Design Connect is requesting applications for project partnerships with municipal governments, neighborhood organizations, and other community development organizations for its Spring 2016 semester. Design Connect is a student run community design and planning organization at Cornell University. We are committed to partnering with communities to address significant planning and design issues through a participatory and multidisciplinary process. This process requires a meaningful commitment of time and resources from both the community and Design Connect Teams.

SERVICES:
Design Connect offers pro bono community-based planning, design and policy work in the following areas:
- Research and Analysis
- Charrettes and Participatory Visioning
- Master Plans
- Parks and Open Space
- Public and Non-Profit Strategy
- Community Gardens
- Streetscape and Pedestrian Oriented Design
- Interiors for Public Space

PROCESS
Students from a variety of disciplines at Cornell including Architecture, Landscape Architecture, City & Regional Planning and Historic Preservation form teams and work with input from a faculty advisor and the community sponsor. Teams engage community members to shape an initial project idea into a conceptual design that reflects local needs and inspires a constituency that can take the project to the next level. Most teams are formed and work within an academic semester, however, Design Connect also encourages applicants with longer-term projects to submit proposals. Projects requiring more than one semester’s work must have distinct components with deliverables to be completed each semester.

COST
We ask for an upfront donation of $500 per project/semester to cover a portion of the travel expenses and material costs incurred by student volunteers. If your organization is unable to provide this level of support please contact us to discuss alternatives. Design Connect will provide a letter documenting our in-kind donation of student time to clients at a rate of $15/hour which can be used to offset requirements of matching-grants in the future.
ELIGIBILITY

Projects must:

- be in the community interest
- engage stakeholders in active dialogue
- be within a 2 hour drive of Ithaca, NY
- have a community partner (an agency, non-profit or citizen group) ready to work closely with the student team and to devote time throughout the semester as an active partner
- involve design up to a conceptual level. Design Connect teams produce high quality student work but we can not assume construction liability or fulfill licensed professional design requirements.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Design Connect receives many applications. In order to prioritize requests and ensure that projects will be fulfilling for students and useful for communities we evaluate applications based on the following criteria:

- **Education**: What will students learn from their involvement? Are lessons applicable to other solutions/communities?
- **Scope**: Does the scope of work fall within the boundaries of work students can reasonably complete?
- **Timing**: Can the project or a significant project element, be completed in an academic semester? Is there enough work to fill a semester?
- **Community Support**: Does the community support the project?
- **Partner Capacity**: Does the applicant have the capacity to support the project during and after Design Connect’s involvement?
- **Mission**: Does the project reflect Design Connect’s goals of promoting social, environmental and economic equity and sustainability through interdisciplinary and participatory design or planning?

Applications for Spring 2016 should be submitted via e-mail no later than December 4th, 2015. Once applications have been reviewed, prospective clients will be asked to participate in an in-depth interview, by phone or in person, in order to more fully determine the scope and feasibility of the proposed project. Should Design Connect require any changes be made to a perspective client’s projection application such changes will be discussed during the interview. Prospective clients will be informed by the second week of January 2016 whether or not their proposed project will be included in Design Connect’s Spring 2015 Project Schedule.

Please contact us with any questions at designconnect@cornell.edu or visit http://blogs.cornell.edu/designconnectcornell for additional information.