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Need for the Project

1. Description of neighborhood and level of distress.

The City of River Rouge, Michigan borders southwest Detroit, and shares history, characteristics and challenges with its larger and better-known neighbor. River Rouge's population is 8,321, approximately 49.9% Caucasian, 42.0% African-American, 5.0% Hispanic, 2.8% two or more races, and 1.6% American Indian (<http://www.city-data.com/city/River-Rouge-Michigan.html#top>). The city is comprised of 2.8 square miles of residential land, small commercial pockets, and the uninhabited, industrial Zug Island on the Detroit River. For more than a century, Zug Island housed and provided jobs for heavy industry, storage of raw materials, shipping, and major steel production for metropolitan Detroit and the country. During the steel industry's peak in the 1950's, thousands of workers were employed on the island.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zug_Island) The once thriving community of River Rouge has declined since its post-war prime, and has been particularly devastated by economic declines in recent years. Loss of jobs, including the closing of the remaining steel plant, and a high unemployment rate (currently 16.4%), have contributed to a run-down city where struggling economic, social and environmental sectors have eroded the opportunities for children, youth, and families to thrive in home, school and community life.

The legacy of heavy industry and its demise is a poor environmental sector for River Rouge residents. One of the most pressing problems in the neighborhoods surrounding Zug Island is poor air quality. Problems related to air quality cited by residents a decade ago in a March 2000 Detroit Free Press article continue to plague the city. Residents complained of the "rancid odor that permeates their living spaces and causes nausea, headaches and dry heaves. The grass and trees in surrounding neighborhoods are dying and there is rust-colored dust on the streets, homes

and cars.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zug_Island). More than one in ten homes in River Rouge is vacant. (<http://www.americantowns.com/mi/riverrouge-information>). These vacant homes, as reported by residents and students in the city, become locales for selling and using drugs, and holding underage parties. The city’s shrinking budget has resulted in reduced police and fire personnel and cuts in city services including trash pick-up and park services. The River Rouge Power Plant, according to a May 2010 report by the Climate Justice Initiative, “is surrounded by low income communities, primarily comprised of people of color, specifically African American and Latino. The plant is a mere two blocks from the start of one neighborhood, and there is a park where people bring their families barbecue, and catch fish, a mere 500 feet from the smokestacks.” (<http://climatejusticeinitiative.wordpress.com/>).

River Rouge’s economic sector has suffered from the loss of large and small businesses, many of them casualties of Michigan’s struggling automotive industry. Both the loss of businesses and the loss of individual jobs have contributed to the city’s dwindling population. From 2000 to 2008, River Rouge lost 14.8% of its residents, shrinking the population to 8,321 residents (<http://www.zoomprospector.com/communitydetail.aspx?id=13769>). The average median household income is \$30,360. Twenty-two percent of residents’ income is below the poverty level, and of that, 10.7% of residents have incomes 50% below the poverty level. For the population that has remained in River Rouge, approximately 35.0% are under the age of 18, and of those, 52.5% live below the poverty line. The total of River Rouge children (40.0%) who are economically disadvantaged is two times that of the state average (19.0%) (<http://www.city-data.com/city/River-Rouge-Michigan.html>). In 2008, 41.3% of Michigan’s students qualified for free and reduced lunch based on low income; in the Detroit Public Schools 74% of students qualified. River Rouge topped both Michigan and Detroit: 80% of its students qualified for free

or reduced lunch (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/StateLanding.aspx?state=MI>; <http://www.greatschools.org/cgi-bin/mi/district-profile/633#finance>).

River Rouge's social sector, which includes the schools, churches, human services and cultural institutions, is beleaguered as well. The River Rouge School District is in particular peril, ranking 568th among Michigan's 632 school districts (<http://www.schooldigger.com/go/MI/schools/2976006555/school.aspx>). The decrease in population size has negatively impacted the River Rouge School District, which has lost enough students to warrant closing one of its four school buildings in 2008. The district currently serves about 1,180 children and youth from kindergarten through 12th grade. In 2008, in response to low enrollment numbers and budget constraints, the District closed the Walter White Elementary School building and moved the staff and students to Ann Visger, another primary school. (River Rouge Board of Education, 2008). Currently there are three operating school buildings; Ann Visger Elementary, Clarence Sabbath Middle School, and River Rouge High School. The Walter White building was rented to The Guidance Center, which had been operating six Head Start classrooms and continues to do so.

Student achievement in River Rouge has fluctuated significantly over the past three years, achievement remains far below the levels the community desires, and an alarming trend has emerged with respect to students' academic trajectory. The Michigan Department of Education in 2008-09 rated Ann Visger Elementary and Clarence B. Sabbath Middle Schools each a letter C grade in terms of their adequate yearly performance (AYP), which was an improvement as these schools were not making AYP in 2006-07 and 2007-08. River Rouge High School received a D-Alert, which means the school did not meet AYP, and has not met AYP for the past three consecutive school years. Currently all three schools in the River Rouge School

District qualify for Title I funding and are consistently low performing schools. For school years 2005-06, 2007-08, 2008-09, an average of 50% of 4th and 7th grade students met state's proficiency levels in reading, whereas for 11th graders only one-quarter of the students met the state proficiency level for reading. More concerning was that on average for school years 2005-06, 2007-08, and 2008-09, 57% of 4th grade students met math state proficiency levels, 59% of 7th grade students met proficiency levels, and only 9% of 11th grade students met the state's math proficiency level. These data demonstrate a disturbing trend in student achievement: It appears that half of elementary school students are on target, but by the time they reach high school and are one year away from graduating from high school, less than one-quarter of them meet the state's standards for reading and math.

Another distressing issue affecting the community of River Rouge is dropout and graduation rates. For the 2008-09 school year, River Rouge High School had a graduation rate of 51.72%, and in looking back to 2006 data, 30.5% of 16-19 year olds that had dropped out of high school had not enrolled in any form of education program, such as a GED class or vocational training. Twenty-two percent of River Rouge residents completed grades 9-12th but did not earn a diploma or a GED, and 37.1% completed high school or received a GED.

