

City of Arlington

2017 Neighborhood Matching Grant Guidebook

Community Development and Planning



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OVERVIEW

The City of Arlington has approximately \$167,000 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
- Promotes the [Champion Great Neighborhoods initiative \(www.arlington-tx.gov/budget/city-council-priorities/champion-great-neighborhoods\)](http://www.arlington-tx.gov/budget/city-council-priorities/champion-great-neighborhoods)
- 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

The City had a similar grant from 2007-2012, and funded projects such as entryway signage, sign toppers, landscaping, pedestrian lighting, sidewalks, and public art. This grant will fund similar projects, but we’re looking for new ideas too!

This grant is a matching grant, which means that your neighborhood has to 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 Arlington (although all necessary permits are required).

GRANT SCHEDULE

Projects must be completed by the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 2017**. Neighborhoods may not apply for additional Neighborhood Matching Grants until all previously awarded projects have been closed out.

Information Sessions	November 2016 – February 2017
Call Opens	November 1, 2016
Applications Due	February 15, 2017
Committee Meets by	March 5, 2017
Council Approval by	March/April 2017
Contracts Signed/Training Conducted	April 2017

** unless an extension is granted by city staff

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Attendance at a Neighborhood Matching Grant Information Session by the Project Team Leader is required before submitting an application. Information Sessions will be held:

Tuesday, November 15, 2016 6:00 pm	Arlington City Hall Council Briefing Room (3 rd Floor) 101 W Abram Street Arlington, TX 76010
Monday, December 5, 2016 6:00 pm	Southwest Branch Library Community Room 3311 SW Green Oaks Blvd Arlington, TX 76017
Thursday, January 19, 2017 6:00 pm	West Police Service Center Community Room 2060 W Green Oaks Blvd Arlington, TX 76013
Saturday, January 28, 2017 10:30 am	Southeast Branch Library Community Room 900 SE Green Oaks Blvd Arlington, TX 76018

If a neighborhood representative is unable to attend any of these sessions, please contact city staff to discuss setting up an appointment at neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

ELIGIBLE GROUPS

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

- A neighborhood group registered with City (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/organizations), with information updated within the past year.
- All groups 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 group that is applying:

Neighborhood Group Type	Maximum funding amount
Any	\$10,000
Nonprofit designation as defined by the IRS or a Homeowners Association	\$25,000

MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Grant funds must be met with a minimum 10% cash match and a 10% additional match, for a total 20% minimum match of the grant request amount. The additional match can come in the form of cash, volunteer labor, donated professional services, or donated materials. The full match requirement may be met solely with cash, if the neighborhood chooses.

Neighborhoods wishing to use grant funds to replace/repair a masonry perimeter fence must provide a 50% match for requested grant funds, 25% of which must be cash.

Donated cash must be available in your organization's bank account at time of application. A statement or some other form showing account balance is required for documentation.

Volunteer labor will come from the community to do the work for the project. The current volunteer labor rate is \$15/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 professional 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 or invoice from the professional on their company 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.

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: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/building-zoning-forms. All permits must be issued to a registered contractor. Requirements for fencing can be found in the [Unified Development Code \(www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc\)](http://www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc), Section 5.3.4. Sign requirements are found in Article 7. Irrigation system requirements can be found here: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/technical-bulletins under "Irrigation Codes."

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 Capacity Building	IRS 501(c)3 designation Communication/outreach tools Historic preservation projects Neighborhood clean up Public art
Crime and Safety	Crime prevention activities
Beautification	Community gardens Drip irrigation systems for approved landscaping projects Landscaping Landscaping to screen fencing along arterial streets Park development/improvement
Natural Preservation	Native plant restoration Planting along creeks to create a buffer for water Recycling/composting programs
Physical Improvements	Benches Bicycle racks Fencing: <u>only</u> full sections along arterial streets meeting UDC fencing requirements (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc) Planters Playgrounds 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 [Unified Development Code \(UDC\)](http://www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc) - www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc requirements
- Plants not on Arlington's [Approved Plant List - www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc](http://www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc) (under "UDC User's Guide")
- Public improvements including streetlights, sidewalks, etc.
- Water or erosion control projects including lakes, streams, creeks, or other bodies of water

GRANT PROCESS

The grant process involves pre-application, application, review, approval, and reporting.

