E-Democracy.org
Inclusive Community Engagement Online – Shared Proposal Document Collection
Comments to: http://e-democracy.org/contact

Released February 15, 2012

IMPORTANT NOTE:

For the purpose of encouraging project partnerships, collaboration, and transparency, we have decided to share extended excerpts from our signed grant agreement and our initial grant narrative proposal.

Our grant proposal narrative was written as a $1.7 million dollar three year initiative with half the funding requested from Knight. It was audacious in scope and in detail. A shorter version was not produced later in the process as the actual grant agreement is most important.

Therefore, ONLY grant agreement should be relied upon as the framework for what we have promised to deliver for a grant of $625,000. We have promised to seek at least $225,000 from other sources over the next three years for this project. Additional resources will allow us to extend our inclusive outreach to other communities be it Minneapolis or new communities who want to become part of our inclusive Neighbors Forum network.

However, we wanted to share the original grant narrative because it represents the scope of activities we can strategically consider AS LONG as we are on target to achieve the primary goals and outcomes stated in the grant agreement. In short, if outreach to reach 10,000 residents in St. Paul goes well, we may have additional resources to assist more Knight communities with training or our next generation innovation investments will be larger.

Finally, let me note that the path toward this successful grant represents 5 years of relationship building with many contacts across the Knight Foundation. This grant was also only possible because it was built on small grants from the Minneapolis Foundation and the Blandin Foundation as well as $250,000 in funding over the previous two years to pilot our **deeply inclusive work** in just a few neighborhoods (and many other "Participation 3.0" projects) from the Ford Foundation. So, while you might have a great idea for a project you hope a foundation might fund, I encourage you to measure your hopes and consider ways to bring new ideas forward through partners like us who have weathered the storm so to speak.

If you would like to get involved individually with our Inclusive Community Engagement Online effort, I encourage you to "land" in our "Projects" online group - http://e-democracy.org/projects - and watch for various calls for assistance. If you'd like to work for us, we will likely have a number of short-term contracts that we will post from http://e-democracy.org/jobs

A huge thank you goes out to St. Paul Program Director for the Knight Foundation, Polly Talen for guiding us through the process of making this grant a reality.

Sincerely,
Steven Clift
Founder and Executive Director, E-Democracy.org

JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION
GRANT AGREEMENT

Grantee: Minnesota E-Democracy

Grant number: XXXXX

Approval date: December 12, 2011

Grant Amount: $625,000

Terms: January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2014

Purpose: To increase online engagement in lower income, highly diverse communities through scaling up public neighborhood forums in St. Paul.

Grant Activities: The project would primarily support scaling up inclusive neighborhood forums in St. Paul with additional activities related to sharing lessons learned with other Knight communities. All activities would be carried out by staff, contractors and volunteers in collaboration with technology advisers. Specific activities include:

Building out the neighbors forums
- Secure the evaluation team
- Develop an outreach advisory group and enhance partnerships especially in Central Corridor
- Launch an outreach campaign that targets lower income, highly diverse, high immigrant areas particularly in Central Corridor neighborhoods.
- Improve content engagement by working with community partners to integrate their information into the forums
- Provide enhanced forum manager training and forum marketing
- Experiment with sponsorships on the largest forums
- Explore adding a private block club model and other experimental features

Sharing lessons and testing expansion
- Glean early lessons from the evaluation and commission "locals online" stories
- Develop training materials for lesson sharing
- Identify and reach out to logical partners in other Knight communities
- Host webinars and/or convening

Anticipated Outcomes: The following description represents your organization's expectations for the outcomes of the funded project. Your organization agrees that these results described below are achievable and represent the terms against which your organization will judge the success of the project.

Key outcomes will include:
- Demonstrate an effective way to get low-income and ethnic participation in online neighbor forums (targeted to the five lowest income neighborhoods in St. Paul – four of which are in the Central Corridor).

- Ten percent of households participating city-wide in at least one forum by end of year three, which will be the largest percentage of households participating in an inclusive online community engagement effort in the nation.
- Demonstrate examples of how online neighbor forums can foster community collaboration and neighbors helping neighbors based on enhanced community communication.
- Demonstrate the power of "public" and open source driven online community engagement and its impact on local democracy by comparing and contrasting lessons from this extremely public model with a number of commercial entrants connecting neighbors in smaller private online groups using highly proprietary approaches.
- Demonstrate the importance of support for inclusive community engagement online in national digital inclusion, philanthropic and civic engagement public policy circles.

Evaluation: E-Democracy will work with Knight to develop and document its evaluation to ensure that the lessons learned can be used to strengthen the project on the ground and provide valuable insights for Knight's community engagement work and the field. As part of their activities, E-Democracy plans to collect data on the following metrics:

- Inclusive Outreach – Growth in members recruited in-person by outreach consultants and online focusing on specific diverse communities and/or geographic areas.
- Growth in Neighborhood Forums and Intensity of Participation – Number of individual members (and percentage of households city-wide this reflects); percentage of members posting monthly/weekly/daily; basic web traffic stats (monthly unique visits and average time spent on site), and qualitative reports on participation including starting new topics, contributing opinion, and calls to action.
- Participant Impact: Baseline participant and follow-up surveys focused on understanding: diversity of members (ethnic and geographic); participant's news consumption and community involvement habits; participant's level of learning, connectedness, confidence about public roles, sense of attachment; and actions taken based on the forum (e.g. sharing information, promoting forum, attending offline events related to discussion topics). The survey will be based on a thorough review of existing surveys, including PewInternet.org Neighbors Online survey, the NCoC Civic Health Index and Networked Neighborhoods UK Survey.
- Public Agenda Setting: Number of journalists that are attracted to the forums to gather stories; number of discussion topics that generate news coverage; number of times elected officials and their /staff respond and engage on a topic.
- Earned Income Generated Through Sponsorship: Total dollars, percentage of budget; number of sponsor partnerships.

Any evaluation reports relating to this grant will be submitted to Knight Foundation.

Communications:

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In addition, communication is the cornerstone of E-Democracy's open-source sharing approach. They share lessons consistently via their blog, guides, e-newsletters, Twitter, webinars, teleconferences, and convening of numerous online communities of practice. They regularly give presentations, seminars, trainings, and keynote addresses.

Their use of video, images, and in-person outreach as part of this grant will help them reach many more people and organizations. As part of this grant they will develop a robust communication plan and improve the digital

storytelling and self-directed learning materials on their website.

