



Community Improvement Grant

What is the Community Improvement Grant?

This grant opportunity provides matching dollars for neighborhood improvement, organizing, or projects that are developed and implemented by community members. All projects are initiated, planned and implemented by community members in partnership with the City. Awards are matched by neighborhoods' or communities' resources of volunteer labor, donated materials, donated professional services, or cash.

Grant funds will be awarded on the basis of merit, with a maximum of \$1,000 available per project per calendar year per group.

What We Help Fund

Neighborhood funded projects must demonstrate the capacity to build a stronger and healthier community, and must:

- Occur within Newcastle city limits
- Emphasize self-help, with project ideas initiated, planned, and implemented by community members who will be impacted by the project
- Maintained by neighborhood volunteers (if applicable)
- Provide a public benefit and be free and open to all members of the public
- Demonstrate community match

Projects/Activities Examples:

- Neighborhood identity enhancements -- signage, entrance beautification
- Public art or amenity -- bench, sculpture, garden, mural, mosaic, information kiosk
- Tree planting
- Landscaping in streetscapes, portions of right-of-ways, public areas, open spaces
- Noxious weed clean-up
- Park enhancements (beautification, benches and garbage receptacles)
- Historical markers
- Neighborhood clean-up, picnic, or special event
- Educational workshops or safety classes, such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Printing of newsletter or flyer

****Projects/Activities must be completed within the calendar year they are approved.**



How Can our Neighborhood Match Funding Dollars?

Grant funds will be awarded on the basis of merit, with a maximum of \$1,000 available per project per calendar year.

For every dollar requested, the neighborhood must identify match items that add up to equal the value of the amount requested. So, if \$1,000 is requested from the City, then at least \$1,000 of match must be proposed.

The following items can qualify for matching funds:

- Donated professional services
- Donated materials or supplies
- Volunteer labor
- Cash

The following are some basic requirements for developing a neighborhood match package:

- The proposed match must be expended during the life of the project - not prior to or after completion.
- Assistance from City staff or funds from elsewhere in the City cannot be counted as match.
- All volunteer labor is valued at \$27.54 an hour.
- Up to 25% of volunteer labor match hours may be expended on project planning and application preparation
- Professional services, if needed for the project, are valued at the "reasonable and customary rate" prevailing in the community and 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 (or inability) to donate services.

The following items will not be reimbursed:

- Food items
- Alcohol
- Fuel/mileage reimbursements for personal vehicles
- Police and Fire staff
- Projects without prior approval
- Individuals



Who May Apply?

Applicant groups must reside within Newcastle city limits. Formal and informal neighborhood and grassroots community groups, as well as HOA's are eligible. Each group is required to have a project coordinator.

A Project Coordinator from your neighborhood must be identified to serve as the contact person with the City during the planning and construction of the project. Responsibilities include:

1. Acting as the primary contact for the project;
2. Communicating with residents;
3. Working with City staff to answer resident's questions and facilitate neighborhood meetings where necessary;
4. Coordinating the project;
5. Coordinating maintenance (a maintenance agreement between the neighborhood and the City may be required);
6. Recruiting volunteers;
7. Filling out and submitting all paperwork;
8. Being accountable for financial documentation of expenditures including requests for Purchase Orders and reimbursement for purchases (submitting invoices, etc.);
9. Submitting a letter of endorsement for the project from the neighborhood association representing the area in which the project will be done

When to Apply

Applications are accepted year-round and projects must be completed by December 1, 2018.

A team of City staff will review applications and make recommendations for approval. This team will be looking for the following in proposed projects/activities:

Scope – Quality – Creativity – Community Benefit – Readiness – Neighborhood Participation

It is advised to schedule a pre-application meeting with Wendy Kirchner, Community Activities Coordinator prior to turning in your application. (425) 649-4143 x142

wendyk@newcastlewa.gov

Applicants are notified of award decision within three weeks of application submission and will receive notification with instructions of how to proceed.

****Projects must be completed within the calendar year they are approved.**



How to Apply

Neighborhoods interested in participating in the matching Community Improvement Grant program must complete and sign an application.

The application must contain a complete explanation of the project including:

- Description of the actual work you want to do
- Authorization from board/people involved
- Number of people committed to project
- Project budget
- Location of the project
- Diagrams of proposed project
- Photo of the location
- Timeline for start and completion
- Demonstration of neighborhood match

Applications may be:

- Mailed or delivered to the City of Newcastle, Community Activities Coordinator, 12835 Newcastle Way , Suite 200, Newcastle, WA 98056
- Emailed to wendyk@newcastlewa.gov

How Will Our Neighborhood/Group Receive Approved Funds?

Because Grant funds are public dollars, the City must meet certain audit requirements for funds it expends. The City Finance Department handles all grant accounts. Upon receipt of the award, the Group/Association and City will enter into an agreement for service.

Final Report

The neighborhood project coordinator is required to provide the neighborhood grant final report summary to the City along with before and after photos and any documents that were created and printed with the use of grant dollars.