



**City of Raleigh**

# **Neighborhood Improvement Funds Level II**

## **Information Packet and Sample Budget Sheets FY-17**



**Housing and Neighborhoods Department  
Community Engagement Division  
919-996-6100  
[www.raleighnc.gov](http://www.raleighnc.gov)**

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## **Note To Neighborhood Organizations**

We encourage you to call the City of Raleigh Community Engagement Division before you prepare your application. We can offer guidance and assistance to help you submit a successful application.

Community Engagement Division  
(919) 996-6100  
310 W. Martin St., Suite 201  
Raleigh, NC 27601

# Program Overview

## What Are Neighborhood Improvement Funds?

Neighborhood Improvement Funds provide neighborhood groups with up to \$1,000 from the City of Raleigh for projects that enhance and strengthen neighborhoods. All projects are initiated, planned, and carried out by community members in partnership with the City.

Residents design their own projects; drawing on their individual, group and community assets, skills and talents. Neighborhood organizations are urged to develop proposals that make the most of resources and strengthen partnerships.

Community-building is core to the success of projects supported by Neighborhood Improvement Funds; the process of bringing people together and building relationships is as important as project results.

## Funding Levels

Neighborhood Improvement Funds are available at two levels:

**Level I** funding provides up to \$250 per project and does not require a neighborhood group to provide a matching amount. A separate information packet and application are available for groups seeking Level I funding.

**Level II** funding provides \$251 to \$1,000 per project and requires the neighborhood organization to provide a match. Neighborhood groups located in City of Raleigh Conservation and Development Areas (see map on page 8) are eligible for funding to cover up to 75 percent of a project's cost. Other neighborhood groups are eligible for funding to cover up to 50 percent of a project's cost. A neighborhood group can provide its share of a project's cost through any combination of volunteer labor and donations of material, services, and cash.

## Project Requirements

Many projects are eligible for Neighborhood Improvement Funds. To be considered for funding, a project must help build a stronger and healthier community. Projects must:

- Provide a public benefit and be free and open to all members of the community.
- Emphasize self help, with project ideas initiated, planned, and implemented by the neighbors and community members who will be affected by the project.
- Demonstrate community involvement or match.
- Occur within the City of Raleigh limits or its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

**\*\*Funds will not be approved for the continuation or duplication of the same project (i.e. any type of festival, celebration or gathering), even if it's submitted in a different fiscal year.**

## Project Types

1. Neighborhood Organizing -- To create, diversify or expand an organization's membership for the benefit of the entire neighborhood or community.
2. Physical Improvement -- To make a physical improvement in a neighborhood or community.
3. Non-physical Improvement -- To organize and hold activities or events, such as a festival, celebration, training session, educational campaign or workshop.

## Eligible Organizations

To receive matching funds, an organization must demonstrate community input and involvement and show that the project will benefit the neighborhood. The project must take place within the boundaries of the neighborhood organization.

Many types of neighborhood-based organizations are eligible, including:

- Neighborhood associations
- Homeowners' associations
- Community watch groups
- Garden clubs

An organization applying for funds must:

- Be currently registered under the Raleigh Neighborhood Registry. To verify if your neighborhood is currently registered or for more information on how to register, please visit [www.raleighnc.gov](http://www.raleighnc.gov) and type in "Raleigh Neighborhood Registry" in the search box.
- Have an identifiable constituency within specific geographic boundaries inside the City of Raleigh corporate limits;
- Hold at least one annual meeting. The minutes of meetings and attendance list must be forwarded to the Community Engagement Division;
- Have a body of officers, with at least one person designated as the contact for the organization;
- Be nonpartisan;
- Have a constitution, bylaws and/or mission statement; and
- Open its membership to everyone who lives or owns property in the neighborhood.

## Timeline

- Completed applications will be accepted through May 19, 2017.
- Applications must be received at least six weeks before the start of a project. We do not fund projects after the fact; nor do we reimburse for projects that have already taken place once the application has been submitted.
- The Community Engagement Division of the Housing and Neighborhoods Department will decide whether to approve funding within three weeks of receiving an application.
- The organization receiving funding must submit a final report on the project to the Community Engagement Division.

# Eligible Projects

Eligible projects may be organizational, social, educational, or involve a structural or physical improvement. Below are examples of projects that may receive funds. The list is not all-inclusive. Applicants are encouraged to submit creative ideas for funding.