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DOCUMENT #2

JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION
CUSTOMIZED PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. **Project:** Please explain your project and its goals.

The goal of the **Inclusive Community Engagement Online** initiative is to create more inclusive and pervasive community engagement in St. Paul, other Knight communities, and beyond.

This project will take our game changing real world experience with **inclusive** community engagement online, starting with the Knight community of St. Paul, to the next level. E-Democracy.org's successful pilot online community engagement effort supported by the Ford Foundation recently broke through in two digitally less connected neighborhoods with large lower income, high immigrant, highly diverse populations. This proposal takes this unique and crucial work to the next level.

This initiative will:

A. Build Out the Neighbors Forum Network in St. Paul - Create the nation's largest **strongly inclusive** city-wide urban network of online public spaces for community engagement.

Our Neighbors Forums are online neighborhood social networks that serve population areas averaging 10,000 with "public life" community engagement and exchange **on a daily basis**.

Specifically:

- o Expand to over 10,000 forum participants (from 3,000) across at least 13 neighbors forums reaching ~10% of households city-wide daily.

- o To reflect the diversity of an area, deploy intensive outreach and community partnerships in lower income, highly diverse, high immigrant areas of St. Paul with a special focus along the St. Paul Central Corridor.

- o Enhance our content engagement training for our volunteers in every neighborhood to bolster efforts that inclusively serve the information needs of communities in a local democracy.

B. Share Online Community Engagement Lessons and Expand to Additional Knight Communities - Based on our 17 years of direct experience, our "Engagement Initiative" will move the field of online community engagement through outreach, education, convening, and technology adaptation. Specifically:

- o Convene and exchange lessons with many types of local organizations to help them improve their online community engagement work and make it more inclusive.

Share lessons within at least three additional Knight communities as well as through Knight Foundation networks like the Community Information Challenge. In year one, identifying, collaborating, then adapting our lessons for independent use by interested grass roots community efforts in Knight communities is the first step to furthering inclusive community engagement online in a sustained manner.

After year one, in an under-served area, host a inclusive neighborhood online pilot effort in an interested Knight community as part of our official network based. This full "one-stop shop" expansion will include outreach assistance, work with local partners, volunteer recruitment and training and hosting. The scale of the pilot will be determined by available funding and local funder interest. Additional full pilot communities will require additional funding.

- o See Appendix 2 for draft *Knight community lesson sharing prospectus*

3. **Innovate and Launch Nearest Neighbor Pilot** – We see a dual opportunity to both generate innovation within St. Paul through community collaboration and to partner nationally with technology-based projects in the community, open government, and media "2.0" space. Knight funding will seed exploration of this effort and as required additional funding will be sought.

- o E-Democracy.org benefits from an effective online neighbors forum model that attracts over 20% of households in our strongest areas. As we take "what works" to scale with sustainability these very "public" spaces serving large neighborhoods, a new feature set (AKA "BeNeighbors") seeks to demonstrate the community engagement potential of complementary "private" small-group exchange and other innovations. We propose recruiting 1,000 participants reaching 50% household participation in at least one target area where the digital divide remains significant. After technology adviser consultations and additional fund raising, software coding work will begin near the end of year one with piloting in the final two years.

- o We will strategically explore use of the BeNeighbors.org name as a directory and promotional engine of all kinds of neighborhood online spaces inclusive of all spaces we can identify in the Twin Cities, other participating Knight communities, and based on interest further afield. This will allow us to educate the public on how to start such spaces using different tools and models as well as to encourage communities to join our network if they chose.

- o Whether integrating empowering in-person community engagement models or pursuing open source technology innovations, we uniquely bridge divides rarely approached by typical online community engagement projects who often struggle with generating ongoing participation from even the most active in their community. Our base of active participants and years of community trust building are difficult to replicate. We will steadfastly pursue online experiences that are high in quality, civil and empowering.

2. **Organization:** What makes your group the right one to do this work? Describe your history, mission, leadership, partners and projects.

History: E-Democracy.org has been consistent pioneer in this work for 17 years. Having created the world's first election information website in 1994 powered by volunteers, we found a dual role. First, we excel at volunteer facilitated online civic engagement based on geography, expectations of civil conduct and use of real names. We promote strong civility and serve as a trusted neutral host. Second, we develop and gather best practices on "e-democracy" and share them globally.

In the last five years, we've grown from 5 communities and 5 forums to over 35 active forums serving 16 communities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand. Ford Foundation pilot support in 2010-11 for our inclusion work represented a major step forward.

Mission and Goals: E-Democracy.org's mission is to harness the power of online tools to support participation in public life, strengthen communities, and build democracy. The goals in our strategic plan align extremely well with the Knight Foundation's priorities and this proposal. They are::

- **Goal 1** — **Engagement** - Strengthen, broaden, and diversify engagement through effective, meaningful, and informed online discussion and exchange on public issues

- **Goal 2** — **Active Citizenship** - Empower people through interactions, experiences, and online skills to have an impact on their communities and governments

- **Goal 3** — **Effective Practices and Tools** - Develop leverage, and disseminate practices and tools from around the world to promote engagement and active citizenship

Leadership: Lead founder, Steven Clift serves as the Executive Director of E-Democracy.org and is also a Knight Ashoka Fellow. He has shared his knowledge of the field across 30 countries and is always seeking ways to move the field of online engagement forward. He recently joined the Humphrey School as an adjunct faculty member teaching social media.

Board members have a wealth of skills and experience to guide this initiative including current and former local elected officials, the author of the OECD's seminal guide to public engagement in government, leaders in civic engagement and deliberative democracy, a top expert on advocacy and social media, a diverse communities public participation consultant, and a technology solutions budget and proposal development expert in one of the world's largest IT companies. See Appendix 3 for our board member list.

Projects: We divide our work into three main program areas - Issues Forums, including inclusive neighbors forum work, the "Engagement Initiative" where we share lessons and convene hundreds of leaders online across the field (CityCamp Exchange, Digital Inclusion Network, Locals Online), and while currently boot-strapped, we have our Participation 3.0 incubator which hosts collaborative online working groups for next generation projects ideas like the open data oriented DemocracyMap and PublicMeetings.Info efforts.

3. **Opportunity:** Why is this idea smart at this particular moment? Do you have a special insight you think will cause this plan to succeed?

