

F07-19

**THE AGAPE FOUNDATION - BOARD OF TRUSTEES GRANTS
FALL 2007 - APPLICATION COVERSHEET FOR ORGANIZATIONS**

Name of organization and/or project: Consejo Popular de Echo Park
Director: _____ Contact person & title (if not director): Juan Ramos

Address: 1226 N. Alvarado St. City, State, Zip code: Los Angeles Ca. 90026

Telephone: (213) 484-0910 Fax number: _____

E-mail: consejo_popular13@yahoo.com Website: under construction

Year founded: 2003 Tax-exempt status (circle): Yes No Pending ☒ x

Fiscal Sponsor's name and address (if applicable): Hispanic Association for Bilingual Bicultural Ministries
54 N. Oakland Avenue #205, Pasadena Ca. 91101

Summarize the organization's mission (2 to 3 sentences):

Consejo Popular is an organization created to fight against evictions, discrimination and the stress toward the poor caused by the high prices in housing, promote empowerment in the community, provide quality in housing controlled by the poor residents and preserve the accessibility of housing for future generations. Also Consejo Popular will educate, organize, and mobilize our community to promote social justice.

Purpose of the grant (2 to 3 sentences): Consejo Popular respectfully requests the consideration of the Agape Foundation of a grant to support our community organizing work. Our grassroots organizing campaign in the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, infused with strong representative community leadership, will confront the racial segregation in our community caused by increasing gentrification. .

Grant amount requested: \$ 5,000

Total organizational budget (current year): \$ 27,150 Total project budget (if applicable): \$ _____

Please tell us how you heard about us: we heard about Agape by members of L.A Social Forum

To be filled out by Agape staff (please do not write below this line).

Granting history with Agape:

Board Review: Accept____ Reject____ Re-apply? ____

Other comments (if rejected, why?):

Amount granted: \$ _____ Fund: _____
Amount granted: \$ _____ Fund: _____

Grant Range and Use

Board of Trustees grants range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for a six-month period. The Agape Foundation will accept proposals for **general support** as well as for **program expenses**.

Application Instructions

If requested by staff, please submit one copy of a written proposal in double-sided format. Do not submit any written materials in plastic. Please be certain to include all requested materials. Agape will consider your proposal incomplete without all of these components. If any of the items are not available or applicable, please explain.

- * Cover Sheet (see insert) - Please complete in full using only the space provided.
- * Budget Sheet (see insert) - Provide actual income and expenses for last year, and list planned expenses and income for the current fiscal year.
- * Narrative - Please address the following 16 points in the order listed *in no more than 5 pages*.

Background:

1. State your mission and give a brief history of your organization.

Established in May 2003, Consejo Popular was created in response to the increasing gentrification of the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, and the resulting evictions of low-income tenants by private landowners, Consejo Popular was one of the first local organizations to protest the inadequacy of laws that are supposed to protect renters from the avarice of private landowning corporations. The mission of our organization consists of the following:

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2. Include any major accomplishments.

Our experience with housing discrimination led us to analyze how we could best work together to create our organizational structure and develop anti-gentrification strategies so that the project will be developed and controlled by community residents. We have organized ourselves to fight for our right to affordable housing, to protect the land against speculation and depredation, and to develop sustainable ways of becoming self-sufficient as we struggle for social justice for our low-income communities.

In June 2003 we developed and plan the cooperative housing project to enable our residents to own their land and thus have access to fair housing. In the past tree years we have conducted outreach in the schools and on the streets of Echo Park, which has led to the formation of the Consejo Popular de Echo Park/Popular Council of Echo Park. The Consejo mobilizes neighborhood residents and community leaders to engage in public actions to stop the gentrification and consequent racial segregation it is bringing to our community. The project began with 13 people and currently numbers 80 members as it continues to grow in response to our organizing and outreach efforts.

Thanks to the generous support of the Liberty Hill Foundation, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, and the Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People, we have created the Seed Fund for our community organizing work. We have also partnered with

the East Los Angeles Community Corporation to learn how to develop and create housing cooperatives, and collaborate with Progressive Christians Unity to identify environmental and social issues that affect our low-income communities.

