



Neighborhood Mini-Grant Information Packet

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 City's Neighborhood Coordinator at (206) 801-2253 or email neighborhoodcoordinator@shorelinewa.gov.

The Neighborhood Mini-Grant Program provides grants to Neighborhood Associations formally recognized by the City of Shoreline. 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 local residential communities, and who have established rules making their deliberations open, transparent and accessible to the community and general public.

Neighborhood Mini-Grant funding is available the following types of projects:

- Projects that create or enhance tangible improvement in a Shoreline neighborhood;
- Projects or events that increase awareness of the Neighborhood Association within its respective neighborhood community; and
- Projects or events that build or expand neighborhood and community connections or civic engagement among Shoreline residents.

All projects must benefit the public. 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 should be completed within the calendar year they are proposed and approved.

Mini-grant proposals may include collaboration with other neighborhood or community groups in joint projects. Such partnerships could include youth or civic organizations, ethnic organizations, schools, PTAs, human service groups and others.

IDEA LETTER

The first step of the Neighborhood Mini-Grant process is to submit an Idea Letter to the Neighborhood Coordinator. This allows early review of the project concept and discussion with City staff to identify areas needing further development or research and to lay the foundation for a more successful project. City staff will review the Idea Letter to ensure the idea meets granting guidelines.

APPLICATION

Please use the current (2013) Neighborhood Mini-Grant Application form. Use this form to guide your research in determining project costs, major project tasks and work with property owners or project partners to develop a well coordinated project. Read the rating criteria listed below and describe your project and how it can meet as many criteria as possible.

Applications will be rated by a cross-department review committee with one community representative and forwarded to the City Manager for approval.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT COORDINATOR

The Neighborhood Project Coordinator is a neighborhood volunteer who oversees the project implementation on behalf of the Neighborhood Association. Typical roles of the Neighborhood Project Coordinator include overall project management, organizing project planning meetings and work parties, submitting invoices, reporting progress to the sponsoring Neighborhood Association, and coordinating the project with the City's Neighborhood Coordinator and other appropriate entities.

RATING CRITERIA

The following criteria were created to rank Neighborhood Mini-Grant application projects and identify for funding those projects demonstrating the strongest benefit to the neighborhood and the City.

A Neighborhood Mini-Grant Application should demonstrate how the proposed project or activity meets as many of the following criteria as possible.

- Provides a public benefit and be open to all community members;
- Builds stronger neighborhoods and expand community connections and engagement;
- Increases awareness of the Neighborhood Association in the neighborhood community;
- If the project will require permits, permit requirements and cost have been discussed with the City's Planning and Community Development staff;
- If the project is a tangible improvement, proposal includes a plan for extended maintenance by the community;
- Project applicant has a history of successful project implementation or can demonstrate capacity to implement project;
- Project addresses new or important area of identified community interest or need;
- Project promotes inclusiveness among a wide variety of populations within a neighborhood (e.g. ethnic, intergenerational, renters or other underrepresented populations).

DEVELOPING A PROJECT BUDGET

Applicants need to include a project budget that addresses all costs for carrying out 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;
- Make a list of all services and expertise 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; and
- Provide clear information within the budget about which items will be donated and part of the neighborhood match, and which items or services will be purchased with mini-grant funds.

Until a project receives City Manager 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

Neighborhood Mini-Grant projects require the neighborhood to provide a one dollar match for every two dollars of City funds.

Match may be composed of many different things, including cash resources from the Neighborhood Association or residents, 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 or community. 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 \$21.00. This rate will be updated every January based on research by Independent Sector (see http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time)

Professional services that are donated are valued at the "reasonable and customary rate" for that service. Justification for a professional rate should be provided by the applicant.

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 approved Mini-Grant project, as described in the "Idea Letter" and Mini-Grant Application;
- If the nature of the Mini-Grant project will not generate adequate volunteer hours for a match, volunteer work on other neighborhood or community improvements can be negotiated with City staff for up to 25% of volunteer labor match hours. The normal business of a Neighborhood Association does not count towards a match;
- Up to 25% of volunteer labor match hours may be expended on project planning and 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; and
- 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. 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 Administrative Services Department handles all grant accounts.

Generally, an invoice from the vendor and a Neighborhood Mini-Grant invoice, signed by the Neighborhood Project Coordinator, are required in order for the vendor to receive payment.