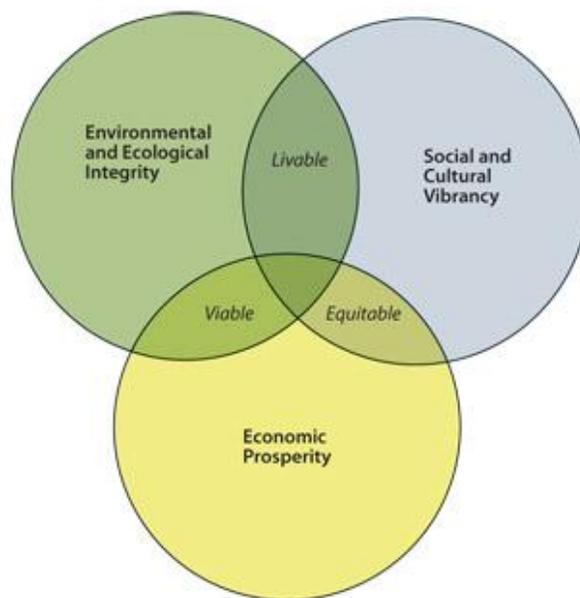
For many River Rouge youth and adults, options appear to be limited. In a 2010 Community Needs Assessment conducted by The Guidance Center, many residents stated concerns over the increased use of drugs and alcohol by youth, the fact that drugs are being sold in the schools and on corners or abandoned houses, the large number of adults participating in drug use, the selling and using of harder drugs, and gang activity. There are two gangs that are very present in the community of River Rouge; the 500 Block Housing Project Blood Gang and the 8th Street and Ecorse Street Crips Gang. Gang activity often revolves around the selling of

drugs, vandalism and graffiti, which can be found on many vacant building viaducts, bridges and other property in the community. Over 54% of youth surveyed in River Rouge in 2007 reported that they drink alcohol to fit in with peers. In another survey administered to Downriver youth in the 2006-07 school year, 4.7% reported using marijuana in the past 30 days, whereas by the 2008-09 school year, reported increased sharply, to 19% (The Guidance Center, 2009).

One of the most difficult problems facing the school district and community is the social acceptance of using marijuana. It was extremely difficult to find any data on youth receiving tickets, misdemeanors or any type of punishment by the schools or city police when caught using marijuana. Despite the fact that the school has strict policies regarding substance use on or near the school campus, students are often not punished by either the school or the police. Police and support staff from the schools shared that if youth were ticketed for being caught with marijuana, they would have to be processed through the court system in downtown Detroit. This process not only creates transportation and loss of work time issues for families, but also pulls the youth out of school, which negatively affects the schools attendance and enrollment rates. The schools cannot afford to have low numbers, as it affects the amount of money the district will receive for the next fiscal year. Additionally, students have commented that the schools do not have enough staff to walk the halls during passing time to catch students selling or using marijuana. Students reported that they believed that increasing staff presence in the hallways would reduce the amount of drug trafficking and drug use in the school.

Despite the significant challenges to the city's environmental/ ecological, social/cultural and economic sectors, River Rouge residents feel a strong attachment to their community and a sense of pride concerning the family history and work history in the city, and many residents have voiced their interest in changing the culture of their neighborhood. A close look at the

resources available to the community depicted on the River Rouge Continuum of Services and Resources (pages 16-18) points out the reality that although many services and resources exist, there are many gaps, particularly in the economic and environmental sectors. Furthermore, the links between providers of the services and resources are frequently weak or nonexistent, and services are often delivered in isolation and without cross referrals. The identified services, the people who provide them, and the people who receive them together serve as a solid foundation for envisioning what a true Promise Neighborhood looks like. They will be key to identifying what remains to be accomplished in order to achieve a common dream of a sustainable community in River Rouge, and in making that dream a reality.



A sustainable community is achieved by the overlapping synergy between thriving environmental/ecological, social/cultural, and economic sectors. As depicted in the diagram above, a truly sustainable neighborhood is at the center, where all three sectors overlap. Our hope for River Rouge is that together, we can create a thriving, sustainable Promise Neighborhood through vibrant synergy in all three sectors.

Quality of Project Design

2. Description of how the applicant will plan to build the continuum.

The Guidance Center will work with the River Rouge Public Schools, a Title I school district with three low performing schools: Clarence Sabbath Elementary (K-5), Ann Visger Middle Academy (6-8) and a two-tier high school comprised of New Tech High (9-10) and Middle College High (11-12). Dr. Carlos Lopez has completed his second year as Superintendent of Schools, and in that time he has made great strides in restructuring the curriculum and reorganizing the schools into achievement-focused international academies to “re-imagine the educational landscape to prepare students for a global economy.” He shared with the community his vision for pre-school through post-secondary preparedness—the Rouge Promise—on the district’s website <http://therougepromise.com/>. The goal of the international academies is to build a culture of high expectations for all students with a rigorous curriculum utilizing project-based learning. Driven by the requirements of a 21st century workforce, the curriculum fosters: top academic performance, creativity and innovation, the ability to learn quickly, the ability to multi-task, technological savvy, global competence and fluency in two or more languages. Dr. Lopez sought and received federal funding to supplement Title I and II funds to begin the transformation of the school district. Dr. Lopez’ vision is parallel to the Obama administration’s priorities for education: finding new ways to improve standards for what students learn and how progress is assessed; the quality of teaching and school leadership; data systems; and improving lowest performing schools. (Schorr & Chou, 2010, p. 27).

From his first day on the job, Dr. Lopez realized that he could not accomplish this transformational task alone. He recognized that students and their families face many barriers to learning that cannot be overcome through school resources alone. Recognizing that basic needs

including adequate housing, transportation, food and public safety, as well as physical and mental wellness must be in place in order for learning to take place, Dr. Lopez began to seek out community partners who could provide necessary supports for students and their families as they progressed from birth through adulthood. He set out to identify and build partnerships that would provide developmental, commercial, recreational, physical, and social assets that are vital to transforming distressed neighborhoods into healthy and vibrant communities of opportunity.

These partnership efforts resulted in two initiatives that are now in place, which will form the foundation for creating a continuum of solutions for a River Rouge Promise Neighborhood. First, a partnership with The Guidance Center and a patchwork of funders created the Walter White Community Resource Center (CRC), housed in a former elementary school building. The CRC is a hub of community activity that has a vibrant Head Start wing, a full-service Family Resource Center, a community garden, summer and after school activities for children and youth, and other services in start-up or planning stages. The CRC will be the place-based anchor for the planned River Rouge Promise Neighborhood, around which community engagement will flourish and develop a continuum of solutions.