As one of the founders of online civic engagement, E-Democracy.org has a unique level of experience, and broad foundation of success at developing online models and tools that connect people in real-world situations. The lessons we have learned fit well with Knight's inclinations toward diffuse, decentralized forms of engagement that are socially enriching and politically powerful. And the scope of our existing work in St. Paul allows us a unique opportunity to test and extend the conclusions of Knight's "Soul of the Community" and "Connected Citizens" research.

Specifically, the key opportunities we see are:

- Build on one of the most inclusive local online community engagement experiences in the nation. The opportunity to go deep with inclusion while going to scale across St. Paul builds on our unique base and reputation. The work done so far in the Knight community of St. Paul has created a large base of volunteers, forum participants, and other stakeholders - it represents a unique opportunity at the right time with the right momentum to introduce further hybrid innovations in online and in-person engagement.

- Promote sustainable community engagement by expanding the reach of cost-effective, volunteer-generating engagement models and tools that meet the democracy and information needs of local communities. There is an opportunity to demonstrate to additional Knight communities and the broader nation that there are replicable low-cost models that also tackle the lack of real public interaction with most online civically-focused community engagement websites to date.

- Combine effective online community engagement with digital inclusion activities already in the community. This includes leveraging the activities of libraries, computer access centers, and others who provide Internet access and online skill building in lower-income areas. It also includes opportunities to innovate right down to the block-

level and to measure and improve community engagement more widely.

- Further documenting, sharing, and experimenting with inclusive online community engagement lessons and models with other Knight communities. Leveraging our success and making those lessons available either to assist the incumbent activities in Knight communities or to pilot a full expansion will generate real benefits that can be adapted.

4. **Strategy:** How does the project inform and/or engage communities?

The Inclusive Community Engagement Online Project is fundamentally about creating accessible, attractive, inspiring online community spaces for engagement in public life.

To accomplish this we will:

- Improve our field outreach, test various methods, and document what works. As a sign of our commitment to inclusive engagement, in the online engagement space we uniquely use paper sign-up sheets at community events and festivals to sign up people for full two-way online participation. This means we reach those neighbors who only use e-mail at the library just as we reach immigrant youth who practically live on Facebook via their smart phone and can then share community information from our network with their friends.

- Improve how we use the Internet to strategically "break the ice" for a wide range of community engagement activities. We continuously help generate in-person turn-out for events hosted by other community organizations as well as foster community "ad-hocracy" to tackle an emergent issue from a recent crime spree to starting a community garden. We seek to accelerate and systematize support for this community action and problem-solving activity.

- Develop diverse community content engagement models that foster our silo-busting "community information streams" that are highly distributed. This will improve the diversity of information shared by helping community groups that do not maintain websites or social media strategies to get their information to the broader local community via our "integrated" community space.

- Sustain engagement as the engine for informing communities. Taking a strategic and accessible lower-common-denominator technology approach, every participant is just one quick action from sharing community information or reply to the conversation. In fact, on our neighbors forums up to 15% of members or more posting each month is typical ... or 50% better than the "participation inequality" rate cited by web expert Jakob Nielsen who suggests that 1% are typically heavy contributors with 9% contributing intermittently.

- Seek existing community stakeholders, non-traditional leaders, community networkers, and activists at all levels and overcome the stereotype that less digitally connected communities need to wait until more skills are built or more people are connected to start implementing forms of online participation.

- Provide enhanced forum manager training and forum marketing methodologies.

- Create an online environment that recreates one of the greatest qualities of the traditional local newspaper: people becoming informed on news, issues, and opinions that they wouldn't ordinarily seek out or "click." This "serendipity" based on common interest local geography is very different from most online networks. They tend to divide people into narrow niches or keep them tightly tied in with friends they know rather than with neighbors they would like to meet if given the opportunity.

- We embraced the use of real names to build trusted engagement (a decade before Facebook). Our approach is an antidote to the disengaging and head-shaking poor quality of anonymous online newspaper commenting that are essentially promoting community disengagement.

- Explore the creation of features that allow forum participants to report on, track, and use information about broader online and in-person forms of community engagement.

5. **Activities:** Please provide a timetable of key project activities, explaining who will do what and when.

Project activities will be carried out primarily by E-Democracy.org staff, our agile network of dedicated contractors, and our extensive volunteer base. We will further seek to engage participants themselves to increasingly invest their time and energy via their local neighbors network to generate community value. Key partners will be further engaged to assist in outreach, technology development, and research/evaluation.

This is a summary of major project activities by year:

Project Area	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
St. Paul	Neighbors Forum outreach campaign to double to 6,000 members, Outreach advisory group	Deepen community engagement with 8,000 members, launch sponsorship experiments	Leverage participation base for next generation experiments, reach 10,000 members which equates to ~10% of households city-wide
Lessons/Expansion	Knight communities inclusive community engagement online convening and lesson sharing	Knight community expansion pilot, additional lesson sharing	"Engagement Initiative" sustains lesson sharing with low cost fee for service model to community foundations, others
Innovate	Enhance open source GroupServer platform we use with more geo-aware options, Technology review with partners to draft "BeNeighbors" nearest neighbor pilot/directory spec	Launch "private" electronic block club features complementing public forums with 1,000 members or 50% of households in target area – scale determined by additional resources secured	Expand innovation with technology partners and push envelope for cost-effective "inclusion" support, Develop phase 2 proposals

See Appendix X for our draft detailed project timeline by year.

6.   Results

These are some of the key results we seek:

    a. Direct: What do you expect to happen as a result of the grant activities?

- Create the largest, most diverse critical mass of participants in an ongoing public online community engagement effort anywhere in the United States. The key term is "public" not private online communities or friend to friend connections.

- Demonstrate the capacity of intensive online with in-person engagement to help neighborhoods and cities make decisions, solve problems, and build community connections. Develop lessons on sustainability, sponsorship, and participant support.

- To the extent possible, develop integrated block- and even building-level online connections among nearest neighbors, using flexible technology that generates new emergent leadership rather than exhausting existing leaders. The key barrier to mass neighbor to neighbor networking online is that all quality experiences require a person, typically a techno-savvy maven, in the center to simply get critical mass engagement started. We seek to break this barrier through an integrated public/private online exchange experience that motivates new volunteers and generates a quality experience through system-wide coaching and participant engagement.

