



Neighborhood Matching Grant Program



Community and Neighborhood
Services

Program Overview

The City of Round Rock promotes and supports community efforts that contribute to vibrant neighborhoods. The City Council has allocated funds through the Neighborhood Matching Grant Program to stimulate and enhance opportunities for residents to address neighborhood concerns and special needs. The City recognizes the need to creatively plan and partner with residents to ensure that Round Rock as a whole continues to be a place where families and businesses want to locate and succeed.

The grant program is designed to provide assistance to specific neighborhood projects that provide a public benefit thereby promoting a stronger, safer and healthier community. The City will enter into agreements with organized, active, registered home/property owner associations, neighborhood associations and other neighborhood groups (Neighborhood Watch, etc.). Groups must not discriminate and actively seek membership from neighborhood residents. Applicants must represent their entire neighborhood and have democratically elected officers. Applicants may be asked to provide a history outreach efforts to include dates and methods of outreach as well as minutes of elections.

This program provides funding for a matching grant initiative to be offered to registered neighborhood organizations. Grant funding will be available on a 50/50 match basis (up to \$5,000) for any qualified, neighborhood sponsored project. Grant requests greater than \$5,000 but not exceeding \$15,000 will be accepted but will be subject to City Manager approval. Matching funds from neighborhood groups may be in the form of cash, in-kind services such as donated supplies, equipment or professional services, with a required percentage of the match in the form of volunteer hours. Each neighborhood will be eligible to receive one (1) grant per fiscal year budget period. Each application will be reviewed by the Matching Grant Advisory Board for consideration and final approval.

Eligible Project Guidelines

Eligible projects must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Provide a public benefit to the neighborhood
- Have an accountable neighborhood resident serve as the project leader
- Directly involve neighborhood residents in all phases
- Have goals which can be accomplished in six months or less
- Take place within the city limits of Round Rock and within the boundaries of the neighborhood, except when donated space is located outside the neighborhood
- It is strongly recommended that neighborhood leaders meet with Neighborhood Services to discuss a potential project before investing significant time and work into an application

Eligible projects could include but are not limited to:	Non-Eligible projects
Cleanup activities	Supplanting a neighborhood organization's operating budget (salaries or operating expenses)
Beautification	Appreciation gifts, plaques, or certificates for City staff or elected officials
City Park development/improvement (must receive Parks Department approval prior)	Projects that advocate or impose religious or political beliefs or restrict participation on the basis of religion or political affiliation
Neighborhood Message Board	Electronic surveillance equipment
Entry features (new construction and renovations allowed as long as they meet current sign codes)	Driveway repair
Neighborhood enhancement features such as sidewalk and lighting improvements	Lawn care equipment
Tree and/or brush planting (plants must be drought tolerant)	Security gate installation or maintenance
Mural Project	Projects outside of Round Rock city limits
Funds for project related paint supplies	Speed bumps or traffic calming devices
Neighborhood Community Garden	Projects without at least a 50/50 match

Projects that only benefit an individual or a restricted group of people, such as those inside a gated community are ineligible for grant funds. Other reasons for application disqualification include:

- Inability to demonstrate match for grant funds
- Requests for educational/social services, salaries, or operating expenses
- Requests to supplant current funding/budget
- Projects that conflict with City improvements or do not comply with local, state, or federal laws
- Applications from single businesses, religious organizations, political groups and single individuals not representing a neighborhood organization
- Projects requiring on-going maintenance from the City of Round Rock
- A previous grant project has not been completed

To be eligible, the neighborhood organization must:

- Be registered with the City of Round Rock Neighborhood Services with up to date contact information
- Show proof of regular membership meetings by including the last 3 (three) meeting minutes of the association's most recent meetings
- Have board and neighborhood approval (see criteria below)
- Provide a copy of By-laws and/or Articles of Incorporation that includes a list of current officers and a copy of the organizational budget
- Provide evidence of an ability to perpetually maintain the project (if applicable)
- Provide evidence of the availability of matching items such as funds, donated materials or services, volunteer commitments for the grant project specified (note these can be letters of commitment)
- Ensure that the project does not violate applicable local, state and federal laws, codes or policies
- Complete the attached Neighborhood Organization Matching Grant Application and checklist with all materials required

Board and Neighborhood Approval

Each neighborhood organization must have its voting members vote on and approve the grant application and neighborhood match contribution before submission. Neighborhood Services can gladly assist with neighborhood meetings by securing a venue and help advertising the meeting with mailers and neighborhood signage. For the neighborhood meeting in which the grant application approval is on the agenda, Neighborhood Services must be contacted and assist with the meeting advertising no less than two weeks prior to the meeting.