Secondly, a partnership with the City of River Rouge, the fiduciary for a Title V grant, and 12 other community sectors, resulted in the formation of the River Rouge Prevention Policy Board (PPB), which will serve as the advisory board for the River Rouge Community Engagement Task Force, formed to develop and initiate the plan for the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood. A needs assessment conducted as part of the PPB planning process revealed community needs much greater than the scope of the prevention initiatives that the PPB is funded to tackle with Title V funds. A Promise Neighborhoods Planning grant will enable the newly formed Promise Neighborhood Community Engagement Task Force and the PPB to

collaborate on expanding the scope and reach of the PPB to develop a plan for a continuum of solutions designed to significantly improve the academic and family and community support indicators outlined on page 23 and in the Logic Model (Appendix F).

Dr. Lopez' cradle-to-college vision for his River Rouge Academies is ambitious, but it is supported at both ends of the spectrum by local educational leaders. The Guidance Center, a recognized leader in Early Childhood and Infant Mental Health Programs, offers a robust array of parenting resources and family support services from infancy through adulthood, and operates six Head Start classrooms at the Walter White Community Resource Center, which prepare pre-school children for a smooth transition to Kindergarten. Dr. Lopez has forged a relationship with Wayne County Community College at the other end of the spectrum, collaborating on dual enrollment for high school students and strategies for supporting students in their transition to college and throughout college.

Additionally, Dr. Lopez is building relationships with the following educational resources, which overlap into the environmental and economic sectors and will bring expertise to the planning process that will begin to link efforts in all three sectors.

- E-Three Labs- Energy+ Education+ Entrepreneurship, is a nonprofit community development organization that envisions a world in which young people in developing communities can successfully start businesses using modern technologies. Partnering with River Rouge Schools for a Promise Neighborhood, E-Three Labs will enlighten K-12 students, teachers and community about solar energy and other forms of alternative energy; expose students (6-12) to community projects that will further cement their knowledge of the uses of solar energy; and link students to more extensive training and

larger projects locally and internationally. E-Three Labs sponsors youth working/learning trips to Africa and other countries.

- Creative Community Pathways, Inc. is partnering with the River Rouge School District to increase parent involvement in schools, church activities, after-school programs, and community activities and events through a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant from the Michigan Department of Education. CCP aims “first and foremost to provide a safe place for our children.”
- Creative Change Educational Solutions is a nonprofit organization focused on educational leadership and innovation through a lens of sustainability, helping educational institutions use renewable energy, brownfield redevelopment and other sustainability sectors as platforms for raising achievement, increasing rigor, and delivering on the promise of educational equity. Its aim is to support long-term educational change by building the capacity of schools, colleges, and other educational organizations to institutionalize sustainability as a core reform strategy.
- Employment Training Designs, Inc. is a Michigan Works Career Development agency serving Western Wayne County area. Programs include JET, WIA Adult, WIA Youth, Welfare-to-Work, NWLB and MCAN Grant, and special services for youth aging out of the Foster Care System. Services include Career Assessments, Soft Skills Enhancements and Job Training and Placement.

The partners who have signed the MOU for the Promise Neighborhood Community Engagement Task Force represent community stakeholders who bring to the initiative a wealth and variety of perspectives and resources from the social, economic and environmental sectors. Individual agencies representing human services, education, healthcare, government,

employment and business include The Guidance Center, the River Rouge School District, the City of River Rouge, Wayne Metro Community Action Agency, Wayne County Community College, Oakwood Healthcare System, PIRC Satellite, United Way Early Learning Community, Bright Smiles, LLC, Creative Community Pathways, Inc. Creative Change Educational Solutions, E-Three Labs, and Employment Training Designs. MOU Signers that represent a collective membership include the Downriver Community Conference, Connections- the Wayne County Systems of Care, the River Rouge Prevention Policy Board, the Great Start Collaborative- Wayne and the Fort Visger Community Development Corporation.

The signed MOU secures commitment and accountability from partners to work long-term to implement the River Rouge Promise Neighborhoods Plan (Appendix C). The expanded scope of the Advisory Board, (PPB) will be addressed at a joint meeting of the PPB and the Promise Neighborhood Community Engagement Task Force, at which time the process of integrating the two entities will be formalized and codified. See Timeline (page 32).

The Community Engagement Task Force envisions this initiative as a community-based participatory project, which will inspire broad community investment, be shaped by the needs and desires expressed by River Rouge residents, and be implemented with active and enthusiastic community involvement.

The Project Director will provide oversight for the entire project, hire and orient project staff, and supervise the Project Manager. The Project Director and Project Manager, in consultation with the Community Engagement Task Force, will identify and contract with a Strategic Planning Consultant at the beginning of the project year.

The Strategic Planning Consultant will have expertise in neighborhood revitalization and experience working with diverse community stakeholders, and will shape and guide the

year-long planning process to ensure development of a viable Promise Neighborhood Plan that will build a continuum of solutions designed to significantly improve the identified academic indicators and family and community support indicators. The Strategic Planning Consultant will work with the Center for Excellence (CFE) to pull together all the quantitative and qualitative data collected for the needs assessment and the segmentation analysis. During this process, stakeholders will review information, provide feedback, and rank in order of priority the needs and strengths of the findings. The Strategic Planning Consultant will engage project staff (Project Manager, Development Officer and CFE staff) in writing a report that covers: 1) the work of the Task Force in expanding its partnerships, 2) the database that was constructed and outcomes of the Needs Assessment and baseline data, 3) the segmentation analysis that identifies proposed solutions, and 4) recommendations for fixing the problems and areas of strength.

The Project Manager will facilitate Task Force and Work Group meetings, facilitate cross-group reporting and information sharing, and facilitate the development of a final River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Plan, and its dissemination to the community. The Project Manager will supervise the Community Liaison, Community Organizers and Support Staff, and be the liaison between all project staff, the Task Force, Work Groups, Strategic Planning Consultant, the Center for Excellence staff and Community of Practice efforts.

The Community Liaison will be a resident of the City of River Rouge who will facilitate identification of new sectors and members for the Task Force and Work Groups, and work with the Community Organizers to engage broad and diverse community involvement in planning opportunities, data collection, community activities and quarterly Community Meetings.

The Community Organizers will actively engage new sectors and members for the Task Force, Work Groups and Quarterly Community Meetings, and work to integrate the new sectors

into the framework of the Continuum of Services and Resources (See pages 16-18). The Community Organizers will engage key stakeholder groups represented on the PPB such as the faith community, parents and youth, and enlist their expertise and assistance in reaching out to their peers throughout the community.

The Development Officer will work with Task Force members to develop a long-term strategy to braid and leverage funding from diverse funding sources, programs and agencies.

