

Project Narrative – anc1D 2008 Small Grants

anc1D
mount pleasant, dc

Title: In 15 words or less, give a title that describes the project's main beneficial result.

Empowering all community members with skills and resources needed to care for their bicycles.

Narrative: 500 words or less, all on this page. Label paragraphs - A: Group. B: Project. C: Benefits. D: Leverage.

A. The Mt. Pleasant Bicycle Cooperative is a group of avid bike riders who share a frustration with lack of access to friendly, affordable, quality bicycle maintenance skills and services in the District of Columbia—specifically in the Mt. Pleasant neighborhood. As of now, our group is an informal collection of friends and colleagues. The opportunity to widen the scope and scale of this group is great—we have already received expressed enthusiasm from students and young professionals and are itching to reach out to the low-income and Spanish speaking members of our community as well.

B. Our project's mission is to: promote sustainable transportation options, foster community connections through education and mentorship, and empower people with the tools and knowledge to take full advantage of bicycles for transportation and recreation purposes. We would use the community grant as seed money to purchase the tools and equipment necessary for expanding our group and for advertising its services to the Mt. Pleasant community. Our hope is to create a space where community members can come to learn and share in a friendly, open, and understanding environment. Initially our plan is to hold open work-shops twice a week---4 hours on a week night and 8 hours on a weekend day. As we become more well-known and develop more relationships (and volunteers!), we hope to expand the hours and services that the Co-op offers. We are fortunate to be in contact with a number of successful community bike co-ops around the country and plan on using them as resources as we grow (see resource addendum for their websites). Our hope is that the Mt. Pleasant Bike Co-op becomes a fixture in the Mt. Pleasant community and is able to serve the community for many years to come.

C. The benefits of supporting the Mt. Pleasant Bike Co-op are numerous: 1) Getting people out of their cars and onto their bikes is healthy for the body, community, and environment; 2) Enabling people from all walks of life to come together in a common space with a common goal develops and nurtures community connections; 3) Offering a free (or low-cost if new parts are needed) service will help people connect with and care for their bicycle. With a quick bike ride down Mt. Pleasant Street, one can see the many people who already ride bicycles. One can also see (and hear) the many people who could use some help in properly maintaining and fixing their bicycles. While we are only a start-up, the benefits of the Mt. Pleasant Bike Co-op would begin to show themselves as soon as we can get the tools ordered and the advertisements out to the community. In the first two months, we hope to help at least 50 Mt. Pleasant Community members and many more into the future. The groups we look forward to working with most are the Spanish speaking and low-income community members who may not have the money or English language skills to go to a bicycle shop.

D. We hope to have diverse sources of funding to grow our work. Our workforce will be all volunteer driven. We plan on applying to other community grant-makers that are willing to invest in community development and sustainable transportation projects. We hope to implement a donation system where folks who can afford to will give \$10/hour for use of the tools and access to classes (though no one will be turned away if they cannot afford it). We also hope to find corporate sponsors, and will continue to research more options along the way. We hope to attract volunteers and streams of funding by spreading the word about what we are doing and showcasing our successes.

Resource Addendum: www.bicyclekitchen.com/who.html; www.mrbikecoop.com; www.fmbikeworkshop.org