



Neighborhood Partners Fund

Program Guidelines FY 2015 – 2016

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City of Las Vegas Neighborhood Partners Fund (NPF) PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Provides Neighborhood Associations With Resources That Support Efforts To Improve The Quality Of Life For All Residents In The Neighborhood

I. Introduction

The Neighborhood Partners Fund (NPF) is designed to assist in **improving the quality of life** in City of Las Vegas neighborhoods and directly responds to two of the City Council's continuing priorities: (1) **Develop and support neighborhood integrity and livability** and (2) **Strengthen the dialogue between the city and its citizens**.

The objectives of the Neighborhood Partners Fund are:

- To increase participation and cooperation among neighborhood residents, businesses, and the City;
- To support emerging and established registered neighborhood-based associations working on significant neighborhood issues and concerns through achievable projects; and,
- To empower registered neighborhood-based associations to effectively plan and implement programs that address neighborhood needs.

The program grants up to \$5,000 to registered neighborhood-based associations for self-help projects that will improve the physical, public safety, cultural, recreational, or educational conditions of their neighborhood.

In order to qualify, registered neighborhood-based associations will have to match the City's contribution with volunteer time, in-kind donations of goods and services and/or financial contributions. **Projects are required to take place within the boundaries of the registered neighborhood-based association or areas immediately adjacent, will involve neighborhood residents directly in all phases of the project, and must not be used to fund the association's operating budget or other City services.**

There is an annual application process, and all applications are reviewed by an appointed committee. Technical assistance is provided to the grant recipients by City staff, and a monthly project report is required until project completion. The registered neighborhood-based associations are expected to begin implementing the project within 60 days of grant receipt. Grant recipients will be expected to have completed 50 percent of their project by January 31, 2016. Grantees who have not started the projects will be required to provide a timeline of project completion, before access to grant funds are permitted. All documentation must be submitted to and monitored by the Office of Community Services for all projects.

II. Timeline

The FY2015-2016 NPF application cycle begins February 9, 2015 and completes on July 15, 2015, when funding recommendations are presented to the city Council for approval. Recipients have until June 2016 to complete their projects.

The following application cycle timeline has been developed:

February 9 – April 15, 2015 Announce availability of matching grants, hold training workshops; receive applications.

April 16, 2015 11:59 p.m. Deadline for applications

April 17 - June 16, 2015 Review of applications; Applicant presentations to Neighborhood Grant Fund (NPF) Board; Funding recommendations made by Board members. Agenda item developed for Council meeting; letters to award recipients.

July 15, 2015 Presentation of funding recommendations to Council.

III. Eligible Applicants

All registered neighborhood-based associations are eligible to receive funds provided that the following conditions are met. A neighborhood-based association is one with a majority of its members residing or operating businesses in a defined geographical area commonly recognized as a neighborhood and whose purpose is to improve the quality of life in that area. The association must be registered* with the City of Las Vegas. Associations **must**:

- Not discriminate in the admission of members to their association;
- Demonstrate active participation of the neighborhood residents and/or businesses within their boundaries;
- Demonstrate neighborhood support for the proposed project/program;
- Not have failed to complete a matching grant project within the past two funding cycles; and
- Submit only one application per Neighborhood Association during the application process

One lead applicant should be identified. An association, which is supportive of the project activities but has only a limited role in the project's implementation, is not a joint or co-applicant.**

**Registered Neighborhood Associations whose boundaries include County land must show that 51% or more of the association area is within the City of Las Vegas and the project will take place within the City of Las Vegas.*

***A joint or co-applicant is an association that is actively involved in the project during all project phases*

NPF applications are only available through ZoomGrants.com. Applicants can attend one of six workshops being offered from February 28 through March 25, 2015, to learn about the NPF program and how to access the ZoomGrants program.

All applications will be checked against the above eligibility criteria. If the applicant association, as described in the application, does not meet the above criteria, it will be considered ineligible. The applications will also be checked for eligibility using the project requirement, match requirement, and application requirements noted in the following sections.

IV. Eligible Projects

The Neighborhood Partners Fund will award grants that attempt to improve the quality of life of Las Vegas neighborhoods through:

- ***Neighborhood Improvement Projects***
- ***Crime and Public Safety Programs***
- ***Neighborhood Education, Recreation, and Cultural Initiatives***

Project Criteria:

- Must provide a public, neighborhood benefit;
- Must involve neighborhood people in the identification, planning and execution of the proposed activity;
- Cannot duplicate an existing private or public program;
- Cannot support an ongoing service or support ongoing operating budgets of associations;
- Must be completed by June 16, 2016;
- Must conform to applicable health, safety, and legal regulations; and,
- Requires 1 public to 1 private dollar match (including cash, in-kind, and volunteer labor).