The Research Associate and Research Assistant are Center for Excellence staff.

The Support Staff will report to the Project Manager and provide administrative support to the project.

The River Rouge community has a framework of services and resources in place (see Continuum of Services and Resources, pages 16 -18), which the Promise Neighborhood Community Engagement Task Force will use as a starting point to gather community input and support to build a ‘cradle to college’ Continuum of Solutions to knit these and other services together, to provide a system that will allow for seamless support along the continuum. The challenge of the Community Engagement Task Force will be to synthesize the work of the Work Groups into an overall plan that has strategies in place to broaden the Continuum of Services and Resources with solutions that fill identified gaps, and to institute policies and communication systems for continuous program improvement and for sharing data, information and referrals, and strategic, collaborative fundraising.

The Community Needs Assessment Work Group will assist the staff of the Center for Excellence in conducting a Needs Assessment and Segmentation Analysis that will build on the findings of the PPB Needs Assessment and provide data requested by the national evaluator. The

following PPB Work Groups will support data collection for the Needs Assessment, participate in the Segmentation Analysis, and seek community input and engagement throughout the year:

- Community Resources Work Group
- Youth Advisory Work Group
- Program and Education Work Group.

New Work Groups will be formed if needed, focusing on Healthy Living, Business Development, or other areas of identified community need.

Using the data from the Needs Assessment and the Segmentation Analysis, the Work Groups will begin to identify gaps in service and align the identified needs with solutions supported by professional literature and evidence based interventions that will result in improving the identified indicators (pages 23-26). Recommended solutions will include strategies for finding and maintaining sustainable funding, building on existing partnerships, engaging new stakeholders, and linking services. Each Work Group will provide a report of recommended solutions to the Task Force. The Task Force will look at all of the Work Group recommendations, prioritize them for implementation phases over time, and identify areas that need additional study.

The Program Manager will work with the Strategic Planning Consultant to synthesize the reports from the Work Groups and Task Force into a final River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Plan. The Community Engagement Task Force will finalize the plan and share it with the community at a Community Celebration to close the planning year and rally the community for the implementation phase of the Promise Neighborhood.

River Rouge Cradle to College Continuum of Services and Resources

0-3 -----→Preschool -----→K-5 -----→6-8 -----→9-10 -----→11-12 -----→College

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT SOLUTIONS

Early Learning Center (TGC/United Way) -----→

Head Start (TGC)--→RR Schools: Ann Visger → Sabbath ---→ New Tech High → Middle College High ----→ WCC

GSRP (RR Schools)→

Community Resource Center (TGC/PIRC) Parent Information Resource Center Satellite Site) -----→

- After School Activities and Tutoring -----→
- Summer Arts and Literacy Camp; Summer Math and Science Camp-----→
- Mentoring -----→
- Internships -----→

Curriculum Development (TGC, Creative Pathways, Inc., Creative Change Educational Solutions, E-Three Labs,

Wayne County Community College WCCC)-----→

Teacher/caregiver Training (TGC/(FAST)Families and Students Together, Creative Pathways, Inc., Creative Change Educational

Solutions, E-Three Labs, Wayne Community College (WCCC), Community in Schools (CIS) -----→

Parent Education classes -----→

Policy (Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency, Great Start Collaborative-Wayne)-----→

0-3 ----->Preschool ----->K-5 ----->6-8 ----->9-10 ----->11-12 ----->College

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS

Early On--->

Developmental Disabilities Services ----->

Mental Health Services ----->

Substance Abuse Treatment ----->

Great Parents Great Start (Great Start Collaborative/ Early Childhood Investment Corporation) ----->

Parent Child Interaction Groups ----->

Home visits (Parents As Teachers, Infant Mental Health, Wraparound (birth- adult) ----->

Project Achieve (Wayne Metro)----->

Youth As Resources and Teen Coalitions (TGC)----->

Youth Assistance Program (TGC) ----->

Juvenile Justice Services----->

Training for direct service workers (VCE and VCR) ----->

Policy (Connections- Wayne County Systems of Care ----->

0-3 -----→Preschool -----→K-5 -----→6-8 -----→9-10 -----→11-12 -----→College

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Walter White Community Resource Center -----→

- Dental/Medical Clinic (Bright Smiles/UD Dental School) -----→
- Community Garden- workshops/ fresh food access (TGC, Fort Visger CDC, Wayne Metro, Creative Change) -----→
- Basic Needs- food pantry, clothing closet, infant supplies -----→

Workforce Development- soft skills, green job training, job placement (TGC, Wayne Metro,

DRCC, E-Three Labs, Employment Training Development, Inc.) -----→

Housing (Fort Visger CDC, River Rouge Housing Commission, Wayne Metro) -----→

Commercial Development (Fort Visger, City of River Rouge) -----→

Community Service- AmeriCorps- community service volunteers -----→

Recreation- City of RR Belanger Park (waterfront gazebo, two picnic pavilions, a walking path surrounding a play area)-----→

Policy- RR Prevention Policy Board (City of RR, RR School District, TGC and 10 other community sectors) -----→

- CASA START (Title V-funded evidence based community prevention model) -----→

Quality of Project Services

8. Description of how the applicant will plan to use the data.

The Center for Excellence (CFE) is The Guidance Center's research and evaluation department that will be the lead in collecting and managing data for the proposed River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative. CFE will be engaged in conducting a comprehensive needs assessment of children along the cradle-through-college-to career continuum that will be built upon the statement of need. The CFE, founded 2003, has led extensive internal evaluations for The Guidance Center's programming and has experience in developing and implementing various evaluation methods, such as, quasi-experimental design, participatory methodology, and comparison and retrospective comparison group methods. CFE has had opportunities to work and partner with research universities and conduct multiple projects that involved national evaluations with the Department of Education and SAMHSA.

The Guidance Center utilizes an electronic health record for all programs and the CFE has used this database to enter, retrieve and analyze data for various internal evaluations. The Guidance Center's electronic health records also include data on any consumers of programs from River Rouge. Having supported the development of The Guidance Center's internal databases, CFE has partnered with various external entities to make data sharing easier. CFE led the charge in creating a universal release of information form that was HIPPA compliant, and met state, county, and four other child-serving agencies' policies and regulations. Leaders from Wayne County's Department of Human Services, Juvenile Justice, Wayne RESA (School Districts), and Community Mental Health share this universal release of information form to support the work CFE is charged with as the lead evaluator for the Systems of Care initiative in Wayne County.