- Drive local learning about how to improve engagement practices, both through our own innovations and through Knight's "Soul of the Community" metrics - and by engaging citizens themselves in assessing and improving the work.

   b. Broader: What larger impact do you hope might occur?

- Our training and "move the field" outreach will help dozens if not hundreds of other projects (typically using the own technology or social media tools like Facebook) dramatically improve their digital engagement activities. We seek to have a major impact on as many interested Knight communities as possible.

- We are democracy and community engagement project and not a generic technology platform. We will counter the unfortunate "build it they will come" illusion that simply using the "right" technology is enough to produce quality democratic experiences. There are rare exceptions within major social media services, but these notable democratic uses often are momentary, one sided advocacy-based and national in scope - rarely local.

- Our "how-to" lessons can help break the cycle of "virtual ghost towns" created by other civic engagement initiatives by fostering greater community leadership and facilitation online. We need better stories to inspire one in 1,000 Internet users to step up as online leaders for their neighborhood, not the one in 20,000 today.

7.   Transformation: Will the project create a lasting, visible change? If so, explain how.

According to the Neighbors Online study by the Pew Internet and American Life project there is a huge divide among adult Internet users in the cornerstone of local online engagement via neighborhood networks (mailing lists/forums). The participation rate among those making $75,000 a year is 15% compared to 3% for households making under $50,000. While notably online whites and African-Americans participate equally at 8% overall, online Latinos are at 3% and quite likely the East African and SE Asian populations that we work with in particular are even lower.

Deep, sustained, bridge-building online community engagement creates new community relationships, inter-cultural awareness, and avenues for information exchange. This change contrasts dramatically with typical online political participation where those already "showing up," often the most partisan and loudest voices in society, dominate.

With our transparent public engagement, you can see the change. It is this visibly when combined with more effective storytelling and lesson sharing that will promote change beyond our own network.

Specifically:

- By expanding our work to bring a broader range of people into public life, including immigrants, people of color, and people from low-income households, we will create a perceptible shift in engagement at the neighborhood and community levels.

- By dramatically increasing the representation, connectedness, and responsiveness of residents, we will give neighborhoods a stronger voice in local decisions, leading to tangible changes.

- We believe that productive, sustained engagement can have a positive impact on community building, education, public safety, and economic vitality.

- By bringing back the power of local connections in public life for all areas of St. Paul - our network will generate **more** community gardens, local food efforts, special crime meetings, parent groups, inter-generational knowledge sharing, and community festivals all because neighbors can now get introduced to each other in new high accessible ways, openly engage each other, and **unleash their latent capacity** to build community.

- As the world's first initiative to put election information on the web in 1994, we repeatedly seek to influence the field by charting new territory. Our online town hall Issues Forum model, is a pre-cursor to the Facebook Page with people using real names and exchanging political news, information and opinions. Today, we see dark clouds on horizon of negative politics online that must be blown back with real inclusion, civility and meaningful experiences for everyday members of the public. Sustained transformation with community engagement online requires a distributed experience that delivers real amazing value locally somewhere (then everywhere) not some magic global technology bullet on auto-pilot. That said, we encourage aspects of our approach and new innovations to be adopted by Facebook and others for massive impact.

8.   **Assessment:** How will you measure progress and, ultimately, success? Please list indicators to be reported, by whom, how and when. What are the critical lessons you hope to learn?

This grant proposal affords the time to develop systematic evaluation and in-depth research of our inclusive community engagement online activities, lesson sharing, expansion, and innovation.

Our "why to" motivation is backed up by "how to" best practices from experience, but our "how did it make a difference" evaluation would greatly benefit our work and the online engagement field. Our pending qualitative evaluation of our Inclusive Social Media effort funded by the Ford Foundation will inform this work.

We seek to measure progress both tactically and for overall impact. With the guidance of our learning and evaluation partners, we will use pre- and post- surveys to measure participants' level of learning, connectedness, confidence about public roles, and sense of attachment to community drawing from the Soul of Community. Further, this initiative is an ideal "network-centric" project that can be reviewed through the questions asked of the Knight-funded Connected Citizens report.

Specifically we seek to measure:

- **Inclusive Outreach** - Monthly reports on in-person recruitment results by our outreach consultants who focus on specific diverse communities and/or geographic areas.

- **Participation Growth** - Regular reports on participant growth by neighborhood forum. From experience, when a forum reaches ~10% of households in the geographic area covered community, cultural, and government organizations have the incentive to actively contribute community information, news, and announcements with minimal effort on our part. Journalists are also attracted to gather story ideas.

- **Outreach Marketing** - Experiment with different outreach methods and compare results. For example insights on the effectiveness of a postcard mailed to thousands of households in a low income neighborhood compared to tabling at the local library or a school festival will be very useful to other projects deciding on how to invest

limited funds.

- **Participant Impact** - After a thorough review of what we can compare with surveys such as Soul of the Community, the PewInternet.org Neighbors Online survey, the NCoC Civic Health Index, and the Networked Neighbourhoods UK survey, we will deploy a baseline participant survey and then a follow-up survey.

- **Entrance and Exit Feedback** - Gather new incoming expectations data, optional demographics, etc. when people join and continue to gather feedback when they leave.

- **Engagement Experience:**
  o Total members
  o Member posting trends - Including percentage of members posting (15% posting onnce in a month is a strong forum)
  o Diversity of members/posting members via survey (we limit the security risk of gathering and maintaining too much personally identifiable information on our participants in our forum system)
  o Typical web statistics
  o Content sharing - Types of community groups posting, effectiveness of efforts to encourage diverse community groups to post
  o Elected official engagement - our strongest forums attract elected official/staff use of the forum for public "constituent service"
  o Forum impact - Qualitative investigations focused on community engagement on key local issues

- **Lesson Sharing and Pilot Expansion**
  o Determine what community engagement lessons are most desired by Knight communities and evaluate our ability to deliver them.
  o Explore how best to determine what capacity is on the ground in new communities already and how to best share our niche inclusion lessons to encourage distributed take up
  o Document what results were generated from our lesson sharing.
  o Pilot expansion in year two and three will be evaluated like any of our funded forums with an additional investigation of the effectiveness of our new community outreach, partnership building and training efforts. We are particularly interested in documenting lessons on opening doors and building momentum in new communities. Local "not invented here" resistance should not be under-estimated as we experience it sometimes more strongly across a river than an ocean.
  o Document project impacts with storytelling - discussions generating news coverage, participation of local elected officials, mix of very local public sector entities and community groups sharing content, engaging (city, parks, police, schools, libraries, neighborhood district councils, ethnic community groups, etc.)

