



Neighborhood Improvement Grant Guidelines 2021

Purpose

The City of Fort Wayne **Planning & Policy Department** presents a grant opportunity that allows neighborhoods to implement projects that will energize their communities. The Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program provides funding assistance for projects that create and beautify public spaces and strengthen community involvement.

Who We Fund

Eligible applicants include City of Fort Wayne Neighborhood Associations registered with the City. A simple one page registration form is available with the grant documents. Neighborhood Area Partnerships are also eligible for the program.

Projects should be the idea of, and championed by, residents of the neighborhood area with input from nearby residents.

What We Fund

Creative community projects that focus on the following criteria will be considered for funding:

- Enhances the aesthetics of the neighborhood.
- Provides a clear community benefit.
- Accessible to all members of the community.
- Addresses a known neighborhood deficiency
- Increases sense of community.
- Activates community improvements or spaces.
- Focuses on community involvement.



What are the Grant Program terms and contract requirements?

- The City retains sole discretion in determining whether or not applications are eligible.
- Necessary permits or other approvals must be obtained by the applicant prior to starting projects. Examples of projects that need permits include but are not limited to, permanent improvements within the public right-of-way such as signage or modifications to city infrastructure, or activities requiring a street closure.
- Projects may involve private property but must provide a clear public benefit. Documentation must be provided that confirms property owner support and approval of the proposal.
- Depending on the nature of the grant project, the contract Agreement will require three quotes for work (if professional contractors are performing work).
- Projects must be accessible and inclusive.
- Award maximum is \$5,000 per project.
- Only one Neighborhood Improvement Grant per project per year.
- Projects may require a design review as a condition of the grant award.
- Project is ready to begin within 1-3 months from award date.
- Projects must be completed within the calendar year of award date.
- Neighborhood Associations that apply must be registered with the City.

How are grants distributed for awarded projects?

- Applicants who are selected (“Grantee”) must sign a contract Agreement with the City before implementation of their project.
- Depending on the nature of the grant project, three (3) bids are required and must be submitted to the City before implementation of the project
- Invoices for project costs must be submitted as proof of expenses once the project has been completed.
- Payment may not exceed total grant award.

What are the reporting requirements?

- Monthly status reports may be required for certain projects.
- Upon completion of the project the Grantee will provide a summary report along with a complete expense report.
- Grantee will include at least three digital photos of the project’s activities along with project report. The City reserves all rights to use the photos for future promotion or publications.

What types of expenses are covered by grant funds?

Projects must provide a capital improvement that enhances the public spaces within the neighborhood. Projects that improve universal accessibility are also encouraged. The following are examples of eligible grant projects:

- Improving or providing neighborhood amenities (signage/welcome markers, community centers, community gardens or greenspaces)
- Public art installations
- Improvements that enhance public spaces (benches, crosswalks, bike amenities)

What types of expenses are NOT covered by grant funds?

- Routine maintenance, *i.e.* mowing and snow removal.
- General maintenance of public infrastructure (sidewalks, streetlights, alleys, street trees)
- On-going operating expenses, *i.e.* administration costs, office supplies, website fees.
- Costs for food and beverages, games, prizes, giveaways, etc.
- Block Parties, social events, and programming.

Grant Application Scoring Criteria

The City retains sole discretion in determining how proposed projects, programs and activities meet the program guidelines and criteria. The nature of proposed projects can vary greatly, therefore the following scoring criteria are not absolute; rather they are intended to provide guidance for applicants while preparing their applications and for City staff in scoring them.

1. Scope of Work/Creativity/Project Readiness: 0-35 Points

- Defines scope of work, timeline, goals, process and measurable outcomes.
- Identifies leaders/organizers of project.
- Project timeline.
- Project creativity.
- Visibility and accessibility.
- Identifies future maintenance for permanent improvements, if applicable.
- Defines budget, contributions and/or pledges for the project.

2. Community Benefit: 0-25 Points

- Defines who will benefit from the project.
- Issue(s) addressed and problem(s) documented.
- Creative and workable solutions.
- Identifies long and/or short term benefits.

3. Neighborhood/Community Participation: 0-25 Points

- Documentation of neighborhood/surrounding residents' approval of project.
- Neighborhood/resident involvement in all project phases.
- Participation level of residents.
- Strengthens and/or builds new partnerships with other entities or groups.
- Matching funds or in-kind goods/services.

4. Consistency with City Policies and Adopted Plans: 0-15 Points

- Implements recommendations from or is consistent with City plans.
- Complies with City regulations.
- Understanding of permissions and permits necessary to implement project.

5. Additional Considerations: 5 Points

- Projects that include a funding match will receive an additional 5 points.