CFE has previously collected extensive data on youth and the community of River Rouge for a needs assessment for Title V funding. The successful collection of data for the risk and protective factor data was in part due to CFE's collaboration with partners of the River Rouge Prevention Policy Board (PPB). These previously collected data will enhance the needs assessment for the Promise Neighborhood because they share similar indicators, and trend data will be readily available to report.

For the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative, CFE proposes to work with partners to gain access to certain data sources and will be the lead in creating a structure that works with partners and stakeholders to identify and extract data that will eventually be synthesized for dissemination and decision-making. By utilizing the partnerships CFE will have sources of data for the Needs Assessment that will provide a comprehensive baseline to be used going forward to measure the progress of implementation activities.

A community-based participatory evaluation approach will be utilized that includes stakeholders (Community Engagement Task Force, community residents, and others TBD) to support in building a system to identify and extract longitudinal data for the Needs Assessment and baseline. A longitudinal database will be built in a progressive manner, and as indicator data is collected it will be shared with stakeholders for interpretation purposes, and this will occur in an ongoing process as data continues to be collected. A formal meeting structure/timeline will be determined after a formal evaluation plan is finalized with the national evaluator. Efforts will be made to invite stakeholders not on the Task Force, such as teachers or health care professionals, to testify about the areas they have expertise in, so information that is not easily captured in a database can be shared about the nature and scope of key indicators. All meetings will be documented in minutes that will be made available, and these documents not only provide

documentation of progress of planning activities, but will also support the work of the Strategic Consultant, CFE, and stakeholders in conducting a segmentation analysis.

The Strategic Consultant will work with CFE to pull together all the quantitative and qualitative data collected to report to stakeholders for the segmentation analysis. During this process stakeholders will review information, provide feedback, and rank in order of priority the needs and strengths of the findings. The Strategic Consultant will engage project staff in writing a report that covers: 1) the work of the Task Force in expanding its partnerships, 2) the database that was constructed and outcomes of the Needs Assessment and baseline data, 3) the segmentation analysis that identifies proposed solutions, and 4) recommendations for resolving the problems and areas of strength.

9. Description of commitment to work with a national evaluator.

CFE will work with the national evaluator to support their data collection and evaluation goals while simultaneously utilizing their knowledge to ensure that an effective and comprehensive data collection plan is in place. In addition, all collected data will be managed to ensure confidentiality of participants, and that the data is accessible and available to stakeholders and the national evaluator. CFE will work with partners on the Task Force to collect data on the identified indicators, any additional demographic data requested by the national evaluator, and additional indicator data that contributes to understanding the level of need in the community. These data will contribute to completing a comprehensive needs assessment, which in turn will inform stakeholders, the Community Engagement Task Force, project staff and the Strategic Consultant in developing a plan for a continuum of solutions. In the past, CFE has developed comparison groups for local and national evaluations, and would welcome the support of the

national evaluator to ensure credible comparison groups were selected for the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative.

CFE has the capability to gather data on the identified indicators, and has conducted similar work with River Rouge's Prevention Policy Board for Title V funding. In 2009, CFE gathered data for multiple years on risk and protective factors in the city of River Rouge with a focus on older children and teens, and participated in a segmentation analysis with Title V's evaluators. This work was successfully completed because of the partnerships on the PBB, their expertise supported CFE in determining key indicators and sources of data. CFE has created and utilized measures and surveys that address many of the identified Academic, and Family and Community Support Indicators, and will encourage stakeholder and national evaluator feedback to adapt these tools to fit the needs in collecting valid and reliable data. Additionally, CFE will work with the Community Engagement Task Force and the national evaluator to formalize a plan to identify and collect valid and reliable data.

10. Description of indicators to be used for the needs assessment.

The River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative is utilizing the three sectors of sustainability to shape its approach for the project, and to support this; CFE has proposed to utilize a community-based participatory evaluation, a practice that is highly supported by sustainability literature (Corbiere-Nicollier, Ferrari, Jemelin, Jolliet, 2003; Innes & Booher, 2000; Reed, Fraser, Doughill, 2005; Reed, M., Fraser, S. Morse, and A. J. Dougill. 2005). CFE and stakeholders are interested in identifying indicators that provide information on the three sectors: social, environmental, and economic. CFE understands that as stakeholders become more engaged indicators may need to evolve over time, because outcomes demonstrate that conditions

have changed (Reed, Fraser, Doughill, 2005). Stakeholder engagement will support the project’s understanding of the sustainability indicators, because these indicators will do more than measure the project’s progress, “they can stimulate a process to enhance the overall understanding of environmental and social problems, facilitate community capacity building, and help guide policy and development projects” (Reed, Fraser, Doughill, 2005, p. 407).

Preliminary indicators were added to expand upon the three sectors of sustainability and to address areas of concern the community had previously identified from a Needs Assessment conducted in late 2009. Table 1 addresses the identified Academic Indicators and two additional proposed indicators; one will examine the frequency with which residents utilize the early learning resources offered at Walter White Community Resource Center and the other looks at students’ suspension and expulsion rates. Family and Community Support Indicators are located in Table 2 and include five additional proposed indicators.

Program Indicators are indicators that will be used for research and evaluation purposes for the national evaluator, and the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative understands that they are not required to propose solutions for them. Project Indicators are indicators for which the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative will propose solutions intended to result in progress on the indicators.

Table 1

Academic Indicators	Program Indicators	Project Indicators	Result
# & % of children birth to five years old who have a place where they usually go, other than an emergency room, when they	X	X	Children enter kindergarten ready to learn

are sick or in need of advice about their health			
# & % of three-year olds and children in kindergarten who demonstrate at the beginning of the program or school year age-appropriate functioning across multiple domains of early learning	X	X	
# & % of children from birth to kindergarten entry, participating in center-based or formal home-based early learning settings or programs, which may include Early Head Start, Head Start, child care, or publicly-funded preschool	X	X	
# & % of residents who use the Walter White Community Resource Center's early learning services*		X	
# & % of students at or above grade level according to State mathematics and English language assessment in grades 4 th , 7 th and 11 th	X	X	Students are proficient in core academic subjects
Attendance rate of students in 6 th , 7 th , 8 th , and 9 th grades	X	X	Students successfully transition from middle grades to high school