Organization & Structure:

3. Describe your core group, staff and volunteers.

Since 2003 our organization has growing of 13 families to 85 members, 35 are involved in the organization, 50 participate as a regular monthly basis, four members are part of the counsel committee, one staff member, four volunteer organizers and developers, the board of directors are comprised for 5 members.

4. Provide a list of the members of your governing body and their occupations/affiliations.

1. President: Rosa Elvira Zelaya (El Salvador)
Member of Ministerio Liberación, and Secretary of Centro de Padres in Logan School.
2. Vice President: Martha Cendejas (Mexico)
Garment worker and community activist
3. Treasurer: Juvenal Martinez (indigenous Otomi from Mexico)
Garment worker founder of Consejo Popular de Echo Park.
4. Secretary: Yolanda Ibarra (Zapotec from Oaxaca, Mexico)
Garment worker, volunteer at Housing Rights Center.
5. Official: Dulce Cerritos (Popular Educator) tenant organizer of Inquilinos Unidos of Westlake-Pico Union, Member of Consejo Popular de Echo Park.

Staff: Juan Ramos (Community Organizer)

Community organizers volunteers:

Francisco Mendez (Activist in the comunidad indígena oaxaquena and KIWA).

Blanca Maria Perez. (Immediate Response Network)

Housing Developers volunteers:

Monique Chavoya (East Los Angeles Community Corporation)

Veronica Saldana (Urban developer, Community Organizer)

5. Describe what inclusive and diverse mean in the context of your organization's community, project, and purpose.

The members of Consejo Popular are people of color, indigenous, women, children, teenagers, and immigrants who live below the federal poverty level. Through our work we fight to change and transform the conditions that promote racial and economic injustice. Each of us comes from a different background, and we understand that our fight is against discrimination based on nationality, gender, or ethnicity and that we must unite to resolve the problems that have been created by the system of injustice we all face today.

We promote the efforts of community members to fight for social change and develop leadership through participation in commissions, our weekly meetings, and community organizing efforts. All members participate in organizational decision-making, which relies on the model of consensus. By educating, organizing, and mobilizing our community, we address inequality, oppression, and discrimination within our organization, and by doing so, we enhance our members' ability to fight injustice in the larger society. We are teaching skills they can turn to throughout their lifetimes to continue the struggle to promote diversity wherever they confront oppression and exclusion.

6. Describe your organization's decision-making structure and processes.

Our organization utilizes the modified consensus as a communal form of decision-making. Our assembly takes into consideration each and every one of their members as well as their problems and at the end we define vote based on reason. All the members have the same rights and obligations established in the rules and by-laws of the organization.

7. Explain whether your leadership is representative of your constituency, and why or why not.

The representation of the board of directors is made up of the members of the community, the general assembly is made up of immigrant workers, single mothers, low-income students, indigenous people. The counsel committee is made up of volunteers and organizers that donate their time to technical information issues and support to the organization.

Guiding Philosophies:

8. Describe how your project creates social or societal change – as opposed to individual change.

One of the primary changes we are trying to achieve in our community is to confront and reduce the causes of poverty among our constituency. To do this, we use the methodology of popular education to develop leadership skills. Popular education helps communities identify their problems, expectations, and needs; facilitate change; and examine unequal power relations in society.

Popular education has been used as a tool to raise people's consciousness of how their personal experiences are inextricably linked with larger social problems. When they are encouraged to work with knowledge they have from their own experience, they can develop strategies together to change their immediate situations. They move from analysis to encouraging collective action to change oppressive systems. This methodology offers the most effective and hopeful system to address and change the root causes of poverty and the insidious effects it has on those it ensnares.

9. Describe how your organization practices and promotes nonviolence in its organizational structure, process and actions.

Due to the many constantly human rights violations to low-income workers, and their families, we have defined gentrification as urbanistic violence. Although given the hostile daily live characteristics that we confront in our communities, we have established a dialogue of mutual respect that not only is focus in our organization but as well within our community. For example: we promote community dialogue, and consensus in an internal level to create mutual agreements with out violating the rights of de diverse collective decisions. In a community level we promote actions that will avoid violent aggressions one to another and violence in general. Our proposal is to engage into inclusive dialogue, as well respect for diversity and differences, and mainly holistic actions focused in the relationship between earth, people, and everything that is around us.

