



Neighborhood Partnership Grants

What is the Neighborhood Partnership Grant Program?

Boulder's community character and active life style is supported by unique neighborhoods and engaged citizens. The Neighborhood Partnership Program has been created to provide neighborhoods in Boulder with an opportunity to leverage City resources for community-driven projects that are planned and implemented by locally organized groups of residents.

The Neighborhood Partnership Grant Program is an inclusive community program where groups of residents, formally recognized or not, can apply to receive funding for a project that will help support and address specific area needs and create more sustainable neighborhoods. Projects can range from public art to neighborhood gatherings to community planning. All an applicant really needs to apply is a great idea and the support of the neighborhood in which the project is taking place!

Who can apply?

Any group of city residents may apply. Applicants need to have a proposal that enhances the quality of life in a Boulder neighborhood. Applications can come from ad hoc groups (with a neighborhood issue in mind), non-profit organizations, community based groups, neighborhood organizations and the like. Partnerships between various groups are encouraged. An individual member of the community cannot apply for these grants.

What projects will the city fund?

The City of Boulder is looking for projects that help promote the sense of community in a neighborhood; enhance quality of life, help increase engagement of residents in the neighborhood and support the sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity efforts of the City. Each project should:

- Support neighborhood sustainability and resilience
- Generally enhance the quality of life and/or neighborhood identity
- Provide a neighborhood/community benefit
- Demonstrate neighborhood engagement through participation in the planning and implementation of the project

What are some examples of possible projects?

- Physical Improvements to the neighborhood, like landscaping, street painting or public art
- Neighborhood planning and design
- Youth engagement opportunities
- Community organizing
- Local food efforts
- Arts and Culture
- Environmentally focused projects
- Purchasing and installing additional park amenities

- Developing athletic opportunities in parks
- Hosting a community cultural event
- Having a neighborhood concert
- Support a neighborhood gathering

What funding is available?

There are two types of funds available to applicants, Neighborhood Spark Grants and Neighborhood Enhancement Grants. Both of these funding levels can be used for a wide range of projects. The smaller “Spark” funds can be applied for year round but will be evaluated at the end of each month. The total funds available in 2016 will be \$50,000 and once the funding is allocated, applicants must wait until the following year to apply.

	Neighborhood Spark Grant*	Neighborhood Enhancement Grant**
Awards	Up to \$1,000	Up to \$20,000
Application Deadlines	Year Round	March 11; Any remaining funds will be distributed in the fall through an additional process-if needed
Grant Award	3 weeks following the end of the month it was submitted	8 weeks after application
Contract with City	Within one month of notice	Within one month of notice

***Spark Grants** are about creating a partnership between the neighborhood and the City of Boulder, therefore they do require some form of contribution other than the funds provided through the grant—this could be cash contribution or it can be an in-kind donation of materials, entertainment, supplies, etc. Canopies, chairs, utensils, or prizes for participants in events will meet this requirement. The Neighborhood Liaison (and applicable staff) will review all applications at the end of each month and provide notice to applicants within three business weeks of that review. No specific match is required for these grants, however, neighborhood/community participation is a criterion for evaluation purposes.

****For the Neighborhood Enhancement Grants**, each partnership requires that the applicant/s, neighborhood or community group, donate a 25% match of the Cities contribution through volunteer labor, donated materials or services, and/or cash. The time spent developing the application for a project can go toward this match. Volunteer labor is valued at \$20.00 per hour.

How do I/we apply?

Each applicant must submit a completed application including the Neighborhood Snapshot, budget and supporting documentation required. The application process includes an outline of the project (including a timeline), the specific monetary amount requested, the steps taken to gather neighborhood support, the resources available for the project and a proposed timeline. It is encouraged that each applicant spend

adequate time developing support for a project in the neighborhood that it is planned before submitting an application. If an applicant is proposing a neighborhood community engagement project then the applicant needs to develop a clear outreach strategy and desired outcomes. Every project should have the support of the current neighborhood organization, a community non-profit, or similar organizations, as individuals are not eligible for these grants. Neighborhood Enhancement Grants are due March 11. If enough projects are submitted to expend the full \$40,000, there will not be another Enhancement Grant opportunity. If there are remaining funds in the fall of 2016, then a second round of applications will be announced. City staff is available to answer questions leading up to these application periods. If an application is not funded at any time, applicants may adjust and resubmit for the same project during the next periods.

Here are suggested ways of gathering neighborhood support for a neighborhood enhancement project:

- Hold a neighborhood meeting
- Gather signatures
- Produce fliers and collect emails
- Have a meeting at the location of the proposed project
 - Gather input from neighbors on what they would like to see
- See if you can partner with a locally based community organization, or non-profit

Here are suggested ways of creating a community engagement project:

- Develop an outreach strategy
 - Knock on doors, create a listserv, develop a social media page, create a neighborhood newsletter, etc...
- Host a neighborhood party or event
 - Develop a goal for a project that enhances quality of life. This can be developing relationships with neighbors, discussing current issues, creating communication channels or discussing a vision for the neighborhood.
- Start a social club or neighborhood organization
 - Create a plan to develop a representative group of neighbors.

How will our project be evaluated?