1. Attend an Information Session hosted by the Community Development and Planning Department (CDP).
2. If the project is eligible and can meet all grant requirements, complete and submit an application.
3. Once submitted, CDP staff will check all applications for completeness and prepare the applications for grant review committee.
4. The grant review committee will independently and collectively review the proposals, and prepare a recommended projects list.
5. The recommended project list will be presented to City Council for approval.
6. Once approved, all neighborhood organizations will be required to attend a training session to learn about reporting requirements and to sign the contracts (a sample contract can be found online at www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/grant).
7. Once the contract is signed and executed, your neighborhood organization can begin their approved project. When the project is approximately 50% complete, the City requests a mid-project report on the progress of the project. You should reach 50% completion in approximately 90-120 days.
8. When your project is complete, you must "close out" the grant within 30 days. Failure to do this will result in ineligibility to apply for future Neighborhood Matching Grants. Refer to the "Reporting Requirements" section for details on reporting documentation.
 - Grant participants may request any funds remaining at the successful completion of their project to be used in a manner relating to the originally approved project. This request must be submitted in writing no later than 90 days after contract execution to their contact in the Community Development and Planning Department, who will ensure appropriateness before forwarding to the Deputy City Manager for approval. Additional project measures must be completed within the original project timeline unless otherwise stipulated. No requests for expenditures unrelated to the original project will be allowed. All project reporting, such as submission of invoices, receipts, etc. are required for this process as well.

NOTE: Neighborhood groups must ensure that any damages to adjacent personal property, rights of way, or any other locations, as a result of this project are repaired. Documentation of such repairs must be submitted to the City as part of the project closeout.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Two reports will be required during the grant project: one report when your project is approximately 50% complete (mid-project) and a final report within 30 days of project completion. Requirements for each report are below:

Mid Project:

- Documentation of expenses paid: receipts and invoices

- Documentation of volunteer hours
- Photographs of the project progress
- Narrative of project status

End of Project:

- Documentation of expenses paid: receipts and invoices
- Documentation of volunteer hours
- Post-completion photographs of the project site
- Narrative of project completion

Samples of all reporting documents are available on the Neighborhood Matching Grant website at www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/grant. If you have any questions on the reporting requirements, submit your questions via email to neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

COMPLETING GRANT APPLICATION

The application and supplemental forms are available at www.arlington-tx.gov/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@arlingtontx.gov.

PAGE 1:

1. Enter the Neighborhood Group Name and the Project Name.
2. The Neighborhood Matching Grant Summary will auto-calculate based on the Budget Worksheet on page 4.
3. Ensure all items for the red section are met, as these are required for all applications.
4. If your grant request is for more than \$10,000, ensure the blue section item is met.
5. The Project Team Leader must sign the application **once it is complete**, so move on to the next page and come back to the first later.

PAGE 2:

1. The Neighborhood Group Name will fill in from the first page.
2. Select the Organization Type applicable to your group.
3. Enter all fields as applicable.
4. If your group is submitting multiple projects, rank the priority for each project. If not, select "n/a."

PAGE 3:

1. Respond to all questions as applicable.

PAGE 4:

The information from these fields will auto-populate the grant summary section on Page 1 of the application.

1. Step 1: Calculate the total project budget.
 - a. For each item of the budget, place a description in the "Line Item" field, and the corresponding amount in the "Amount" field. The line items should be specific enough to understand all of the

components of the project. You may include quantities or a broad scope of work, if it fits on the line. More detailed information should be included in the “Budget Narrative” on the following page of the application.

2. Step 2: Determine the Match Value
 - a. For each type of match, place the value in the “Value” column. The Total Match Value will auto-calculate based on the sum of the values in “Cash Match”, “Donated Services Value”, “Donated Materials Value”, and “Volunteer Hours Value”. Be sure to explain the exact sources of match in the appropriate field in the following page of the application.
 - b. Make sure the auto-calculated match percentage fields meet the minimum requirement. “Cash Match Percentage” should be at least 10.0%. “Total Match Percentage” should be at least 20.0%. If your neighborhood is applying for perimeter fence assistance, these amounts should be 25.0% and 50.0%, respectively.
3. Step 3: Define the Grant Request Amount
 - a. Based on the information entered in the previous two sections, the Grant Request amount will be the amount the neighborhood will actually receive from the City, if a grant is awarded. This amount is equal to the total cost of the project, less the match funding.

