

City of Shoreline

Neighborhood Mini-Grant Information & Application Materials

This Information Packet will assist you with writing your Idea Letter and developing your Neighborhood Mini-Grant application. If you have questions after reading this material, please contact the Neighborhood Coordinator at (206) 546-8564.

The Neighborhood Mini-Grant Program provides equal grants to each of the neighborhood associations formally recognized by the City Council in the City of Shoreline that properly applies for a Mini-Grant. The City recognizes neighborhood associations as formal groups of citizens who have organized themselves for the purpose of improving or developing services and amenities for their communities, and who are publicly incorporated or have established rules making their deliberations open and available to the community and general public.

Mini-Grant projects may include:

- Projects that create or enhance a tangible improvement in the neighborhood;
- Projects that disseminate information and increase awareness of the goals and mission of the neighborhood association to the neighborhood community;
- Projects that directly benefit a public agency or organization and its immediate neighborhood, and that require the active involvement of both the public agency and members of the neighborhood in planning and carrying out the program.

The Office of Neighborhoods reviews Neighborhood Mini-Grant applications prior submitting them for City Council approval. All projects must benefit the City of Shoreline. No project shall be for the benefit of any individual or private entity. Projects that require ongoing funding or staffing will not be considered for funding. Projects must result in a tangible benefit to the neighborhood within one year of approval.

Neighborhood associations are encouraged to involve other neighborhood or community groups in joint projects. These might include groups such as Scouts, PTA, businesses, service and civic organizations, youth service organizations, and others.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT COORDINATOR

The Neighborhood Project Coordinator oversees the project on behalf of its neighborhood association. Typical roles of the Neighborhood Project Coordinator include: organizing project planning meetings and work parties; obtaining volunteer labor pledges; submitting invoices; and coordinating the project with the Office of Neighborhoods and appropriate government entities.

DEVELOPING A PROJECT BUDGET

Applicants need to include a project budget in their application that includes all costs for doing the project. Researching costs as the project takes shape is critical to developing a budget. The following suggestions may help in developing a realistic budget:

- Make a list of all materials and services needed to accomplish the project;

- Get cost estimates for each item from more than one reliable source;
- If you are proposing a physical improvement project, be certain that City staff has confirmed cost of permits, potential design review costs, installation costs and/or any required survey work.

Until a project receives City Council approval, the City is not responsible for nor will it pay for any expenses or costs incurred by the applicant organization for the project.

NEIGHBORHOOD MATCH

Mini-Grant projects require a dollar-for-dollar neighborhood match for City funds awarded. For every dollar requested through the Mini-Grant fund, one dollar of match must be provided by the applicant organization.

Match may be composed of many different things, including cash resources from the neighborhood association, volunteer labor, and donated materials or services. Match may be generated from co-sponsoring groups, businesses, organizations, schools, media, and in-kind donations. The best way to consider ideas for match is to look over a list of all resources needed to complete the project and to identify those items that can be found in the neighborhood. Don't forget human resources, such as expertise needed to develop a design, to supervise construction or to analyze data.

For purposes of match, an hour of labor is worth \$15.00. Professional services that are donated are valued at the "reasonable and customary rate" for that service.

Following are some guidelines to use when determining how to provide neighborhood match:

- To qualify as a volunteer labor match hour, volunteers should be working on the City Council approved Neighborhood Mini-Grant project, as described in the "Idea Letter" and Mini-Grant application.
- Up to 25% of volunteer labor match hours may be expended on application preparation.
- The intent of Mini-Grant projects is to encourage neighborhood and community involvement by all neighborhood residents, so as many volunteer labor hours as possible should be expended on the Mini-Grant project itself.
- The neighborhood association that pledged the match will be responsible for delivering the match in all cases - no matter who acts as Neighborhood Project Coordinator. All commitments for match must be in hand at the start of the project.

Limitations on Match

Assistance from City staff or funds from elsewhere in the City cannot be counted as match. Professional services must be either wholly donated or wholly paid for with grant funds. "Partial donations" (i.e. professional services delivered for a discount) or other arrangements are not acceptable. This is intended to ensure that persons hired to provide services or skilled labor are selected on the basis of their qualifications, experience, and fees, not on their willingness to donate services.

PAYMENT OF PROVIDERS

Because Mini-Grant funds are public dollars, the City must meet certain audit requirements for funds it expends. The City Finance Department handles all grant accounts.

Generally, an invoice from the vendor and a Mini-Grant invoice, signed by the Neighborhood Project Coordinator, are required in order for the vendor to receive payment. Invoices should be addressed to the City of Shoreline, not the neighborhood association.

A City purchase order may also be used. Neighborhood Project Coordinators should work out the details of the purchase order with the provider before requesting the Purchase Order from the City. The City Finance Department needs a minimum of two weeks notice to process a purchase order request.

The City cannot pay in advance for goods and/or services and must follow the above procedures.

After approval of a Mini-Grant project by the City Council, the Office of Neighborhoods will provide the Neighborhood Project Coordinator more detailed information regarding the payment of providers and vendors. Please contact the Office of Neighborhoods if you have any questions.

MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC FACILITIES

Whenever Mini-Grant funds are used towards the purchase or construction of neighborhood assets or facilities, the neighborhood will be required to plan for, and take responsibility for ongoing maintenance of the asset. In the event that the neighborhood is unable to continue maintenance the City will assume responsibility. Ultimate ownership and responsibility for City facilities, including Mini-Grant Projects, rests with the City. If the Mini-Grant project has been installed on private property, or on property owned with another public entity, such as the School District, King County, or Seattle City Light, the neighborhood will work with the property owner to develop a maintenance plan. (Projects on private property must result in a demonstrable, ongoing public benefit).

LIABILITY

Neighborhood associations proposing Mini-Grant projects that present risk to the neighborhood association and/or the City will be required to obtain liability insurance. The City Attorney will review Mini-Grant proposals to determine whether liability insurance will be required.