



CITY OF COCONUT CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Purpose

The purpose of the Neighborhood Enhancement Grant Program is to stimulate and enhance neighborhood vitality by addressing the concerns and special needs of our neighborhoods. The City Commission has allocated funds for a Neighborhood Enhancement Grant Program to assist in neighborhood planning opportunities, neighborhood enhancement programs, support of neighborhood/homeowner associations, and neighborhood partnership agreements. The City's mission statement is to "foster continuous quality improvement to enhance a sense of community, quality of life, and personal security." Quality neighborhoods are crucial to attaining our mission. The state of our neighborhoods reflects the overall economic stability, social quality, and security of the City.

Who is an eligible applicant?

The types of organizations eligible for funding include the following:

Neighborhood Associations – Voluntary, non-profit organizations formed by residents of a subdivision. The goal of these organizations is to enhance and preserve the quality of the neighborhood. Association activities may include beautification efforts and the development of crime prevention programs. Neighborhood associations have no regulatory powers.

Homeowners Associations – Mandatory organizations for all property owners within the boundaries of a development, including condominium and townhome associations. Homeowners Associations have legal authority to enact and enforce maintenance and design standards, and levy fees for maintenance of common areas. This type of organization is formed as a part of the development process of new neighborhoods prior to actual construction.

Schools – Accredited Schools serving elementary age children and higher.

Others – Other non-profit organizations that can assure the long-term maintenance of the enhancement.

Eligible Projects

The matching grant program is designed to provide funding assistance for specific neighborhood projects that promote a stronger, safer, and more sustainable community. Eligible neighborhood projects may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. **Beautification Projects:** involve low maintenance landscaping or other improvements to common areas, rights-of-way or City-owned property, which serve to beautify the neighborhood. Projects may include upgrades to neighborhood identification or directional signs, street trees, lighting, or median landscaping.

2. **Energy Conservation Projects:** involve the use of renewable energy, such as solar panels, photovoltaic systems, or windmills, for the use of common area energy to reduce demand for electric power. Common area energy includes those site features where the HOA is responsible for electric bills such as clubhouse, pool equipment, site lighting, and site irrigation.
3. **Butterfly Gardens:** involve the planting and maintaining of caterpillar food plants upon which adult butterflies lay their eggs (larval host plants). Projects may include the planting of blossoming nectar plants to make the butterfly garden more beautiful and provide for adult butterfly feeding.
4. **Wildlife Habitat Sites:** involve providing the basic habitat elements (food, water, cover, and places to raise young), taking steps to conserve natural resources in the habitat, and applying for and receiving certification from the National Wildlife Federation as a "Backyard Wildlife Habitat." The National Wildlife Federation certification application fee is eligible for reimbursement.
5. **Buffer Walls:** must screen, enhance community aesthetics, and improve quality of life.
6. **Greenway Connections, Amenities, and Trailheads**
7. **Multi-phase Design Projects:** involve design of community landscape plans where existing approved plans are no longer consistent with industry best management practices (BMPs) and/or compatible with surrounding areas. Funds may be used for third party professional services and would be eligible for reimbursement based on percent complete and scale of community. Applicants shall enter into an agreement, committing to a multi-phase installation plan up to five (5) years. Failure to adhere to the installation plan will result in a reassessment of awarded funds.

Project Criteria

- Neighborhood improvements shall benefit the entire neighborhood or community and demonstrate the direct involvement of the neighborhood residents. All project proposals must include members of the neighborhood in the identification, planning, and execution of the project. No project shall benefit an individual more than it would the entire neighborhood.
- Projects must be voted on and approved by the applicant association or organization. Documentation of affirmative vote and approval is required.
- Funds cannot be used for maintenance-type projects or improvements that are required by code. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to, re-sealing or re-paving streets, routine painting of walls or fences, trimming trees and/or shrubs, or installing improvements that are required as part of the City code or required as a condition of site plan approval.
- Program funds cannot be used to replace the organization's current operating budget.