We strongly recommend that the Knight Foundation consider a comparative evaluation of the results and lessons of both online neighbor to neighbor network (including commercial models with primarily closed private networks) and digital inclusion for community voices more broadly across more public interactive civic spaces online. Our research and evaluation within that comparative context will increase in value to the field.

Lessons will inform any phase two proposals developed near the two year mark or later in this initiative.

9. **Context:** Who else is doing this work, and how successful are they? Who leads the field? How is your work similar or different?

Differentiation among the many commercial, media, non-profit, and academic projects in the broadly defined "locals online" space is difficult from a distance. Many emerging projects are technology-based with a skilled solo programmer or small team pushing out a tool or mobile app with little outreach capacity and a speculative business model.

Here is our niche where we lead: We are a "civic engagement-based" 501c.3 non-profit driven by dedicated volunteer capacity that **uses** inexpensive open source technology with mission-driven inclusion and public engagement goals.

We take a strong stand around real names, civility, simplicity, user choice of technology in a unified experience, (meaning e-mail publishing is a must for truly broad participation just as we need to add an integrated Facebook App option or mobile interface), volunteer capacity required upfront to serve new communities for sustainability, etc. Most importantly our core model is centered around "public" engagement meaning our main neighbors forums are open to all, searchable in Google, and designed to support community engagement that promote civic agenda-setting and problem-solving. Our forums are designed to influence elected officials, journalists, and community leaders through openness and transparency – a path rarely chosen by other neighbor connecting projects which limits their impact on local democracy.

As we evolved from our classic city-wide online town hall Issues Forum (where there is really no competition, but only strong appeal to the most political in a community) to the far more attractive "community life exchange" at the neighborhood-level we are now bumping into many different models and projects. Our Neighbors Forums are a hybrid combining elements of civic Issues Forums, Freecycle and Craigslist to give away free stuff down the street rather than to the junk dealer, Angie's List style local service provider recommendations, Yelp style restaurant exchanges, online parent and mom networks, local crime prevention networks, a neighborhood newspaper, and a community bulletin board and calendar. With our geographic scope limiting exchange, all of these things can be conveniently bundled into one community information stream.

The "leaders" with "locals online" are really the thousands of autonomous individuals who started a private YahooGroup for their homeowners association a decade ago or the place blogger who has moved on to a Facebook Page to reach more people this year. Through our Locals Online community of practice we have convened over 300 players across the field to encourage lesson sharing (the commercial prerogatives of other's make this challenging). They include (does not indicate participation in or endorsement of this grant proposal):

- I-Neighbors.org - A long-time academic project hosting primarily private neighbors groups geared toward areas of 500 people.
- Front Porch Forum - A small business focusing on Vermont with a large network of private, centrally supported, small population area exchanges.
- OhSoWe - A new commercial start-up entrant based in Chicago offering local private online group hosting to local organizations. Includes notable tool reuse features.
- Everyblock - A commercial government data driven mapping service has added public interactive features with limited take-up thus far. They don't require real names, but they do have a community manager attempting to encourage discussion.
- There are many other start-ups from Hey Neighbor and CommonPlace USA to BlockBoard and Neighbor Goods indexed here: http://pages.e-democracy.org/Social_media_in_local_public_life

While we will seek sponsorship income as part of this initiative on our strongest forums, particularly from local businesses in the wealthier parts of town as we reach 10% of households (that is when we start to get queries about commercial promotions), **we see no other entity in this space seeking to bridge the digital divide and serve low income neighborhoods. Nor are we aware of successful attempts to build integrated public spaces that pro-actively engaging many different diverse and immigrant communities toward participation in a unified neighborhood online public space**.

Finally, we've sustained ourselves for 17 years based on the continuous growth of volunteer capacity. We are extremely skeptical that without the estimated 90% of our labor covered by volunteers (local forum facilitation and outreach), that any project with social goals or quality/civility standards will not be able to generate the profit required to survive. Further we expect Facebook or other major social media companies to cherry pick features that undermine new entrants. We are however, open to the idea that the nearest neighbor pilot combined with our incumbent public forums should become a social enterprise that generates revenue from its operation to cover its social goals once it reaches a certain scale.

10.   Partners: Please identify key partners and explain their roles.

- **St. Paul Neighborhood Network/Community Technology Empowerment Project (Americorps)** - Key outreach and content engagement partnership with an Americorps doing grassroots digital inclusion work across St. Paul and Minneapolis. We will leverage their existing network for year one outreach and explore creating positions to assist our outreach in the final two years.

- **Community Groups and Local Government** - We informally collaborate and connect with many community organizations. Including: District Councils (neighborhood associations), City of St. Paul - including parks, libraries, and police, schools/PTAs, ethnic and cultural organizations, Community Development Centers, neighborhood social service centers/settlements houses, places of worship, etc. We will seek more formal collaborative opportunities where needed.

- **Deliberative Democracy Consortium (DDC)** - An alliance of practitioners and researchers working in public involvement and democratic governance. The DDC will help us develop our complementary face-to-face tools, identify evaluation methods and partners, and assist in our efforts to share lessons learned with the broader field of community engagement.

- **Technology Advisers**: In addition to direct technology volunteers, we seek to leverage open source technology development activities, advice, and networks in shaping our next generation technology innovations. We will engage the following open source-oriented organizations:
  - OpenPlans.org , Civic Commons, Sunlight Foundation, CityCamp, GroupServer/OnlineGroups.Net (GPL/open source platform we use)
  - Invited: MIT Center for Civic Networking, Code for America, , mySociety (UK), Ushahdi,
  - To invite: CommunityTools.info/CommunityForge Drupal project (EU), Mozilla, Others

- We will further share our outreach lessons and strategies with these organizations based on their priorities and interests. We seek to explore opportunities where our dynamic participant base might be leverage to assist cost-effective testing of new

11. Communication: How does communication help you achieve your goals, including the sharing of things you've learned?

Communication is the cornerstone of our open-source sharing approach. We share lessons consistently via our blog, guides, e-newsletters, Twitter, webinars, teleconferences, and convening numerous online communities of practice. We give presentations, seminars, trainings, keynotes, and more.