Graduation rate	X	X	Youth graduate high school
# & % of suspensions and expulsions for grades 8 th -12 th *		X	
# & % of River Rouge Promise Neighborhood students who graduate with a regular high school diploma, and obtain postsecondary degrees, vocational certificate, or other industry-recognized certifications or credentials without the need for remediation	X	X	High school graduates obtain a postsecondary degree, certification, or credential

* Proposed additional Academic Indicator

Table 2

Family and Community Support Indicators	Project Indicators	Program Indicators	Result
# & % of children, teens and adults who have a place where they usually go other than an emergency room, when they are sick or in need of advice about their health*		X	Students, parents and community members are healthy
# & % of children who participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily and consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily	X	X	Students are healthy
# & % of students who feel safe at school	X	X	Students feel safe at

and traveling to and from school, as measured by a school climate survey			school and in their community
Student mobility rate	X	X	Students live in stable communities
# & % of vacant homes*		X	
# & % of families that rent versus own a residence*		X	
Crime rates by age and offense type*		X	
# & % of youth reporting use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs*		X	
# & % of students who say they have a caring adult in their home, school, and community	X	X	Families and community members support learning in River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative schools
# & % of family members who attend parent-teacher conferences	X	X	
# & % of students who have school and home access (and % of the day they have access) to broadband internet and a connected computing device		X	Students have access to 21 st century learning tools

* Proposed additional Family and Community Support Indicator

Quality of Project Personnel

3. Description of the applicant's organizational capacity to plan and implement a promise neighborhood.

The Guidance Center (TGC) is the largest human service agency in Downriver Wayne County. A community presence for more than 50 years, TGC is an innovative leader in providing mental health and substance abuse treatment, prevention and educational programs to help children, youth, adults and families thrive. Staff for this project have deep experience in River Rouge, building diverse partnerships, delivering and evaluating programs, conducting needs assessments, and securing funding. We will identify an independent consultant with expertise in neighborhood revitalization and community engagement, to facilitate the planning process. Key staff include:

Roxanne Brinkerhoff, Project Director, is Director of Early Childhood and Family Support Services for The Guidance Center. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from The University of Michigan and a Masters of Education from the University of Phoenix. She chairs the Education Action Teams of the Great Start Collaborative Wayne County, a partner of the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. She is a member of The Guidance Center's Administrative and Operations Teams, sits on the agency's Strategic Planning Committee and leads the Education Task Force. She has been with The Guidance Center for more than 10 years and has been instrumental in securing braided funding and developing broad community relationships that have resulted in far-reaching and collaborative initiatives. Brinkerhoff is well suited to oversee the creation of a successful Promise Neighborhood in River Rouge. Her efforts and expertise have laid the foundation for this initiative. She has:

- Developed a network of seven Family Resource Centers (FRC), funded as Parent Information Resource Center satellite sites, which offer a wide array of parenting and family literacy resources, parent-child interaction groups, pre-school play groups and computer access. She has begun to expand several FRCs into full service Community Resource Centers, beginning with the Walter White Community Resource Center in River Rouge.
- As chair of the River Rouge Prevention Policy Board (PPB), she oversaw the data collection for the Needs Assessment, which the PPB has used to develop its prevention plan priorities and to select an appropriate evidence-based intervention, the CASA Start model.
- She collaborated with Dr. Carlos Lopez, Superintendent of River Rouge Schools, to mobilize the community around the Walter White Community Resource Center within six months of the closure of this River Rouge Elementary School in order to allow four Head Start classrooms to continue to operate. Brinkerhoff initiated a full service Family Resource Center and secured funding for resource materials, painting and carpeting, and four IBM “Little Tyke” computers. Corporate funders including National City, TJX, Target, Gannet and Fifth Third Bank. AmeriCorps members developed a free family clothing closet and food pantry- both now staffed by volunteers including AARP. New partnerships at the Walter White CRC include the Department of Education funded Community Garden, also supported by DTE Energy, and a United Way funded Early Learning Center. Plans are underway to add Developmental Disabilities services and Workforce Development to the array of programs.

- Brinkerhoff, working with the Program Development Officer, built on an existing partnership with University of Detroit Mercy Dental School, United Way and Carls Foundation, which created a dental clinic for Head Start children and their siblings at Walter White: She brought in Bright Smiles, LLC Dental to staff the clinic, providing cleanings, dental exams and restorative services to the River Rouge community by billing Medicaid and third party insurance. Bright Smiles has engaged two dentists to provide limited office hours and has plans to add a doctor.

Other key project staff include:

Victorio (Louey) Guillen, Community Organizer, is a Community Resource Coordinator for The Guidance Center, focusing on the cities of River Rouge and neighboring Ecorse. He has a Master of Social Work with a concentration in Community Organizing from The University of Michigan. He has four years experience working with youth and the community, and leads The Guidance Center's Economic Development Task Force and The River Rouge Prevention Policy Board (PPB) Youth Advisory Work Group. He facilitates quarterly Community Networking Luncheons at the Walter White CRC, each which attracts up to 70 residents and stakeholders.

Deborah A. Willis, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Excellence, will lead the Needs Assessment, Segmentation Analysis and Evaluation components of the planning year. She holds an MSW and Ph.D. from The University of Michigan School of Social Work. Dr. Willis has twelve years of experience providing direct services to children and families, seventeen years of experience in program development and program evaluation and is responsible for agency wide program evaluation. The Center for Excellence (CFE), The Guidance Center's research and evaluation arm, was founded in 2003 to support the development of competent evaluation measures, outcomes, and best practices at The Guidance Center. The CFE works with staff at all

levels, including administration, to develop and implement logic models, and construct and implement program evaluation. The CFE uses information collected from evaluations to identify training needs, develop workshops, seminars and conferences in partnership with others, and to disseminate best-practice information to ensure the delivery of programs and services that enable individuals and families to succeed and thrive.

Kate Callas, Senior Program Development Officer with The Guidance Center, has an MBA from The University of Michigan Flint and 25 years experience in communications, development and community relations. She is a member of the River Rouge Prevention Policy Board (PPB) and the CEO's Strategic Leadership Group. She has a strong track record of building community partnerships to secure foundation, corporate, county, state and federal funding. Over the past four years, she has secured \$7.2 million in multi-year grants for the agency and its partners.

Sherri Zacharski, Financial Analyst, is the Budget Manager for The Guidance Center. She has a MBA in Finance from Wayne State University and 20 years experience in accounting and finance. She works closely with the programs and the development team to develop realistic budgets and braid funding of different funding sources, programs and partners.

