

City of Cedar Hill

Neighborhood Matching Grant Guidebook 2020

Neighborhood Services



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OVERVIEW

The City of Cedar Hill has approximately \$10,000 available for neighborhoods that have improvement projects to beautify and enhance the public spaces in our neighborhoods. Your neighborhood project is eligible if it:

- Serves a public purpose/benefit
- Builds neighborhood cooperation and involves a significant number of neighbors
- Has a detailed budget reflecting accurate project costs and match sources
- Has a detailed and achievable timeline including a plan for long-term maintenance
- Meets applicable codes and has identified necessary permits

This grant is a matching grant, which means that your neighborhood must put some investment into your neighborhood too. The match requirement can be met with cash, in-kind donations, and volunteer hours. Additionally, the neighborhood will act as the General Contractor for most approved projects, not the City of Cedar Hill (although all necessary permits maybe required).

INFORMATION SESSION

Contact Neighborhood Services before applying to answer any questions. Please contact city staff to discuss setting up an appointment at neighborhoods@cedarhilltx.com or call 972.291.5100 ext. 1099

ELIGIBLE GROUPS

Groups eligible to apply for the neighborhood matching grant must be:

- A neighborhood group registered with City of Cedar Hill, with information updated within the past year.
- All groups/fiscal agents must be an established organization with a separate bank account for their organization, as well as an Employer Identification Number (EIN) issued by the IRS.
- Membership in the organization must be open to all households within the neighborhood.

FUNDING LEVELS

Maximum funding levels are determined by the type of project applied for:

| Neighborhood Group Type | Maximum funding amount |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Community Engagement | \$500 |
| Capital Improvement | \$2,500 |

MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Grant funds must be met with a minimum 10% cash match and a 10% additional match, for a total 20% minimum match.

* The additional match can come in the form of volunteer labor, donated professional services, or donated materials.

Volunteer labor will come from the community to do the work for the project. The current volunteer labor rate is \$25/hour. Documentation of volunteer hours worked is required for grant reporting. Pledge sheets are not required for the application, but it is recommended that the Team Leader collect commitments from volunteers when planning the project.

Donated professional services can be anything you will hire a contractor to do, but for which they might offer to waive all or a portion of their usual fee. This includes work done by architects, landscape architects, engineers, sign contractors, electricians, etc. A letter from the professional on their letterhead documenting their usual fee and how much they are donating is required for the application.

Donated materials can be any material donated by a business or individual for the project. This includes items such as plant materials and signage. Documentation of these donations is required for the application.

* The City reserves the right to adjust this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

Match Requirement Calculator: Use this Calculator to estimate how much match you will need based on your planned grant request:

| Match Requirement Calculator | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Neighborhood Matching Grant Request | |
| Required Cash Match (10%) | + |
| Additional Match (10%) | + |
| Total Project Cost: | |

1. Enter the anticipated Neighborhood Matching Grant Request.
2. The Required Cash Match will auto-calculate.
3. The Required Additional Match will auto-calculate. This additional match can be in the form of Volunteer Labor, Donated Services, or Donated Materials.
4. If you expect to have any additional match provided, you can enter that on the "Additional Match" row.
5. The Total Project Cost will show how much the total cost of the project could be.

PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

If a project involves any City departments, such as Parks and Recreation or Public Works and Transportation, groups should coordinate with them prior to submittal and document their input/coordination in the submittal.

Permits that may be required include fence, sign, and irrigation permits. Applications can be found online here: <http://www.cedarhilltx.com/403/Applications-Documents>. All permits must be issued to a registered contractor.

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

Projects funded with a neighborhood matching grant are intended to have a long-term positive impact on your neighborhood. Applications must have a well-developed, long-term plan for maintaining and/or repairing any improvements you make on private property.

For projects on public property, provide documentation that any affected City departments have discussed your project with you and are able to take on the responsibilities of maintaining your improvements, if applicable. Documentation can include a letter or emails from the departments.