Terms of a Neighborhood Enhancement Grant Program Agreement

Grants will be capped at \$20,000 for accredited schools, \$20,000 for standard single-family neighborhoods with public rights-of-way, and master associations that represent more than one homeowners association, \$5,000 for signs, \$7,500 for townhouse/condominium projects, and \$20,000 for multi-phase design projects, depending on scale and population of the community. Exceptions may be made for buffer walls and when the public benefit to the community outside of the neighborhood warrants additional investment. The City's contribution may include in-kind services, such as labor and materials used, as well as cash contributions.

Applicants will be expected to match at least 50% of the value of the project. The grantee contribution may include cash contributions as well as "sweat equity" contributed by neighborhood residents. Sweat equity will be valued at the rate of \$15.00 per hour per person except for professional services, which will be rated at the fair market value for the provided type of service. Design services associated with a multi-phase design project do not require a match.

If funds are not expended within 9 months of the award, the applicant must seek an extension. Extensions may be granted by the City Commission for up to an additional 6 month period.

Funding Priorities

Each project will be evaluated on the basis of how well it addresses the Neighborhood Enhancement Grant Program's main purpose of improving neighborhoods and the community. When there are more projects requested than funding will allow, projects that accomplish the following goals will be considered for funding:

- Projects that propose the use of renewable energy sources for common areas.
- Projects that impact major thoroughfares will receive a higher priority than those that impact interior streets.
- Projects which serve more than one HOA (adjoining or adjacent communities).
- Projects which serve to revitalize older or declining neighborhoods.
- Projects that further City and neighborhood goals and/or complement other public improvements.

Funding Restrictions

An applicant who has previously received funds will not be eligible to receive additional funds for two years unless:

- There are no other applicants that meet the criteria and / or funding requirements.
- It is a multiple neighborhood association project that will require that all neighborhood associations apply, including previously funded associations, in order to implement the proposed project.
- There exists an approved multi-phase plan for community restoration as described in item 7 under eligible projects.

Application Deadlines

All applications must be submitted on approved application forms, which may be obtained by contacting the Department of Sustainable Development at City Hall or calling 954-973-6756. Applications may be emailed, mailed, or delivered to:

**City of Coconut Creek
Department of Sustainable Development
Attn: Neighborhood Enhancement Grant Program
4800 West Copans Road
Coconut Creek, Florida 33063**

Funding is available each fiscal year, October 1st through September 30th. Applications will be accepted until July 31st for the current fiscal year. Funds will be awarded on a first come, first-served basis.

Selection/Notification

Applications will be reviewed for sufficiency by Sustainable Development staff to ensure that the minimum criterion has been met. Any applicant that does not meet these criteria will be notified at that time. The applications deemed complete and eligible will be submitted for review to the City's review committee. The review committee is comprised of representatives from the following disciplines: Zoning, Landscaping, Building, and Engineering, where applicable. The review committee will make a recommendation to the City Commission for award.

Neighborhood Project Proposal/Application Requirements

The applicant must submit the required application form with a complete description of the project and maintenance plan. The application must include the following listed items 1-13:

1. Contact names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the members who have the authority to act on behalf of the association/organization;
2. Project purpose;
3. Project description;
4. Estimated project cost, including an itemization of the described project plan and line item estimates, the amount of City funding requested, the amount of matching funds supplied by the applicant, and the make-up of the funding (cash, sweat equity, materials, etc.) A minimum of three estimates must be submitted for all work over \$1,000;
5. Brief description of Maintenance Plan, including acknowledgement and execution of Maintenance Agreement;
6. Photographs of the proposed project area;
7. Plans, maps, or surveys depicting the project in relation to the neighborhood and surrounding community;
8. Letters of authorization, where applicable, from the appropriate agencies, abutting property owners of property to be improved, utility companies, etc.;
9. Board minutes showing approval of described project and funding commitment;
10. Landscape plans, where applicable, which include plant locations, quantities, species, sizes, and grade;
11. Design scope of services, contract, and phased installation plan when proposing a multi-phase design project;
12. Construction drawings when proposing permanent signs or structures;
13. Organization's W-9.

Project Completion and Reimbursement

Upon project completion, applicant must complete and submit the following items to be eligible for reimbursement:

- Final inspection by City staff
- Photographs of the project area
- Invoices of actual costs