Types of Projects Not Eligible

- Projects benefiting an individual or individual property only;
- Direct subsidy of existing services by community associations;
- Direct subsidy of care for the medically indigent;
- Projects identified with political parties of any kind;
- Projects proposed by a for-profit association;
- Associations that practice discrimination of any kind;
- General contributions to capital campaigns;
- Operating deficits or retirement of debt;
- Endowment programs; and
- Commercial housing or construction projects.

Eligible Project Categories

Neighborhood Improvement Projects

Physical improvement projects make neighborhoods better places to live, work or play. Funded projects may include landscaping to public right-of-ways and medians, community gardens, neighborhood signs, shelters and playgrounds, tot lots, murals, trashcans, benches, supplemental street lights, sidewalks or other public amenities not otherwise funded by the City.

Soft costs (i.e. engineering, permitting, architectural or consultant fees) associated with planning for large-scale improvement projects will also be eligible under this category.

- Neighborhood associations undertaking planting projects, installation of poles for banners, or other types of physical enhancement projects in public right-of-ways may need to sign a **Landscape Maintenance or Public Right-of-Way agreement as an addendum to the NPF contract**. Applicant will be provided a comprehensive explanation if special arrangements have to be made.
- It is the sole responsibility of neighborhood associations to be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of planting projects or other types of projects on located in the public rights-of-way.
- Annual plants are not an eligible expense; perennial plants are an eligible expense.
- Planting projects performed in phases are eligible for funding over several grant cycles.

Neighborhood Education, Recreation, and Cultural Initiatives

Projects aimed at enhancing the educational, recreation, and cultural opportunities available to all neighborhood residents are recognized as fundable projects. Examples of these types of projects include making available after-school enrichment activities for children and youth, cultural, recreational, and educational activities for all ages, and senior citizen activities. Neighborhood-based initiatives in areas such as music, outdoor activities, sports, arts, tutoring, parenting, health and literacy are also included.

Costs for equipment, books, transportation, meeting space, advertising, and professional services qualify under this grant. Partnership with the Las Vegas/Clark County School District, with churches, or clubs that have recreational or cultural facilities, is strongly encouraged.

Projects and activities funded under this category may be eligible for subsequent grants at the discretion of the NPF Review Board. Types of projects and activities considered in this category include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Neighborhood festivals, block parties, or barbecues;
- Neighborhood newsletters;
- Youth projects such as science workshops, dance workshops, etc.

Recipients are allowed to spend a maximum of 25 percent of the total grant amount on food, beverages, and entertainment for neighborhood events. Video cameras to record events are not an eligible expense.

Neighborhood associations can receive only one grant for trips. Trips must be open to all people in a neighborhood. The purpose of the trip is key in determining if a grant is to be awarded. Applications must indicate the benefit to the neighborhood. Trips will not be funded as “rewards” for keeping your neighborhood clean. Eligible expenses for trips include transportation costs (lowest price form) and lodging. Food, tips, and other sundry items are not eligible expenses.

Crime and Public Safety

Projects that reduce crime or increase public safety are also encouraged. Examples of crime and public safety projects include signs for neighborhood crime watch programs, drug awareness programs, fire safety programs, and removal of sight obstructions or safety hazards that would not otherwise be funded by the City.

V. Matching Criteria

Applicant associations must pledge and then secure resources to match the funds they request. Matches may include: cash, volunteer labor, donated supplies, equipment, or professional services. These match elements may be blended together to make the required total match, provided each match element is truly needed to complete the project.

Volunteer Hours

- **Volunteer hours from the neighborhood are mandatory.**
- **Volunteer hours cannot represent 100 percent of the matching amount.**
- To ensure neighborhood involvement in the Neighborhood Partners Fund, **at least 25 percent of the matching amount must be volunteer hours from neighbors that reside in the defined neighborhood.** (For example: If the association applies for a \$5,000 grant, 25 percent of \$5,000 requires a minimum of \$1,250 worth of volunteer hours. Volunteer labor is valued this year at \$22.55 per hour for the purpose of calculating the match. In this example, approximately 56 hours are required to fulfill this requirement (56 X \$22.55 per hour = \$1,262.80). These hours would be itemized through a **Volunteer Hours Pledge Sheet.**

Pledged Business Donations and Professional services; Donated Supplies and Equipment

- Applicants must have ***NPF Donations Pledge Letters*** for each business and professional individual pledging time or money to the project. If checks are collected as pledges, copies of these checks must be attached to the application with its corresponding ***NPF Donations Pledge Letters***.
- The value of professional services counted toward the match shall be based upon the reasonable and customary value of the service rendered.
- Borrowed equipment such as computers or trucks may be used as match. The value of the equipment is set at the amount that would have been paid to rent the equipment for the work performed.

Time Devoted to Creating the Application

- ***Time devoted to planning the projects, preparing the application, and fund raising can be considered part of the match.***
- The assistance provided by the NPF Administrator or additional funds received from the City of Las Vegas cannot be considered as match. Technical assistance from the City will be available to help neighborhood groups prepare their applications and value their match.

