

Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program

The St. Cloud HRA will make available the Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program to provide small matching grants to qualified neighborhood organizations as an incentive to encourage neighborhood residents to take on projects that will improve the neighborhood and community at large. Up to \$5000 in matching grant funds are available for qualified projects. Initially, the St. Cloud HRA will have available funding totaling \$15,000.

The goals of the Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program are to improve the health of St. Cloud's neighborhoods by addressing needs through the active involvement of the neighborhood residents themselves. Specific goals include:

- Improving the neighborhood organization and pride by encouraging more resident involvement in addressing neighborhood issues and needs;
- Leveraging both the St. Cloud HRA 's and the neighborhood's resources towards addressing neighborhood issues;
- Improving the community aesthetics by encouraging physical improvements in St. Cloud's neighborhoods such as beautification programs, environmental enhancements and neighborhood clean-ups; and
- Maintaining or improving property values in the neighborhood.

The program is administered through the St. Cloud HRA and funding is provided on a first come, first served basis.

Who can apply for funding?

- An approved neighborhood group in the City of St. Cloud representing a specific neighborhood or community area may apply for matching funding under this program. Examples of such groups include neighborhood association, neighborhood watch group, homeowner's association or an organized committee of neighborhood residents.

What types of projects are eligible for funding?

- Legal formation of neighborhood or homeowners association
- Skills training on how to organize your neighborhood
- Neighborhood communications such as developing a neighborhood web site
- Physical improvements; tree planting, initial landscaping, neighborhood signage, playgrounds, environmental enhancements, murals, lighting or security enhancements and maintenance of landscaping, signage or environmental projects

What types of projects are not eligible for funding?

- On-going maintenance of landscaping, signage or environmental projects
- Food
- Salaries or stipends
- Expenses such as rent, phone, utilities
- Field Trips
- Festivals
- Entertainment

What is the matching grant and how does my organization meet it?

- Applicants requesting funding under the Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program must provide a 100% match (\$1.00 in matching funds for each \$1.00 requested in funding). The match provided must be directly related to the project being undertaken. Matching resources may include the following: cash contributions, donated or discounted materials or services, donated land, donated professional services, volunteer labor

How does the application process work?

- Letters of request for funding will be accepted by the St. Cloud HRA throughout the year for this program. The request must describe the project for which funding is requested, provide a project budget and identify sources of the match requirements.

What happens after a project is selected for funding?

- Work selected for a matching grant must be completed within 6 months of approval of the application, unless extended by the St. Cloud HRA. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all building permits and any other required permits for the work to be done. The applicant is responsible for conformance with all applicable safety standards and conditions. The applicant also agrees to maintain the project or improvement once completed.