Improving our digital storytelling and self-directed learning materials on our website is a priority. Our use of video, images, and other more resource intense forms of communication as part of this grant will help us reach many more people and organizations. Our old school "Craigslist" design while extremely functional because it "just works," does not tell our success story strongly enough to inspire the volume of new start-up forums in more distant communities that we desire. We find that many nearby neighborhoods "see" what they are missing and seek to build a neighbors forum for their area. Storytelling that motivates a "we can do this here" reaction and we want to do it together with you is a goal we seek as well as influence on existing efforts to add real inclusion to their projects.

12. Governance: Describe the powers and role of your governing body. Does it, for example, actively raise funds?

- We are a 501c.3 non-profit organization based in Minnesota.

- Our Board of Directors meets bi-monthly by teleconference, crafts the regularly updated strategic plan, reviews and adopts our terms of service (forum rules), approves our yearly budget, plays an active role in program development and grant seeking activities. Further, the Executive Director reports to the Board which also plays a

role in our unique rules process which actually grants participants basic due process and the ability to appeal suspensions from our our service for uncivil behavior and other infractions.

13. **Sustainability:** Will the project continue after this grant? If so, what's the plan for making this happen?

This project will continue after the grant. While our operating costs will increase with more users, the vast majority of this investment is about making a qualitative leap in participation, inclusion, and technology to support larger scale engagement. It is that scale which will provide us a stronger platform for revenue potential.

Specifically:

- Volunteer capacity will be built into this project at all levels. We will improve the training and peer to peer support for our cornerstone volunteer forum manager role. We will identify and segment new volunteer roles that bolster that role and local online engagement.

- As we seek low cost replication of our lessons in other communities, we will develop new volunteer coordination roles to further our capacity. This suggests sustainability will require ongoing revenue to support **professional** volunteer coordination and network management. We pay attention to building long-term momentum and keep funded start-up forums open as long as participants want them and the volunteers stay engaged (only one has been fully retired in 17 years, an academic partner led experiment without a local community member as a volunteer forum manager.)

- Revenue from business sponsorships (public radio style advertising), whether getting visible credit for sponsoring participants nearest their location or for underwriting forums as a whole, will be explored in earnest. In the long-term, we seek to generate $10 a year per participant to cover the low cost to **maintain** the network. Donations will also be sought from those able to afford it to support inclusion and other motivating improvements but we expect that to be a small revenue generator based on the challenges faced by online news sites. From group purchasing to digital coupons, there will be other ideas to explore and balance with our volunteers expectations that we are mission driven initiative and need to avoid Facebook-like criticism for sacrificing members privacy for marketers. This grant will support revenue generation capacity development that will first be deployed in our strongest and most appropriate areas within and outside St. Paul.

- We fully appreciate that communities with fewer resources need targeted funding for effective inclusive outreach. We see no evidence that beyond one or two community events when first launching a forum with volunteer leaders, that repeat in-person outreach, door-to-door canvassing, or other labor intensive inclusive outreach can be sustained in even the wealthiest neighborhoods that we serve without revenue or funding. This project must deliver well documented and inspiring results to develop a "market" for small grants and fee-for-service assistance to help potentially scores of communities add inclusive online community engagement to their community. Whether providing assistance and training to independent online communities funded by community foundations or being funded to start new forums, there are a lot of bridges to build across this nation. The alternative is the current path where the Internet and social media is clearly empowering those with the most resources or the loudest voices.

- Lessons learned through this project will be circulated throughout the field of community engagement, allowing other leaders and practitioners to build on our work in the same way that they have already incorporated some of the best practices of our existing online town hall forums in their work.

- The "Engagement Initiative" is our working name for our fee-for-service offerings and our convening and knowledge sharing among practitioners in online communities of practice. The materials, methods, and human resources we develop for initial sharing with Knight communities will be leveraged and turned into an assistance package made available to other interested communities. We will further build on our current small scale consulting work for local governments, foundations, and other non-profits to help sustain our move the field lesson sharing activities.

14. **Capacity:** As an organization, where are you strongest and weakest? How can this grant increase your capacity?

- Strong:
  - Our Neighbors Forum model works and generates tremendous value to the communities we serve every day - strongest example: http://e-democracy.org/se
  - E-Democracy.org has built a low-cost network model using open source systems
  - E-Democracy.org execution and delivery is based on demonstrated interest and involvement. We don't build wishful "build it they will come" thinking into our implementation plans
  - Consistency and incremental innovation based on what experience of what works and what is achievable.
  - Targeting populations and access to leaders and media stakeholders is based on documented and guided experience

- Weak
  - Internal technology development resources - we need to partner with newer technology-based projects like the Sunlight Foundation, Code for America, OpenPlans, and other who have large technology contingents
  - Participants have not been effectively asked to contribute toward the cost to serve them or to support project activities that inspire donation - We need to determine to what extent a percentage of user will donate and secure the technical features with professional fundraising assistance to properly execute such efforts.

- Capacity Building:
  - Knight Foundation funding can help flesh out model for block-level inclusion for replication in Knight communities through lessons learned in the project and applied elsewhere by other organizations.
  - This grant can help E-Democracy.org develop activities to add revenue generating growth (local sponsorship interest generated by a larger participation base) to our model.
  - Increased support for staffing support will bolster output from consultant network and increase volunteer impact

15. **Risks:** Please describe a frank description of what could go wrong. What challenges could disrupt the project? Consider internal risk, such as project factors, or external risk, such as marketplace risk.

- If commercial "Locals Online" efforts find a viable way to generate profits in the lower income areas we seek to serve AND add civic-spirited community engagement, then our target market will be better served. Alternatively, if commercial models cherry pick revenue by exclusively serving wealthier areas and enter our strongest market in the Twin Cities, we may find our ability to serve all kinds of neighborhoods in a symbiotic manner diminished.

- Diffusion of poor online public spaces and vitriolic online news commenting further sour the public to any form of local community engagement online. This trend further leads people who could succeed with us as volunteer forum managers to conclude generically our community "tried it and it didn't work." Further, the current "go home" anti-immigrant attacks via many local news sites comment systems does hinder our current work as these diverse communities now view any form of public engagement online as an invitation for potential abuse. If the broader online news community continues to empower these attacks through poor commenting systems our ability to convince diverse communities to take a risk with public exposure will become even more challenging.

- Private nearest neighbor group communication adds risk of increased abusive communication due to perceived lack of public accountability. Further if existing conflicts among neighbors move online it can spoil the positive communication among participants.