Quality of Management Plan

4. Description of how the applicant will plan to sustain and “scale up” the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

The planning phase of the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood (Year one) will leverage exclusively in-kind contributions of time and resources of the community partners (see Letters of Commitment, Appendix D).

Looking ahead to the implementation phase, the community partners have a rich array of potential funding sources, many of which are reflected on the Continuum of Services and Resources (pages 16-18).

The Guidance Center and Wayne Metro Community Action Agency provide services for infants, children, youth, adults and families in River Rouge funded by an array of public contracts, which are relatively stable. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funds services for adjudicated youth. The Detroit Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency funds mental health services, and services for children and adults with developmental disabilities. The Department of Human Services funds child abuse prevention services, wraparound services, and foster care services. The Southeast Michigan Community Alliance provides grant funding for adult substance abuse services and youth prevention services. The State of Michigan funds workforce development and job training services provided by the Downriver Community Conference and The Guidance Center.

Federal grants already in use for this project include the Department of Education- funded Community Garden project at the Walter White site, The Guidance Center, fiduciary (\$200,000 over three years); a Department of Education 21st Century grant for Project Achieve at all River Rouge schools, Wayne Metro Community Action Agency, fiduciary; a Title V Prevention grant to fund CASA Start and ongoing PPB activities, City of River Rouge, fiduciary (\$200,000 over three years). River Rouge also receives services through an AmeriCorps grant to fund 30 AmeriCorps members working in River and surrounding communities, The Guidance Center, fiduciary (\$767,601 over three years); and a AARA funded AmeriCorps grant, The Guidance Center, fiduciary (\$144,000 for one year). The Guidance Center secured funding for a United Way Early Learning Hub (\$211,969 for one year which we anticipate will be renewable

annually) and a Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC) grant (\$230,000 per year for 5 years, ending in 2012), which both provide services at the Walter White CRC. The Community Garden project has received \$1,000 additional funding from DTE Energy, and in-kind donations of supplies and labor from local vendors and other community members.

A significant source of ongoing funding is the Wayne County Child Care Fund, which supports activities and services for at-risk youth ages 7-17 and their families. The Child Care Fund provides a dollar-for-dollar funding match, as long as matching funds are not state funds. Currently, the Child Care Fund matches funding for after school tutoring and activities and summer camps at the Walter White CRC, and supports Community Garden activities for at-risk youth and their families. The Child Care Fund currently matches more than \$200,000 per year for these services in River Rouge.

The Program Development Officer named in the grant will continue to work with partners on the Task Force to identify and pursue funding opportunities to support the project after the grant period ends. The expectation is that the Promise Neighborhood Plan will include development and implementation of a process for partners to strategically collaborate to seek, braid, leverage and pursue funding opportunities that are directly tied to evidence based solutions designed to improve the indicators of academic and family/community achievement outlined in this proposal.

Partners on the Task Force have strong relationships with funders, and government, and school leaders in neighboring communities in Wayne County, including Ecorse, Lincoln Park, Melvindale and southwest Detroit, with whom we intend to develop an infrastructure of policies, practices, systems, and resources in order to replicate the Promising Neighborhood model in these communities that share risk factors and demographics similar to River Rouge.

Grant proposals to support aspects of the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood currently pending decision for which The Guidance Center is named fiduciary include: a USDA Community Foods Project to expand the scope of the Community Garden, a SAMHSA Drug Free Communities proposal to expand and enhance the prevention activities of the Prevention Policy Board (PPB), an OJJDP Enhancement to Mentoring proposal that includes in its scope students in River Rouge. Oakwood Healthcare System has written The Guidance Center into its proposal to DHHS-OAH to deliver an evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention intervention to students in River Rouge Schools. The funding available for River Rouge services would be \$20,000 per year for five years.

5. Description of commitment the applicant anticipates receiving from partners, including the preliminary memorandum of understanding (MOU) (paragraph 5(a)).

The signed MOU (Appendix F) outlines the commitment of a diverse group of community partners to work together during the planning year and during the implementation phase with a common vision, Theory of Change and Theory of Action, on the Community Engagement Task Force and Work Groups to create and implement a River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Plan, and to collaborate on creating a model to take the River Rouge Promise Neighborhood to scale in nearby communities. The diverse makeup of the Task Force members and Work Groups will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are engaged in the planning and implementation of the Promise Neighborhood, including those of consumers of behavioral health services, families, school staff, the business community, and a variety of disciplinary and professional fields. The letters of commitment (Appendix D) outline the commitment of the Task Force members to dedicate in-kind match dollars for the planning period and to help secure funding to sustain the

Promise Neighborhood beyond the grant period. The attached budget and budget narrative outline realistic expenditures for the planning period. The Timeline below outlines project tasks, responsibilities, timelines and milestones for the planning year.

Planning Year TIMELINE for Community Engagement Task Force

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED	RESPONSIBLE
Secure partners with signed MOU	June 2010	Project Director
Hire Planning Grant staff	October 2010	Project Director
Hire Strategic Planning Consultant	October, 2010	Project Director and Project Manager
Initiate Monthly Task Force Meetings	Oct. 2010- Sept. 2011	Project Manager
Institute Meeting Structure for Planning Process integrated with Task Force, Work Group and Community meetings	Oct.2010-Sept. 2011	Strategic Planning Consultant
Meet with PPB to formalize expanding scope to embrace Promise Neighborhood concept	October 2010	Project Manager, Community Liaison
Report monthly to PPB Advisory Board	Oct. 2010- Sept. 2011	Project Manager
Participate in a Community of Practice	TBD- Sept. 2011	Project Manager, Task Force Members (TBD)
Add Task Force members to existing PPB Work Groups (Community Needs Assessment, Community Resources, Program and Education, Policy and Prevention, Youth	Oct. 2010- Sept. 2011	Project Manager

Advisory)		
Initiate and staff new Work Groups as needed	Oct. 2010- Sept. 2011	Project Manager
Seek out and add new community members/sectors to Task Force/ Work Groups	Oct. 2010- Sept. 2011	Community Liaison, Community Organizer
MILESTONE: By November 2010, promote and provide concrete opportunities for community members to engage in the planning process for the Promise Neighborhood: data collection, Work Groups and Community Meetings.		
Convene 1st Quarterly Community Meeting	November 2010	Community Organizer
Meet with National Evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods	TBD	CFE staff, Project Manager
Conduct Community Needs Assessment	October 2010-January 2011	CFE, Community Needs Assessment WG
Identify additional indicators as needed	November 2010	CFE, Community Needs Assessment WG
Conduct Segmentation Analysis	December 2010	CFE
MILESTONE- By January 2011, Needs Assessment and Data Collection Completed		
Gather and leverage resources to support financial sustainability	January 2011- ongoing	Community Resources Work Group, TGC Development Team
Work Groups use Needs Assessment and Segmentation Analysis data to identify solutions to address specific indicators	Jan. 2011-Sept. 2011	Work Group Chairs
MILESTONE- By February 2011, CFE presents Needs Assessment Data to Task Force and Work		