For all elements of the match, applicants must be prepared to justify that the amount and types of proposed contributions are appropriate to the project. The proposed match elements must be expended during the project's implementation.

- Cash match must be expended before the funds from the City.
- ***To be credited as match, all resources provided by the applicants must be expended after the award of funds by the City.***

VI. Evaluation Committee and Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by city staff for threshold compliance with applicable laws and policies. Applications that fail the threshold requirements will be rejected, with notification sent to the applicant association. Applications meeting the threshold criteria will be forwarded to the Neighborhood Partners Fund (NPF) Board for review and funding recommendation. Applicants may be required to submit a modified ***Vendor Cost Estimates Sheet and Project Budget Worksheet with additional NPF Donations Pledge Letters*** after NPF funding recommendations are approved by city Council.

Evaluation Committee

- The NPF Board reviews the matching grant applications and makes the final recommendations. The board is composed of 13 Ward designees and neighborhood representatives appointed by the Mayor and six Council offices. Staff from the Office of Community Services provides support to NPF board members. The following **Evaluation Criteria** will be used in assessing the viability of the project.

FY 2015-2016 Rating Sheet

EVALUATION CRITERIA	# of Points	Score
1.1 Quantity of Match (a) Cash (b) In Kind Donations (c) Volunteer Hours (d) Professional Services	40 (1.1 -1.3)	<input type="text"/>
1.2 Quality of Participation (a) How are the volunteer hours being used? (Directly or indirectly on project?) (b) How do the volunteer hours contribute to the overall success of project?		<input type="text"/>
1.3 Other type of Support (a) Does this project involve the support of any of the following organizations (i.e., LVMPD, UNLV, CCSD, the faith community, local artists or businesses, etc.)?		<input type="text"/>
2. Project Impact –Quantity (See: Cost Estimates & Project Worksheet) (a) How critical is this project to the community? (b) How many people/homes will be impacted by project?	10	<input type="text"/>
3. Project Impact –Quality (a) How will this project affect this community? (b) How will it change the lives of the residents?	10	<input type="text"/>
4. Long Term Impact (a) How will this project increase community spirit? (b) How will this project engage residents over time?	10	<input type="text"/>
5. Program Design Specifics (See: Cost Estimates & Project Worksheet) (a) How cost effective is the proposed project? (b) Is the project well planned and ready for implementation?	10	<input type="text"/>
6. EXTRA POINTS (a) Did the residents show exceptional effort in developing this project/application? (b) Is there something unique about this project?	10	<input type="text"/>
7. Presentation (a) Is the presentation clear about the project's mission? (b) Does the presentation include photos or some type of project description? (If this project has received prior NPF funding, are there photos explaining the achievements of previous years?	10	<input type="text"/>
Total Possible: 100 points	100	<input type="text"/>

VII. Administration

Successful applicants will be required to sign an agreement with the City. This agreement is created to maintain a thorough accounting of grant funds. No funds will be disbursed until the association and the City have signed the agreement. The City has no responsibility to reimburse a neighborhood association for any expenses incurred prior to the award decision AND prior to the execution of an agreement. A contract will become null and void if not signed within a six-month period.

The NPF Program Administrator will work with each of the neighborhood Project Leaders to finalize proposed neighborhood projects. Funds are disbursed using two processes:

- (1) Project leaders request a service or product needed to achieve their project by completing a **Request for Funds** form. The Program Administrator reviews and approves funding request before forwarding for purchase. Vendors are paid directly by the City.
- (2) Project leaders obtain approval from the NPF Program Administrator to pay vendors for work done as NPF project. A special form is completed to request reimbursement from the city for these expenditures. NPF Program Administrator will provide appropriate form for these transactions after approval is obtained.

The project's intent and scope as contained in the approved application must be the same as the project that is completed with the grant funding. Minor revisions to the specific scope and budget may occur to accommodate circumstances that arise between the time of the application and execution of the project.

The City will work with the neighborhood association in full partnership to ensure project completion. All partners should be recognized in any literature or publicity received by the project.

Subsequent Grants

Neighborhood associations may not be awarded a second grant until the first funded project has been successfully completed and a satisfactory project close-out report is filed. ***Neighborhood associations that have failed to carry out a project satisfactorily will not be eligible to apply again for two years from the time of the original application.***

Equipment

Associations purchasing or receiving equipment as part of the project, whose value is over \$1,000, will give the City rights to the equipment for three years from the date of purchase. Should the association be dissolved or should the equipment not be used in accordance with the grant agreement, the city will have the right to re-appropriate the equipment.

Other Requirements

Projects under contract with the City of Las Vegas will be conducted in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws. Projects involving public property must receive the permission of the appropriate governmental jurisdiction. Projects involving private property must have the permission of the property owners involved. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any permits normally required for particular activities (e.g. street use permits). Permitting fees may be incorporated into the budget at the time of application.

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