Meeting minutes must be taken that include a general membership motion and a vote that includes:

- The name of the grant project
- A motion, a second and a vote of approval to submit the grant application and neighborhood match contribution to the City (minutes must include the names of those making the motion)
- If constructing a neighborhood identification sign(s), the neighborhood organization must vote and approve the proposed design and location(s) before voting to submit the grant application

Grant Match

To qualify for the Matching Grants program, the value of the neighborhood organization's contribution must be equal to or greater than the total amount being requested from the City of Round Rock. The grant match is generated by a combination of cash, volunteer labor and/or in-kind goods or services as follows:

Limitations on Match

In-kind or cash donations from City of Round Rock services, staff, or elected officials are not eligible for the match. In addition, professional services must be furnished by established service providers, skilled laborers and/or businesses in order to be counted as match. Specialized labor performed by licensed tradesmen will be valued according to the current market standard.

Match Component	Definition	Limit
Cash	Cash contributions or donations, proceeds from neighborhood fundraisers, etc.	Unlimited
Volunteer Labor	Volunteer Labor will be valued at \$31.94 per hour.	A minimum of 10% and a maximum of 50% of the requested grant amount is required. (Filling out the application does not count towards match requirement)
In-kind Goods and Services	Supplies, equipment, space or professional services valued at "fair market value" and furnished by legitimate service providers, skilled laborers and/or businesses.	Unlimited

Estimating Physical Improvement Costs

Written estimates must be submitted from at least **3** established vendors for any single expense that exceeds \$1,000 per unit cost. These estimates must be submitted with the grant application.

Application Period

The City of Round Rock’s fiscal year runs from October 1, to September 30. The completion deadline for all projects is six months from their award date on October 1. Upon completing the project, final reports are due within 30 days. Applications will be accepted year round, however the deadline to apply for the following fiscal year is August, 31.

Cancelation of Projects

Failure to meet the terms of the Funding Agreement may result in the cancellation of the project and restriction from future Matching Grant applications. In the event of cancellation all remaining Matching Grant funds awarded by the city will be transferred back to the City of Round Rock. Applicants must begin project implementation within 3 months of approval to avoid termination of the project. Requests for time extensions must be submitted to the Neighborhood Services Division in writing.

Permits

Permits do not need to be applied for prior to the submitting of the grant application. However, any application where work will require a permit will need to have a letter of approval from the Planning and Development Department indicating that the project has been reviewed by staff and qualifies for a permit if an application is submitted. Permit fees for grant approved projects will be waived.

Ranking Priority

Projects will be ranked according to the highest and best use of the Matching Grant funds. Each project will be evaluated on the basis of how well it addresses the City of Round Rock’s goals for safe, vibrant neighborhoods. When there are more projects requested than funding will allow, the following criteria will be used to determine funding priorities:

- Projects that serve to revitalize older or declining neighborhoods will receive higher priority than newer neighborhoods.

- Projects that impact major thoroughfares will receive a higher priority than those that impact interior streets.
- Projects that further neighborhood goals and complement other public improvements will be chosen for their increased community benefit.
- Applications from HOAs proposing projects on privately owned HOA property will be ranked low and, in some cases, disqualified as certain HOA amenities are not open to the public, are supposed to be maintained by the members of that HOA and therefore cannot be supported by public tax dollars.

Application Review

Applications will be read and evaluated by a technical review committee consisting of members from various city departments to insure that the minimum criteria are met. Grant funding notifications will be in writing (via e-mail).

All grant applications will be rated using the following criteria. As you plan the project and prepare the application, please be sure the application addresses each area.

Criteria	Scoring Weight	Explanation of Criteria
Neighborhood Status/ Maturity	20	The condition and age of the neighborhood demonstrates a need for intervention.
Community Benefit	20	Project proposes a good approach to a neighborhood problem and helps improve the quality of life in the neighborhood and/or aesthetics of the area.
Project Feasibility	20	The project is cost effective, achievable, realistic, sufficiently funded, without any on-going maintenance required from the City of Round Rock.
Community Involvement	15	Demonstrated participation of residents in planning and application process.
Environmental Impact	10	Implementation or completion of the project will not negatively impact the environment or surrounding area.
Match	10	Match is realistic and appropriate to the project. Letters of intent are provided for in-kind donations or cash as well as volunteer commitment forms.
Other	5	Uniqueness of the project, innovative or groundbreaking.
TOTAL SCORE		Out of 100

Disbursement of Funds

The applicant will act as the General Contractor for most approved projects. An applicant may not begin to incur costs to be paid by the Matching Grant before having a funding agreement with the City of Round Rock. It is recommended that the applicant have a bank account registered in the name of the neighborhood organization to deposit the grant funds into.