PAGE 5:

1. Describe how you arrived at the budget estimates and the make-up of your match. Be as detailed as possible, and submit supporting documentation to validate the reported match amounts.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ensure the application form and budget worksheet are completely filled out.
2. Print the first page of the application, and obtain signatures from the Project Team Leader. Scan the page and include it with all other required documents.
3. Ensure all Required Documents listed on the bottom of page 5 are scanned if needed and ready to be sent.
4. Save the application and attach it to an email to be sent to neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov, or click the red button in the center of page 5 automatically attach it.
5. Attach all required documents to the same email. Please note that the maximum attachment size is 10 MB. If you need to send any documents in an additional email, ensure the email includes the Neighborhood Group name and the Project Name.
6. If technical issues prevent emailing the required documents, supporting documents can be either:
 - a. Brought into the One Start Development Center on the second floor of City Hall at 101 West Abram Street, or
 - b. mailed to:
Neighborhood Matching Grant
Community Development & Planning
101 West Abram Street
PO Box 90231 MS 01-0260
Arlington, TX 76004-3231
 - c. Please note: the application **must** be emailed to neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov

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

A: Use the form found on the top of this page: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/neighborhoods/organizations

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 www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/How-to-Apply-for-an-EIN.

Q: Can neighborhood groups partner together on an application?

A: In some cases, multiple neighborhoods can and should work together on a large-scale project. The funding amount will still be capped at a maximum of \$25,000. If you would like to determine if your project is suitable for a neighborhood group partnership, please contact City staff at an Information Session, or by emailing neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

Q: If our neighborhood applies for more than one grant, can we apply for the maximum amount our group is eligible for on each application?

A: No. The maximum award amount is per neighborhood group. The reason for applying for multiple grants per neighborhood group would be if the proposed projects were significantly different from each other, and should be considered separately – for example, you want to do a landscaping project and a traffic calming project. If you're not sure if you should apply for a single grant, or multiple grants (up to 3), please contact us at neighborhoods@arlingtontx.gov.

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: Can groups apply for more than one grant per funding cycle?

A: Groups can apply for funding for up to three projects. Applicants must rank the projects in order of preference.

Q: Will projects be weighted heavier with a higher match?

A: We require at least 20% match, but a higher match can help to demonstrate support and commitment to the project from the neighborhood.

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: We're not a non-profit or HOA, how can we apply for grant funds?

A: As long as your organization has an EIN number and a separate bank account (not a personal checking/savings account), you are eligible to apply for up to \$10,000. If your neighborhood is ready, you can also apply for grant funding to become an IRS designated non-profit organization, and will be eligible for larger grants in future grant cycles.

Q: How are projects selected?

A: All project applications will be reviewed by the grant review committee, comprised of City staff from multiple departments. 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! 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.

Q: We have a landscaping project, but are concerned about planting during hotter months

A: Projects should be completed by September 30, 2017, but we also want plants to survive the hot summer. If it's not practical to install plants in May or June before the weather warms up, talk with City staff about extending your project period to allow planting in the fall (i.e. October or November).

Q: What type of fencing is eligible for the grant?

A: Only perimeter fencing along an arterial road that meets the requirements of the Unified Development Code (UDC) is eligible for the grant. Fences must be 100 percent masonry (brick, stone, architecturally finished reinforced concrete), or any other sustainable material with more than 30-year life expectancy. Fences cannot be wood, chain link, or vinyl. See section 5.3.4 of the UDC (www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/udc) for specific requirements. If you wish to apply for a grant fund related to fencing, a match of 50% is required (at least 25% cash).

Q: How do we determine if a street is an arterial?

A: This designation comes from the City's Thoroughfare Development Plan. You can see this plan online at: www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/transportation/tdp.