- Community gardens and landscaping.
- Educational programs, such as lawn care, property maintenance and conflict resolution.
- Mailings to members of a neighborhood-based organization.
- Rental of meeting space when city facilities are unavailable.
- Membership in neighborhood organizations such as Neighborhoods USA, NeighborWorks and National Neighborhood Network.
- Neighborhood promotion and branding.
- Neighborhood Watch signs.
- Newsletter or website development.
- Neighborhood parks and related improvements.
- New signage or replacement of neighborhood signs in older neighborhoods. (Please remember to include the cost of permits in your application.)
  - Signs require a permit from the Inspections Department. Prior to submitting an application, contact Jocelyn Cochrane (919) 996-2472 [jocelyn.cochrane@raleighnc.gov](mailto:jocelyn.cochrane@raleighnc.gov).
  - An encroachment permit may be needed as well. For information on encroachment permits prior to submitting an application, contact Debbie Wyatt in Public Works (919) 996-2410 [debbie.wyatt@raleighnc.gov](mailto:debbie.wyatt@raleighnc.gov).
  - Improvements to city-owned green space must be discussed with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department. Prior to submitting an application, contact Wayne Schindler at (919) 996-4844 or [wayne.schindler@raleighnc.gov](mailto:wayne.schindler@raleighnc.gov) or Stephen Bentley at (919) 996-4784 or [stephen.bentley@raleighnc.gov](mailto:stephen.bentley@raleighnc.gov)
- Plaques of nominal value to honor residents for volunteer contributions.
- Playground equipment.
- “Yard-of-the-Month” signs.
- Youth programs.
- Membership dues for Scouts and other youth organizations for children and youth from City of Raleigh Conservation and Development Areas (see map on page 8).
- Programs to engage seniors and people with disabilities or to cover transportation costs for those wishing to participate in a neighborhood project.
- Food for banquets, meetings, picnics or community festivals. Food costs may not exceed \$500.

## Ineligible Projects

Neighborhood Improvement Funds are public funds. They may not be spent for purposes that violate the North Carolina Constitution, North Carolina statutes or City of Raleigh ordinances.

Neighborhood Improvement Funds may not be used for:

- Motor vehicles
- Employment of individuals or companies to provide services that are available from the City of Raleigh.
- Purchase of real property
- Physical improvements to private property unless a right-of-way agreement or easement has been provided for neighborhood signage.
- Mobile phones, mobile phone services or similar electronic devices or associated airtime.
- Money for the private use of individuals, organizations or groups or for uses that do not benefit the neighborhood at large. This includes payment for services such as rent, telephone, utilities and Internet.
- Membership in social, political, or fraternal organizations.
- Field trips and admissions.
- Cash prizes.
- Purchase of yard equipment, chainsaws, weed-eaters, lawn mowers and similar equipment unless it is part of an approved community tool shed. Rental of equipment is permitted.
- Reimbursement for purchases or projects that have been completed prior to approval of Neighborhood Improvement Funds application.

# Neighborhood Match

It is important to have neighborhood participation for projects to be viable. So neighborhood organizations share in the cost of improvement projects. An organization can provide its share of the costs through any combination of fundraising, volunteer labor (currently valued at \$23.56 per person per hour), in-kind and contributions and other types of donations.

- **75/25 Match**

Neighborhood organizations located in City of Raleigh Conservation and Redevelopment Areas (see attached map) may apply for a maximum of \$1,000 in Neighborhood Improvement Funds to pay for up to 75 percent of a project's cost. The neighborhood organization must provide the remaining 25 percent.

**Example of 75/25 Match:**

Total project cost:	\$1,200
75% from Neighborhood Improvement Funds:	\$ 900
25% from neighborhood organization:	\$ 300

- **50/50 Match:**

All other neighborhood organizations may apply for maximum of \$1,000 in Neighborhood Improvement Funds to pay for up to 50 percent of a project's cost. The neighborhood organization must provide the remaining 50 percent.