General Program Requirements if Grant is Awarded

Grant awardees must:

- Sign the funding agreement
- Maintain copies of the Hold Harmless Agreements for all volunteers committing to work on the project prior to initiation of work
- Provide monthly status reports (attached)
- Submit copies of all approved permits required for the project to Neighborhood Services
- Maintain accounting records as follows:
 - Each volunteer will be tracked on a time sheet showing the days, number of hours worked and what specific work the volunteer performed
 - Receipts for all purchases with the vendor's name, address, telephone number, item(s) purchased, date and method of purchase must be kept and turned in as part of the final report
 - Failure to maintain receipts for purchases may result in the cancellation of the project and restriction from future Matching Grant applications
 - Purchases for goods must be made from retailers located within the city limits of Round Rock where possible
 - Document volunteer professional services being provided including a written scope of work (deliverables, estimated time necessary to complete the project and current cost of providing the services) and any discount given should be submitted by the company in writing
- Repair all damages incurred to adjacent property owners and to features of the right-of-way (sidewalks, vegetation, benches, lights, signs, statues, etc.) as a result of project implementation
- Provide verification that the project maintenance included in the project application (if applicable) is being performed by the grantee
- Photograph the project and volunteers during project hours and include them with the final project report
- Complete all projects no later than six months after grant award
- Submit final project report within 30 days of project completion:
 - The work completed
 - Post-completion photographs of the project site
 - Copies of the Hold Harmless Agreements for the volunteers
 - Final volunteer log
 - Account of the expenditures including receipts

**Attachment A
City of Round Rock
Neighborhood Matching Grant Program
Donation Letter**

This letter shall confirm that, _____ will
(private/public organization or individual name)

participate as a partner with the _____
(neighborhood organization/business association)

in the implementation of their Neighborhood Matching Grant project.

PLEASE PRINT:

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

The contribution will consist of the following: (please check all that apply)

- Cash: \$ _____
- Materials/Equipment: Indicate the amount and value of the items being donated. Use additional sheets if necessary.

- Professional Services: Indicate the type of services being provided.

The market value for professional services rendered is \$ _____ at a
rate of \$ _____ per hour. Total number of hours donated _____.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



City of Round Rock Neighborhood Matching Grant Application

Neighborhood representatives may acquire a grant application by downloading one online or by contacting the City of Round Rock Neighborhood Services at 512-671-2734.

Application period: Open

Deadline to submit grant applications: August 31

Grants awarded: October 1

Completion deadline: 6 months from award date

Final reports deadline: 30 business days after project completion date

APPLICATIONS MUST BE COMPLETE AT TIME OF SUBMITTAL TO BE CONSIDERED
AND ALL APPLICABLE ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Title: _____
PLEASE INCLUDE THE NAME OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE PROJECT TITLE

Applicant Name: _____
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION – HOA

Project Leader: _____
PERSON FAMILIAR ENOUGH WITH PROJECT TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE PROJECT

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Day _____ Evening

E-mail address: _____

Signature: _____

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION (cont'd.)

Task	Start Date	Completion Date	Person/Committee Responsible

Estimated number of days needed to complete project: _____

Number of volunteers needed: _____

Proposed start date: _____

Estimated completion date: _____

PROJECT BUDGET

The project budget is the most important part of the application. It details the grant request and the match to be provided by the applicant.

Instruction for Matching Funds

For each project, the applicant must provide a “match.” The match is encouraged to be equal to, or greater than the amount requested from the City for the project. Identifying the match is vital to the preparation of an application for all projects and needs to be shown in the budget table.

Requirements for a Match

A match may include any or all of the following:

- Cash
- Volunteer labor
- Donated materials and supplies
- Equipment and machinery
- Donated professional services

Any other funds or services obtained from the City of Round Rock will not be accepted as part of a match.

All match funds must be assigned to a particular line item in the project budget, and be pertinent to the project. The applicant should be able to justify each part of the match as necessary to implement the project.

The monies received from the City and the neighborhood and/or businesses' match must be used for the duration of the project's implementation and solely for the purpose indicated in the project budget.

The applicant must provide documentation (receipts, etc.) for the match funds expended during the project. This documentation must be included in the final report.

All applications will be checked against the list of matching requirements. If the match does not meet these requirements, the application will not be considered.

