmark Talks program already has an established audience, as last year's program attracted an average of 92 participants to each walk, with nearly 200 participants attending the most popular walk. We will look to build on this successful track record with the Culture Walks program, and we expect to have at least 150 participants at each of the four walks. We anticipate that the creation of new content related to the history and spirit of these neighborhoods, we will appeal to a wider audience than the Art Walks & Landmark Talks program.

6. What are the goals and outcomes of the project and how will it be evaluated?

The Culture Walks program will be evaluated in two domains: the humanities content and the broader impacts of the program on individual and neighborhood health. The humanities content goals are three-fold:

1. To interview and engage residents of four neighborhoods with the purpose of capturing their stories and observations on the "spirit of their neighborhood" with the help of humanities scholars familiar with neighborhood arts, history, and architecture.
2. To validate that these stories are indeed important to understanding the sense of place and the importance of local history both to the residents of the community and to the larger sense of a healthy city as one that values authentic experiences, firsthand knowledge and information, and healthy conversation.
3. To transmit information and stories gained from the community to diverse audiences. In addition, to encourage residents of these 4 areas and/or visitors to archive and celebrate their stories in some way.

The content evaluation to determine if these goals have been achieved will be led by Cathy Nelson, a local humanities expert with a wide breadth of qualifying experience. Ms. Nelson has a bachelor's degree in Education from The Ohio State University and a master's degree from Ashland University, and is the founder and president emeritus of the Friends of Freedom Society, a nineteenth century historical research organization whose main focus is Underground Railroad research. Ms. Nelson also served as an advisor to the Ohio History Connection's Ohio Village program and served for six years on the Ohio History Connection's Board of Trustees. The content development phase of the project will be evaluated by tracking resident participation, the number of stories and "artifacts" generated by each meeting, as well as the

number of final stories compiled by CLF staff. A survey will be used to determine the opinions and satisfaction of residents who participated in the meetings. Specifically, we will evaluate whether people valued the opportunity to share their stories, whether they feel more connected to their neighbors and neighborhood as a result of participating, and whether they intend to increase their civic engagement in their neighborhood as a result of participating. Content will also be evaluated by surveying participants on the walking tours regarding their enjoyment and understanding of the tour's content.

The health-focused goals of the project are also three-fold:

1. To provide safe and enjoyable opportunities for physical activity that appeal to a wide audience and that are accessible to all, especially health-vulnerable populations.
2. To promote social cohesion and sense of place within the four neighborhoods by sharing stories and allowing residents to experience the spirit of the neighborhood in a way they otherwise would not, in turn helping to reduce barriers to physical activity and promote community engagement.
3. To create conditions which encourage physical activity for residents of Columbus, and that extend beyond the implementation of the Culture Walks program. The health-focused evaluation will be led by Columbus Public Health staff, including Phil Hanson, Walking Programs Manager, and Scott Ulrich, Healthy Places Program Director, with support from the Office of Epidemiology. The health impacts of the program will be evaluated by conducting surveys of participants to capture their demographics, physical activity behaviors during daily life, and barriers to physical activity. Understanding the demographics of our audience will be important in determining whether the Culture Walks program has the potential to reach health vulnerable audiences, and whether residents or visitors make up a larger proportion of our audience. Comparing our demographics to those of the Columbus Art Walks & Landmark Talks will also allow us to say whether we have been able to reach a new audience. Surveys will address participants' intent to engage in additional physical activity, and any changes to their perceptions and barriers to physical activity as a result of participating in the Culture Walks. We will assess both the immediate impact of the "dose" of physical activity that is provided by participating in a Culture Walk, and more long-term impacts of the walk-in terms of changing perceptions and barriers to activity that may influence behavior change over time. We hope to determine whether the content produced and the method of delivery during the Culture Walks has the potential to impact health both on the individual and neighborhood level. For the purposes of the evaluation, we define health of the neighborhood through factors such as civic engagement, social cohesion, feeling welcome within the neighborhood, and social equity/justice. As social determinants of health, these factors impact the health of individuals by creating an environment that is health-promoting or health-inhibiting.

7. Who is the sponsoring organization?

Columbus Landmarks was founded in 1977 and strives to enhance the quality of the built environment by promoting preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings and neighborhoods and by advocating for excellence in the design of new buildings, public art and spaces. In so doing, Columbus Landmarks recognizes that our city's physical assets, old and new, contribute to its vitality and help to provide a foundation for the quality of life in our city. We are committed to sharing the stories behind the stones, connecting history with heritage and culture.

Columbus Landmarks is qualified to carry out the Spirit of Neighborhoods: Culture Walks project through our longtime experience developing and leading tours and through our engagement in historic neighborhoods. Columbus Landmarks has partnered with Columbus Public Health for profound, immersive humanities-based Arts Walks & Landmark Talks for the past four consecutive years. The Culture Walks project fits with our mission and aligns with our goals to advocate for, promote, and preserve Columbus landmarks and neighborhoods.