Group Members, who complete Segmentation Analysis using Data		
Convene 2nd Quarterly Community Meeting	March 2011	Community Organizer
MILESTONE- By March 2011, Final Report completed by CFE: Lessons Learned from Needs Assessment and Segmentation Analysis		
Plan and expand a comprehensive logistical data management system	TBD	CFE
MILESTONE- By April 2011- CFE completes Preliminary Action Plan for Continuum of Solutions		
Convene 3rd Quarterly Community Meeting	July 2011	Community Organizer
MILESTONE- By September, 2011 Task Force presents Action Plan for Continuum of Solutions to the community		
Convene 4th Quarterly Community Meeting- Celebration of the Plan and Engage Community for Implementation	September 2011	Community Organizer

Significance

Description of how the applicant will plan to track available sources and funding levels of Federal, State, and local funds that could be utilized in the project.

The River Rouge Public Schools and The Guidance Center have developed a common matrix for tracking grant submissions requesting funding for the River Rouge Public Schools and/or the Walter White Community Resource Center. In the past year, 16 proposals submitted to federal, state and county funders have been tracked using this matrix. The Program Development Officer will adapt the matrix for the Promise Neighborhood Initiative to track:

- source and type of funding
- the project to be funded
- the fiduciary agent
- partner agencies
- the dollar amount of the request
- the source and amount of matching funds
- the date submitted
- the date awarded or denied, and
- the date awarded grants will expire.

The Promise Neighborhood partners will use this tracking system to plan and execute a unified funding strategy, which will sustain services and fund innovation.

6. Description of how applicant will identify Federal, State, or local policies, regulations, or other requirements that would impede the applicant achieving its goals.

The Guidance Center has existing relationships with many government entities, corporations and foundations, which can be leveraged to improve programs and linkages for The Promise Neighborhood, as well as for scale-up support and connections to potential neighborhoods where our Promise Neighborhood Plan might be replicated. The Skillman Foundation, the McGregor Fund, the Carls Foundation, and the United Way for Southeastern Michigan have funded start-up initiatives for The Guidance Center’s Early Childhood programs. Last fiscal year, more than 60 local businesses and corporations donated a total of \$536, 169 to the agency’s programs and operations.

The Guidance Center has a solid relationship with Wayne County, with a long history of funded programs and well-executed service contracts. For example, Dan Chaney, Division Director, and Eric Reed, Director of Prevention Services for the Wayne County Department of Children and Family Services have helped The Guidance Center's Juvenile Justice programs and other programs for at-risk youth secure funding and/or contracts through OJJDP, the Byrne grant, the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), the Wayne County Child Care Fund, and AARA funding.

Other Wayne County partners we will engage and leverage for improving programs and linkages and for scale-up support, are the Detroit Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency, Wayne County Department of Human Services, and Connections- Wayne County Systems of Care (SOC). The SOC is a collaboration of human services that aims to eliminate barriers for children with serious emotional disturbance (SED) who are in multiple systems – child welfare, juvenile justice, community mental health, and schools and are experiencing problems/barriers at home, in school, or in the community. The SOC offers an excellent model for policies and procedures that will foster and support unified services. Sundra Kollie, the Director of the SOC, is on the Community Engagement Task Force, and will be a key resource in helping the Promise Neighborhood improve connections with human service agencies to effect long-term system change in River Rouge.

Community Engagement Task Force entities that represent a collective membership are well-positioned to identify Federal, State, and local policies, regulations, or other requirements that have posed barriers to service delivery and which might hinder the progress of the Promise Neighborhood Initiative, and to work together and with the policy makers to craft and implement solutions. Key Task Force Members include the Downriver Community Conference (DCC- job

policy barriers), Connections- the Wayne County Systems of Care (human services policy barriers), the River Rouge Prevention Policy Board (PPB) (policy barriers related to schools, law enforcement, and the courts), the Great Start Collaborative- Wayne (policy barriers related to early childhood education and services) and the Fort Visger Community Development Corporation (policy barriers related to equitable housing, economic development and community revitalization).

Partners with whom we will build upon and leverage high-quality academic programs and family and community supports from cradle to college include the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health (MI-AIMH), which provides advocacy and endorsement for Infant Mental Health practitioners and resources for parents; Great Start Collaborative Wayne which sets early childhood policy and provides educational and developmental resources for children, parents and teachers; the United Way Early Learning Center, which provides resources and training for childcare providers; and the Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC), which provides literacy and developmental resources and supports for families with children 0-17. These partnerships will be leveraged in the context of the academic goals of Head Start and other preschool stakeholders, the River Rouge School District and its governing agency, Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency (Wayne RESA), and Wayne County Community College and other institutions of higher learning.

The River Rouge Promise Neighborhood Initiative will engage and leverage the above referenced wealth of resources in the community and on its Community Engagement Task Force to develop and effectively implement a robust plan for a continuum of solutions that will:

- result in long-term systems improvement;

- build local capacity to provide, improve and expand services that address the needs of the City of River Rouge;
- develop promising new strategies that build on existing strategies; and
- have the potential to sustain and apply the model in a variety of settings.

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) contends that, “Achieving sustainable development requires collaboration among sectors and institutions, and the participation of all stakeholders and individuals.... to have a greater impact on policy and practice than they would have on their own” (<http://www.iisd.org/networks/>).

The River Rouge community appears to be ready for this. A 2010 Community Needs Assessment conducted by The Guidance Center identified the River Rouge community to be at Level 5, the preparation stage, of community readiness, “where tangible planning targeting the problem behavior is happening and leaders are actively analyzing the possible approaches and may be seeking funding to implement the changes.” (River Rouge Prevention Policy Board, 2010). Level 5 is half way along a readiness continuum that begins with vague awareness of community problems and ends with active and effective community response. The River Rouge community appears to be ready to engage in the Promise Neighborhood planning process to identify and tackle the community’s challenges.