10. Provide a brief explanation of how your organization fits our funding priorities.

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11. Describe your organizing methods.

Specific methods include: recruiting organizational members through community events, popular celebrations, outreach in schools, and parent centers; an anti-eviction campaigns; creating a housing plan; conducting public education campaigns to inform residents about housing cooperatives and self-sufficiency; sponsoring workshops on gentrification and its affect on the community, tenants and legal rights, economic literacy, study circles based on popular education, and housing planning.

12. Include collaborations or networking with other organizations.

We collaborate with the Westlake Neighborhood Council, Progressive Christians Uniting and the Ministerio Liberacion for training workshops, outreach, community actions, sharing experiences, and cultural activities.

Program:

13. Describe the need for and the work for which you are requesting funds.

As a result of rapid population growth, the City of Los Angeles, in consort with large private housing corporations, has created the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, the Westlake Community Plan, and the Silver Lake-Echo Park Community Plan, which are having devastating consequences for our communities. These consequences include increasing: real estate prices, evictions, racial segregation, gentrification, rent gouging, criminalization of the poor, and unemployment resulting from industrial restructuring – as well as reduced budgets for social services, the closing of 12 health clinics, and reductions in service or closing of service in public hospitals for people without health insurance.

Fewer and fewer working people can afford to live in the communities where they work; fewer still can afford to buy homes in those communities. Thousands of families have been forced to move into smaller spaces, double up with friends or family, or become homeless because they can no longer afford to pay for their basic needs, such as housing and food.

While the cost of housing has continued to increase in Los Angeles, incomes have not risen in response, especially for low-wage workers. According to a study by the California Budget Project, between 1989 and 2002, the median income of low-income renters decreased by 10.3%. During the same time period, the income of the median homeowner household increased by 7.4%. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, as of December 4, 2005, the median price for residential resales in Echo Park in 2005 was \$560,000, an increase of more than 20% over the previous year.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition calculates the "housing wage," the hourly wage needed to pay the rent on an apartment at the "fair market rent" set by the federal Department of

Housing and Urban Development. In Los Angeles County the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,275. The annual income needed to afford this apartment is \$40,840 and the hourly wage needed is \$19.63 for a 40-hour week. A minimum wage worker earning \$6.75 per hour – typical of the immigrant and sweatshop employees living in Echo Park – would have to work 116 hours each week to afford this rent.

The high rents help explain why many Los Angeles residents pay so much of their income for rent and why many low-income renters live in overcrowded conditions. According to the federal government, rent is considered affordable when it is no more than 30% of the renter's monthly income. Nearly 25% of Angelenos spend more than half their income on rent, and among the very poorest households, the figure is 62.4%, leaving very little for needs such as food, transportation, and health care.

Hundreds of poor families have been evicted in Echo Park to make room for people with the means to pay high rents. The Silver Lake-Echo Park Community Plan does not include low-income residents in its decision-making processes as outreach campaigns and community forums have only reached home and property owners in Echo Park. Renters are shut out of plans that significantly affect their homes, their jobs, and their families.

The problems of low-income neighborhoods typically revolve around disinvestment and absentee ownership. As homeownership declines, older buildings are likely to be bought by absentee investors who allow the buildings to deteriorate while charging high rents. The rents paid to these absentee owners leave the community – they are not saved by the residents, not spent in local businesses, not used to improve the community. Even when residents organize themselves to improve their neighborhoods, it is typically the absentee owners who reap the benefits of increased property values.

14. Provide a brief description of your organization's strategy.

As part of our efforts to combat rapid gentrification and the displacement of low-income residents, our plan is to take land off the speculative market, hold it in trust for the long term, and develop affordable housing. Our work is based in the Echo Park-Silver Lake corridor because strategic and environmental factors position the area as particularly desirable to private developers and real estate corporations.

The proposed land cooperative is the community's response to the segregation and gentrification plans being implemented by the City of Los Angeles. We will support poor and low-income families in their demand for justice and the right to fair and affordable housing. The cooperative will help end evictions and housing discrimination, give poor and low-income residents priority access to affordable housing, and train community members to develop plans to meet their financial and social needs.