Ultimately, it is important that projects funded by the neighborhood matching grant look just as good 5-10 years from now as they do when you finish the project. We imagine that you probably want the same thing for your neighborhood. 😊

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Eligible projects must meet a public purpose and benefit a neighborhood. Eligible project types include (but are not limited to):

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS LIST

Community Engagement

Capacity Building

- Block Party
- National Night Out
- Communication/outreach tools
- Historic preservation projects
- Neighborhood clean up
- Public art

Crime and Safety

- Crime prevention activities
- Crime Watch programs

Beautification

- Neighborhood Clean Up
- Recycling/composting programs

Capital Improvement

Capacity Building

- Historic preservation project
- Public Art
- Community Gardens
- Landscaping to screen fencing along arterial streets
- Park development/improvement

Natural Preservation

- Native plant restoration
- Planting along creeks to create a buffer for water

Capital Improvements

- Playgrounds
- Safe Routes to School Programs
- Sidewalks and pedestrian curb cuts
- Street lights Streetscape improvements
- Traffic calming (speed humps, etc)

Signage

- Neighborhood entrance signs
- Street sign toppers

***Creative ideas beyond this list are encouraged, if appropriate for your neighborhood**

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Generally, projects that only benefit an individual or restricted group of people are ineligible for funding. Ineligible projects and expenses include:

- Projects inside a gated community
- Private community amenities (example: pools, club houses, etc.)
- Projects that only benefit individual property owner(s)
- Purchase of equipment for other City programs
- Projects that are not accessible to the public
- Projects that fund a current or ongoing activity
- Requests to replace current funding being received
- Projects that do not have support of the neighborhood
- Projects that conflict with City improvements or do not comply with local, state, or federal law
- Projects that duplicate an existing public or private program
- Expenditures incurred prior to award of grant funds
- Projects that fix a self-imposed code violation
- Educational/social services
- Salaries or operating expenses
- Fencing not along arterials, not in complete sections, or not meeting code requirements
- Contributions to political campaigns
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages or other illegal substances

GRANT PROCESS

The grant process involves application, review, approval, and funding.

1. Contact Neighborhood Services to discuss project. Phone number 972.291.5100 ext. 1099
2. If project is an eligible project that can meet all grant requirements, complete and submit an application.
3. Once submitted, NS staff will check all applications for completeness and prepare the applications for review by the Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB).
4. The NAB will independently and collectively review the grant application and prepare a recommendation to City Council.
5. The recommendation will be presented to City Council for approval.
6. Once approved, neighborhood organizations will be notified.

COMPLETING GRANT APPLICATION

The application and supplemental forms are available at www.cedarhilltx.com/neighborhoods/grant. Complete instructions for completing the application are below. If you have any questions on how to fill out the application, please submit your question(s) by email to neighborhoods@cedarhilltx.com

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**Q: How do I register my Neighborhood Group?**

A: Use the form found on the bottom of this page: www.cedarhilltx.com/neighborhoods/grant

Q: How does my neighborhood group get an Employer Identification Number (EIN)?

A: An EIN is free to obtain from the Internal Revenue Service online, by fax, mail, or telephone by visiting <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>.

Q: Can time spent preparing application count towards match?

A: No. While we want you to take sufficient time to put together the best proposal for your neighborhood, this time cannot be counted towards your match requirement as volunteer time.

Q: Can volunteer hours completed before grant awarded count?

A: No. The project that you apply for grant funds for is considered its own, independent project by the City, so no hours completed towards a complementary project can be counted towards the match requirement as volunteer time for this project.

Q: What is public property?

A: Public Property includes rights-of-way, parks, City-owned recreational facilities, or any other property owned by a public entity.

Q: What is private property?

A: Private Property is any property owned by a private entity, individual, or homeowner's association.

Q: How are projects selected?

A: All project applications will be reviewed by the grant review committee, comprised of the Neighborhood Advisory Board. A recommended project list will be compiled based on the merit of the application and the capacity of the neighborhood group to carry out and complete the proposed project. The recommended project list will then be presented to the City Council for their final approval. Once approved by Council, contracts with each neighborhood organization will be signed so the project can begin.

Q: Our group previously received NMG funds. Can we apply again?

A: Yes! With the update of this program we want to encourage all neighborhood groups to apply for projects they are excited about. However, if a previous grant project was not completed or the reporting requirements were not met, please discuss with City staff how you will address these issues for the new project. One project a year will be awarded.