- Worst case scenario: Use of nearest neighbor private communication by criminals to intimidate others in response to the system being used to successfully organize responses to crime. This has not happened to date outside of a

graffiti "tagger" attempting to post anonymously on a neighbors forum to an anti-graffiti topic.

- Targeted diverse community participants and community groups actively resist the use of online models for community engagement. The increased project scale causes some to vocally suggest that they are being exploited by what they perceive as outsiders. (Our Neighbors Forums are very open, so it only takes one person with a grievance to "hold us to account" publicly. Hence, our strong incentive to authentically work to build efforts "of" each community.)

16. Other: Is there an important question we have not asked?

- Why can't you just use Facebook?
    - Facebook "Groups", YahooGroups, and Google Groups as well as simple bcc: e-mail lists are used by block leaders for small group private communication. It may well be that a key "BeNeighbors" feature will be a "find existing online block groups" directory. Despite lacking key features like forwarding a PDF or any file with a police crime alert, we do see Facebook Groups on the rise over YahooGroups and Google Groups for use on those select streets with tech-savvy block leaders.
    - Our analysis of local community-wide Facebook "Pages" is that in reality with Facebook's "EdgeRank" posts to pages reach only a small percentage of those who like pages. Our analysis of a strong local community Facebook Page and our strongest forum, shows far more content engagement with 850 members on one of our forums than on a local community page with over 13,000 "Likes" on Facebook.
    - Facebook Groups are not designed for large scale public interaction. They do not provide the tools required for facilitation nor can you use in-person sign-up methods. It is notable that the neighborhood association with the largest and most active Facebook Group in Minneapolis has approached us to start-up a Neighbors Forum on our site.

- How will this work with large concentrations of non-English speakers (e.g. Spanish) and different cultures in non-majority diverse areas?
    - Our outreach to East Africans, Native Americans, and African-Americans in our current summer of outreach has been most effective. Outreach to Latino and Hmong/SE Asian communities is being bolstered. We've found that finding the right outreach contractor "of" a community with both strong levels of trust and an outgoing personality is essential. While we do have multi-lingual posts in our some of our forums, the English dominance is an issue for going beyond "bridging" individuals who can at least comfortably read English. We are considering options to open some cross-neighborhood/regional local engagement forums in Hmong, Spanish, and Somali languages and plan to include this in our Ford Foundation request. As we have members of these communities working for us, we are building the foundation for this next generation experimentation. Key to us is how these language-spaces will provide a path toward growing participation in our expressly intergenerational Neighbors Forums.

Inclusive Community Engagement Online Appendices

1.   **Lesson Sharing Knight Communities Draft Prospectus**
2.   **Board Member List and Biographies – See:** http://pages.e-democracy.org/Board_members
3.   **Detailed Project Timeline Chart – Draft based on larger blue sky $1.7M initiative**

Detailed budget information is not part of this collection. Our grant, with demonstrated progress, is $275,000 in year one, $250,000 in year two, and $100,000 in year three. We've promised to raise additional funds in both forum sponsorship and local grants to bolster lesson sharing/outreach/piloting in more places. Roughly half the budget is for St. Paul outreach and and quarter each is for lesson sharing and next generation technology innovation and various piloting.

1. Lesson Sharing Knight Communities Draft Prospectus

Inclusive Community Engagement Online
Lesson Sharing and Knight Communities Extension

Draft Prospectus Outline V1.1

This is a working outline on the types of outreach, lesson sharing, and potential direct extension of inclusive "Neighbors Forums" to Knight communities outside of St. Paul. This is not the full proposal outline.

The three primary components are:

1. Knight Communities-wide Networking and Lesson Sharing
2. Move the Field - Digital Inclusion for Community Voices Education and Outreach
3. Knight Community(ies) Expansion Neighbors Forum Pilots

Based on over a decade and a half of direct experience, E-Democracy.org pragmatically understands that to achieve the goal of digital engagement across many local democracies and communities, you have to help local people do their own thing.

We also see a lack of diverse community outreach and inclusion in almost all online engagement initiatives to date. We see this as an opportunity to help existing local online networks improve their inclusive participation outcomes.

We also appreciate the unique role we can play with interested local communities and volunteers who seek our online engagement hosting and want to be a part of our official community Issues Forums network.

1. Knight Communities-wide Networking and Lesson Sharing

Goal: Build more inclusive community engagement online grounded in existing and already sustained local efforts within interested Knight communities.

Proposed steps:

1. Identify existing active **neighborhood** online public spaces and leaders (hosts) in selected Knight communities. This includes gathering information on existing e-mail lists, place blogs, Facebook Groups/Pages, etc. and listing them in a simple wiki-based directory.

2. Determine each active online space leader's interest in digital inclusion for community voices training and peer to peer to networking.

3. Identify local online community engagement enthusiasts in that community and convene online with existing practitioners (then in person). This includes scouting for enthusiasts in local non-profits, government, media, community foundations, higher education, etc.

4. Bring road show training to town combined with knowledge sharing that allows existing local online engagement talent to become better known.

5. Bring local hosts and enthusiasts into the existing global "Locals Online" community of practice that is hosted by E-Democracy.org.

2. Move the Field - Digital Inclusion for Community Voices Education and Outreach

Goal: Promote inclusive community engagement online widely.

Proposed steps:

1. Provide conference presentations, trainings, speeches, etc. at Knight-related events like those that are part of the Community Information Challenge.

2. Provide such offerings at other strategic events, webinars, etc. to promote momentum for digital community engagement.

3. Package up digital engagement lessons generated in St. Paul and across E-Democracy.org's global local network and share widely.

4. Build out the "Locals Online" community of practice and promote digital engagement lesson sharing via the CityCamp unconference series. (E-Democracy.org is the fiscal agent for CityCamp and host of the CityCamp Exchange online community.)

5. Strategically engage, foster or in select cases establish niche online communities of practice where lessons related to digital inclusion for community voices can be shared for impact across many fields.

3. Knight Community(ies) Expansion Neighbors Forum Pilot

Goal: Demonstrate the cost-effective sharing of a deeply inclusive community engagement model from one Knight community to at least one other Knight community.

Proposed steps:

1. This step most logically builds off the first year of initial lesson sharing with Knight Communities.

2. In the process of identifying existing online community engagement under part 1, it is likely based on data from the PewInternet.org Neighbors Online study, that very few neighborhoods on the "wrong side of the digital tracks" so to speak will have active or quality local online engagement public spaces that are serving their information and engagement needs.