**Example of 50/50 Match:**

Total project cost:	\$1,200
50% from Neighborhood Improvement Funds:	\$ 600
50% from neighborhood organization:	\$ 600



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: How many times may my organization receive funding for projects?**

**A:** Organizations may receive Neighborhood Improvement Funds only once during a fiscal year (July 1 – June 1).

## **Q: How do I access funds allocated to my project?**

**A:** Recipients access funds in several ways:

**1. Check.** Neighborhood-based organizations that have or secure a Federal Tax ID number can receive a check for deposit into an organizational account. Neighborhood-based organizations must be willing to be on the City's approved vendor list. Link here for [Vendor Registration and Update Process](#) or contact the Community Engagement Division at (919) 996-6100 to speak with the program coordinator. Could take up to 90 days to process request.

**2. Purchase order.** The City can issue purchase orders to vendors who are willing to be on the City's approved vendor list. Link here for [Vendor Registration and Update Process](#) or contact the Community Engagement Division at 996-6100 to speak with the program coordinator. A vendor must print out an estimate for all the items needed. The estimate must be provided to the Community Engagement staff, which will have the City's Accounting Office provide a purchase order to the vendor. Identify the person(s) from your organization authorized to pick up items on behalf of the organization. The vendor will have a copy of the purchase order and will allow you to acquire the items listed.

**3. City procurement.** At the neighborhood-based organization's request, the Community Engagement Division can purchase the item(s) with the department's procurement card. Call the program coordinator at (919) 996-6100 to schedule an appointment to meet at a vendor location to make the purchase. To use this option, a purchase may not exceed \$1,000, including tax.

**4. Vendor check.** When a vendor does not accept a purchase order or a procurement card, arrangements can be made to issue the vendor a check. The vendor must be willing to be on the City's approved vendor list. Link here for [Vendor Registration and Update Process](#) or contact the program coordinator at (919) 996-6100. Could take up to 90 days to process request.

## **Q: Can my organization combine Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) Awareness Funds and Neighborhood Improvement Funds to pay for a project?**

**A:** No. Neighborhood Improvement Funds cannot be used for projects that also involve CAC Awareness funds.

## **Q: What if my application is not approved?**

**A:** You may request feedback on your application and are welcome to resubmit your application any time. The Community Engagement Division will be happy to assist you as you work on your application.

## Sample Budget Sheet

An application includes two sections: Part A and Part B. The following two samples serve as examples of how the budget forms in Part B might be filled out. They are for illustrative purposes only. This sample budget is based on a neighborhood applying for landscaping assistance.

PROJECT COSTS	Source	Notes and Explanation	Total
<b>Plants (6 trees, 20 plants, 20 bushes for planting around new sign)</b>			
	ABC Landscape Nursery	Quote (attached) for materials	\$500.00
<b>Shovels, post diggers and tiller rental</b>			
	Capital Town Rent-all	Quote from Capital (attached) for 3 day rental.	\$430.00
<b>Labor Hours</b>			
	10 Resident Volunteers	Each volunteer will be provide 2 hours	
		at a \$23.56 value per hour	
		10volunteers x 2 hours x 23.56	\$471.20
<b>Refreshments for volunteers</b>			
	My Grocery Store	Estimated Cost	\$50
	<b>Total Project Cost =</b>		<b>\$1,451.20</b>

### How to determine your share of the project's cost:

Total project cost as illustrated above = \$1,451.20.

- For a 50/50 match, your group will need to provide \$725.60 of the total project cost.  
(\$1,451.20 x .5 = \$725.60)
- For a 75/25 match, your group will need to provide \$362.80 of the total project cost.  
(\$1,451.20 x .25 = \$362.80)

*Proceed to the next page to show how you will provide your share of the project cost.*

# Sample Budget Sheet for matching resources to be provided by applicant

*(This illustration is based on a 50/50 match)*

**MINIMUM TOTAL OF PROJECT COSTS TO BE MATCHED BY APPLICANTS = \$725.60**

Resources	Calculations/Explanations	Total
<i>Volunteer Labor Hours</i> (10 volunteers have been recruited and will each give 2 hours of their time for a Neighborhood Work Day to clear debris and underbrush, till the soil and put all plantings in the ground)	10 volunteers x 2 Hours x \$23.56	\$471.20
Monetary Donations	Cash contribution from community = \$100	\$300.00
Others:	Capital Town Rent-All discounted \$30 off the total cost of rental (from \$460 to \$430, a savings of \$30)	\$30.00
Total contributions made by neighborhood =		<b>\$801.20 **</b>

**\*\* The matching contributions from the neighborhood exceed the required matching amount of \$725.60. The neighborhood organization has successfully shown how it will match its share of the costs for the project.**