Spark and Neighborhood Development Grants are evaluated differently. The neighborhood liaison, along with a representative from any applicable department will review Spark Grant applications based on the criteria outlined below and then issue grants when funds are available. For “Neighborhood Enhancement” applications, there is a standing committee of City staff, representing a cross section of departments, who review and evaluate applications as they come in. For projects that are physical in nature (move or potentially impact the ground), the application and supporting documents may go through a development review committee process, assuring that funded projects meet appropriate regulations. Staff members will review each Neighborhood Enhancement Grant applications based on the criteria below:

- Project Idea & geographic equity (10 pts) – Points are awarded to underrepresented neighborhoods based on previous Neighborhood Partnership Projects.
- Neighborhood/Community Participation (20 pts) – A project earns points based on the active participation of community members and neighborhood residents.
- Project Resources and Readiness (20 pts) – Points are awarded based on the completeness of the application and by having every piece of the project requirements in place

- Incorporates City Council Vision/Initiatives (25 pts) – Points are awarded to projects that take into account City Council Initiatives, address an unfunded or underfunded project, and that fit within the City’s Sustainability Framework. The neighborhood liaison can help applicants identify/locate these documents.
- Quality of Life Outcomes (25 pts) – Points are awarded based on how the project enhances life for the residents of the neighborhood where it is taking place. Enhancement can be both through physical improvements or creating greater sense of neighborhood identity.

Are there any items that do not qualify for funding?

- Individuals
- Organizations located outside of the Boulder city limits
- Applicants who have failed to successfully carry out contracted projects in the two preceding years
- Duplication of public or private programs
- Support redundant programs or services
- Replacing lost funding
- Purchasing land/buildings
- Pay for traveling expenses
- Pay for expenses already committed to before the contract with the City

What are the contracting requirements for a Neighborhood Partnership Grant?

- If the applicant is not a taxable entity then a fiscal sponsor will need to be identified as individuals are not eligible to receive funding.
 - An example of a fiscal sponsor would be Play Boulder. Play Boulder can act as a fiscal sponsor for these projects if the applicant does not have the necessary structure to manage the funds. There is a small administrative fee associated with using most fiscal sponsors. City staff can help identify fiscal sponsors if the applicants have not already identified one. Fiscal sponsorship contracts will need to be provided as part of the application process.
- Insurance
 - Each project will need to have insurance for volunteers
 - Occasionally projects can be covered by a waiver agreeing to indemnify and hold harmless.
- Contingency
 - Projects can go over budget due to unforeseen circumstances while in the planning stages. Each applicant needs to budget a 5% contingency in the project plan for such circumstances, particularly those including physical or structural improvements. Contingency inclusions may not exceed funding limits set for each type of grant. .
- Reporting requirements
 - Funds will be available on a reimbursement basis only. Enhancement grants can be paid in installments related to the project timeline agreed upon; Spark grants will be paid at the completion of the project/event.
 - Checks will be issued from the city to the grantee, based on receipt or other proof of project-related expenditure, to the grantee.
 - A Reimbursement Request Form must be completed and submitted with each set of receipts/invoices.

- Changes to the budget that exceed 5% (contingency) must be approved prior to expenditure and an amended budget must be submitted as a part of that approval process. Total requests for reimbursement may not exceed total awarded funds.
- All grantees are encouraged to share pictures of the event/project resulting from your partnership grant. The city does reserve the right to use any pictures shared for future promotion/publications.
- All grant recipients are asked to complete a program evaluation. Information and recommendations will be utilized as a part of the continuous improvement process for the Neighborhood Partnership Program.

Roles and Considerations

The City of Boulder is committed to helping applicants interested in this program work through the requirements. If you have questions about an idea or would like to understand the requirements further please call the **Neighborhood Liaison 303-441-1895** or email **Nagla@bouldercolorado.gov**.

This is the first year of this program and systems/processes are likely to be encountered that will require communication and coordination between multiple city departments, the employee committee and applicants/grantees. The Neighborhood Liaison will serve as a conduit to answer questions and assist throughout the process. Contracts will be written that outline roles and expectations of all entities involved in the project. It will be required for both the city and the applicant/grantee to sign the contract in order to initiate the project.

It is a 5 step process:

1. Review the Neighborhood Partnership Grant details.
2. Review the reporting requirements for the grant application.
3. Prepare the required materials for the grant application.
4. Complete the neighborhood snapshot.
5. Complete the application.

Tips to get started:

- Brainstorm a great idea!
- Create a simple sketch and description of your idea, with the location identified
- Start working on a completed project budget (see link under the application)
- Brainstorm a plan to meet your cost-share through fundraisers, in-kind labor, cash donations, etc.

Second, talk to your neighbors: show them the sketch, tell them about the cost-share, earn their support!

The City requires:

- The endorsement of the commonly recognized neighborhood association, the homeowner's association for your area (City staff can help you to identify this), or a group of committed neighbors.
- An agreement to maintain the project after installation.

Use the resources available at <https://bouldercolorado.gov/neighborhood-services/apply-for-a-neighborhood-grant> to help you. There are downloadable pdf(s) that will provide the questions/information required on the application (and snapshot) so that you know exactly what you need to collect, prior to opening the application. There is also a sample budget for your use/review.