3. Identify 1 to 3 neighborhoods with at least one being an area that is lower income, highly diverse, and less digitally connected for pilot forum efforts.

4. Identify a local "Forum Manager" volunteer(s) in each area - the key to our low-cost sustainability. Lower income areas will need the bulk of volunteer outreach following necessary community networking with existing local organizations to make this truly an "of" the community effort.

5. Hire local paid outreach contractors deeply connected to those diverse communities to work "with" existing neighborhood and community groups over 18 months to establish volunteer sustained, highly inclusive online Neighbors Forum that are fully hosted by and part of E-Democracy.org.

6. Execute aggressive, often in-person forum outreach. Forums each require 100 initial participants to open and the goal is to attract ~10% of households as members in an area covering 5K to 15K in population. (The St. Paul portion of the project will be taking existing and start-up forums toward a goal of 750+ members each across 13+ neighbors forums.)

7. Gather and share lessons from this effort with other Knight communities and beyond.

Note: The project budget proposal includes expansion to one Knight community with the scale determined by additional funding local sources. Additional communities will require additional funding. We also have a strong interest in local community foundation participation even at a small level to build local connections beyond the pilot.

Initiative Community Engagement Online - Project	Year One (DRAFT Outline)	Year Two	Year Three
St. Paul	1. Outreach - Major inclusive outreach campaign - leading to 6,000 members across 13+ forums by Q4 with special partner engagement focused on lower income/diverse areas - Led by diverse outreach consultants and city-wide outreach experiments	1. Outreach - Reach 8,000 members by Q4, explore East Metro expansion potential, integrate select face-to-face "Neighborhood 2.0" engagement to bolster sustained and quality participation	1. Outreach - By Q2 reach 10,000 members across the City of St. Paul with at least 10% of households in all forum areas
	2. Evaluate - Project results measurement planning and member baseline survey - leverage questions from census, Soul of the Community, PewInternet.org	2. Evaluate - Establish qualitative research partnerships generating independent research and improve project storytelling	2. Evaluate - Comparison survey and evaluation
	3. Start-up - Complete opening of remaining start-up Neighbors Forums across St. Paul with required 100 initial members (builds on previous grant work), review "branding" and consider "BeNeighbors" as umbrella for promotion	3. Sustain - Launch sponsorship experiments and revenue explorations (particularly in higher income areas to support full "inclusive" network)	3. Leverage - Engage participation base in "next generation" online community engagement experiments, will involve technology partners and other Knight funded tools
	4. Capacity - Volunteer training for Forum Managers, participant education on diverse community "content engagement" to fully experience the diversity "in the room"	4. Capacity - Deepen "community information stream" success and systematize programming leading to distributed diverse community engagement (e.g. move well beyond potentially "token" diversity in the virtual room)	4. Broaden Capacity - Leverage neighborhood "inclusive" community engagement for greater regional diverse community voices with ethnic associations and other partners
Lessons	1. Sharing Infrastructure - Develop lesson sharing "Engagement Initiative" gathering inclusive community online engagement effective practices to date and compose into presentations, webinars, and articles.	1. Pilot - Extension of fully "hosted" 2-3 pilot neighbors forum to at least one Knight community building on year one outreach, one must be in inclusion targeted area	1. Refresh Lessons - Gather and share emergent lessons from St. Paul, the pilots, and related trends from the full project

	2. Knight Communities - Identify, convene, and assist existing local online public spaces in interested Knight communities with focus on adaptive inclusion online knowledge exchange	2. Share Lessons - Reach out to next round of Knight Communities	2. Sustain Lesson Sharing - Further develop package of online engagement services available to others on a fee for service basis and seek resources and partners to make introductory self-directed learning in the space available to thousands of potential local online engagement hosts
	3. Site Visits - In-person training and outreach in interested Knight communities	3. "Engagement Initiative" - Provide online community engagement services and advice to community foundations, local governments, local community initiatives, etc.	
	4. Move Field - Build-out current "Locals Online" community of practice and other strategic online convening, provide education outreach via Knight Community Information Challenge and other key networks	4. Move Field - Increase "Meet Your Neighbors Online" participation via promotional "Got Milk?" style campaign, leverage Locals Online community of practice and explore ways to make the thousands of existing opportunities for local community engagement online visible to far more people	
Innovation/ Nearest Neighbors	1. Open Source Technology - Rapidly update select features on current and effective GroupServer platform (GPL) to assist large scale outreach and experiment with geographic awareness options - Q1	1. BeNeighbors Tech Community - Development sprints, competitions, etc. that foster further code contributions to nearest neighbor pilot platform, share "proximity connecting" code with other initiatives, seek resources from other funders to bolster activity	1. Expand Innovation - Experiment with partners on break through local online community engagement models and technology, secure additional resources for R and D that pushes envelope and make supporting "inclusion" cost-effective
	2. Technology Review - Investigate requirements for "nearest neighbor" BeNeighbors pilot and relation to current Neighbors Forums GroupServer platform, gather input from technology partners and collaborators - determine options for technology experimentation - Q2	2. Move Field - Locals Online/CityCamp Code-a-thon - Partner with lead technology-led local government 2.0 and non-profit tech initiatives to network open source developers committed to local community engagement online - Play convening and promotional role and let tech-strong projects take lead where they are best	2. Move Field - Technology Innovation - Foster partnerships to close divide between traditional "community engagement" and open source technology-driven community initiatives (leverage national local government 2.0 interest and transfer to appropriately hosted community non-profit initiatives for need flexibility), build funding sources to foster technology innovation based on software requirements/needs from non-technologists to technologists

3. Nearest Neighbor Pilot - By Q3 ID specific area(s) likely along Central Corridor - area to seek 1,000 "electronic block clubs" pilot users representing ~50% of households, Start coding work based on technology review for pilot (either adding to GroupServer, leveraging another open source CMS, or a mix of both)	3. Nearest Neighbor Pilot - Open pilot to public, door-to-door/etc. Intensive outreach and partnerships, leverage face to face engagement/block/building level community building in small target area, develop evaluation/research program, explore social enterprise models to support scaling to "locally everywhere" first across Twin Cities, other Knight communities, and beyond	3. Nearest Neighbors Pilot - Evaluate initiative, seek to expand service areas, share pilot lessons globally