For purchasing materials or services, a City purchase order may also be used. The volunteer Neighborhood Project Coordinator should work out the details of the items to be purchased with the vendor before requesting a purchase order from the City. The City Administrative Services Department needs a minimum of two weeks notice to process a purchase order request. Purchase orders may be requested through the City's Neighborhood Coordinator. 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 Manager the City's Neighborhood Coordinator will provide the Neighborhood Project Coordinator more detailed information regarding the payment of providers and vendors.

MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC FACILITIES

Whenever Neighborhood Mini-Grant funds are used towards the purchase or construction of neighborhood assets or facilities, the neighborhood will be required to plan 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).

CONTRACT

Upon approval of the Neighborhood Mini-Grant by the City Manager and negotiation of a final scope of work with the Neighborhood Coordinator, a contract for the project will be developed, to be signed by an authorized Neighborhood Association Board member.

LIABILITY

Neighborhood Associations proposing Neighborhood 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 Neighborhood Mini-Grant proposals to determine whether liability insurance will be required.

ATTACHMENTS TO APPLICATION

Please include the following with a Mini-Grant Application:

- Letters or emails documenting cooperation, role or approval from site owner and key partners;
- Maps or photos of physical location or project concept (if relevant); and
- Neighborhood Association minutes documenting project discussion and approval for funding request.

How to Apply

Read the Neighborhood Mini-Grant Information Packet thoroughly.

Identify a project(s) through group discussion at either a general neighborhood meeting or through a subcommittee with oversight from the Neighborhood Association.

Designate a volunteer Neighborhood Project Coordinator who will be the contact person between the Neighborhood Association, the City and other groups involved in the project. The Coordinator oversees the project.

Submit an "Idea Letter" to the City of Shoreline Neighborhood Coordinator.

Within two weeks of receipt of the "Idea Letter" by the City, the Project Coordinator will be notified a) whether the project is feasible and b) if more information is required for review.

If the project is determined to be feasible begin tracking volunteer hours dedicated to develop the project and prepare the Mini-Grant Application. Up to 25% of the volunteer match can be accrued during this phase of the project.

Once the Neighborhood Project Coordinator is notified the project is feasible, complete a "Mini-Grant Application" and send a signed copy to:

Neighborhood Coordinator

City of Shoreline, 17500 Midvale Ave. N

Shoreline WA 98133

And email a copy to neighborhoodcoordinator@shorelinewa.gov

The Application must contain a complete explanation of the project including scope of work, timeline for completion, demonstration of capacity to meet the neighborhood match, and contacts made about permits or authorizations required to complete the project. The Neighborhood Coordinator is available to connect you with the appropriate City staff to discuss review of potential projects on public property and any permitting requirements.

The City Neighborhood Coordinator will coordinate ranking by the Mini-Grant review team and approval by the City Manager and contact you if additional information is needed.

Once a project is approved by the City Manager the City Neighborhood Coordinator will coordinate a contract and providing information about how to submit for payment of Mini-Grant expenses.

Applications may be submitted between January 1 and June 30. Applications received after this date will be evaluated based on remaining funding available and estimated timeframe for completing the project. All funding will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, contact the City's Neighborhood Coordinators at (206) 801-2253 or (206) 801-2256 or email neighborhoodcoordinator@shorelinewa.gov

Neighborhood Mini-Grant Idea Letter

Please read the Neighborhood Mini-Grant application packet thoroughly before submitting your Idea Letter. The Idea Letter is the first step of the Neighborhood Mini-Grant application process to allow early review of the project concept.

DATE: _____ Neighborhood Association: _____

Neighborhood Project Coordinator: _____

Phone (best) _____ Phone (alt) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Project Title _____

Please provide numbered, typed answers to the following questions for an Idea Letter up to three pages in length.

- 1. Summary of Idea:** *Describe the scope and intent of the proposed project. What will this project accomplish?*
- 2. Timeline:** *Approximately when do you plan on starting and completing this project?*
- 3. Budget:** *How much do you anticipate this project will cost? How much do you anticipate requesting in Mini-Grant funds? What research are these figures based on? (Note: these figures can be very general)*
- 4. Proposed Ideas for match:** *How will neighborhood volunteers be involved in the project? What money, time or services has been identified as a source for a match?*
- 5. Maintenance:** *Will the project require ongoing maintenance? How will it be accomplished?*
- 6. Describe how this project benefits the neighborhood.**

City of Shoreline

17500 Midvale Avenue North

4905 Shoreline, WA 98133

Phone: (206) 801-2253 Fax: (206) 546-7868