The Consejo Popular de Echo Park/Housing Cooperative is a coalition of people of color and low-income families struggling to promote democratic participation and mobilize and train the residents of Echo Park so the Neighborhood Council will become truly representative of the cultural diversity of our community. It is currently comprised of 95% White people. Our strategies are to end evictions and housing discrimination, establish the basis for developing affordable housing, stop rent increasing, promote popular education as a method of social and political awareness, and create coalitions with other sectors of the community that are also fighting for social change.

In 2007, we will develop several cultural events, fundraising activities, information tables, community forums, workshops in schools and churches, and “green” housing workshops to promote our projects. We will publish the Council’s bulletin in Spanish with information about community activities and the results of our workshops. Members of the East Los Angeles Community Corporation will work with us in the planning and development of affordable housing. We will provide technical assistance to community residents with the help of staff from the Institute for Community Economics. By October 2007, we will expand the number of residents and community leaders on the Popular Council, including the representation of people of color participating in the Neighborhood Council elections.

Fundraising:

15. Provide a description of how your organization raises funds.

Our fundraising plan are to continue and expand the annual series of cultural celebrations, house parties, and other community events that will enable us to secure the funds we need to carry out our work. These activities are a critical part of our plan for self-sufficiency. In 2007, we will conduct our first direct mail campaign, targeted to individuals and businesses, and we plan to increase both the size and frequency of mailings each year as our donor base grows.

Membership dues will continue to be an essential source of revenue. In addition, we will be actively applying for foundation grants. We anticipate that in four years, 70% of our revenues will be derived from individuals through membership dues, direct mail, and special events, with the remaining 30% coming from grants.

16. Include a list of foundations to which you have or will be applying, and the status of those applications.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development	\$10,000	received
National CCHD (Technical Assistance)	\$ 3,500	received
Self-Development of People (SDOP)	\$20,000	promised
Sparkplug Foundation	\$10,000	promised
SDOP San Gabriel (Los Angeles Region)	\$10,000	promised
Peace Development Fund	\$10,000	promised
Common Counsel Foundation	\$ 8,000	promised

Optional: Any other pertinent material - recent newsletters, publicity flyers, newspaper articles, etc.
Please be selective and conserve resources by choosing sparingly.

Submit completed proposal to: The Agape Foundation, 1095 Market Street, Suite 304, San Francisco, CA 94103

THE AGAPE FOUNDATION - FALL 2007 - APPLICATION BUDGET SHEET

	ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET <i>(last year's actual)</i>	ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET <i>(current year planned)</i>
Dates of Fiscal Year (ending mo/yr)		

INCOME

<i>Contributed Income</i>		
Regular Appeals	2750	4960
Special Appeals		
Acquisition		
Donor Pledges		
Board Pledges		
Foundations	18500	58000
Major Donor Gifts		
New		
Renewing		
Matching Gifts		
Premiums		
T-shirts		2600
Booklets		
Bumper stickers		
Special Events		3800
Raffles	1800	2600
Dances	2500	4700
Conferences		
Luncheons	1600	3750
Other		
Subtotal (<i>Contributed Income</i>)		
<i>Earned Income</i>		
Bank Interest & Dividends		
Gain/loss		
Fee for Service		
Other		
Subtotal (<i>Earned Income</i>)		
Total Income	\$27,150	\$80,410

EXPENSES

Salaries (p/t)	\$10000	\$40000 (two full time)
Benefits and Taxes	\$ 1000	\$ 4000
Professional Fees		\$ 3600
Occupancy (rent, utilities)	\$ 3400	\$ 4200
Insurance		
Telephone	\$ 756	\$ 960
Postage/Shipping	\$ 275	\$ 1200
Copying/Printing	\$ 3600	\$ 4500
Supplies	\$ 1819	\$ 3800
Equipment (specify)		
Travel/Transportation		
Fundraising	\$ 2800	\$ 4700
Promotion/Publicity/Outreach		\$ 3450
Training/Technical Assistance	\$ 3500	\$ 10000
Other		
Total Expenses	\$27150	\$80,410