



City Council

Approval of 2021 Neighborhood Matching Grants Awards

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Title

Approval of 2021 Neighborhood Matching Grants Awards

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve the Neighborhood Matching Grant proposals as recommended by the Grant Review Team.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve funding for ten (10) Neighborhood Matching Grants.

Staff Contact:

Lydia Moorehead, Associate Planner, Community Planning & Development, 360.570.3746

Presenter(s):

None - Consent Calendar

Background and Analysis:

The Neighborhood Matching Grant program helps Olympia's Recognized Neighborhood Associations (RNAs) fund community-driven projects.

The program goal is "to encourage projects that foster civic pride, enhance and beautify neighborhoods, expand citizen involvement, and promote the interests of the Olympia community. To accomplish this goal, the Olympia City Council will make available grant funds to Recognized Neighborhood Associations up to a 50/50 matching basis. The City Council firmly believes that community participation and commitment to accomplish improvements within our City are mutually beneficial to all Olympia residents."

2021 Application and Review Process

The City Council approved a budget of up to \$23,000 to fund the Neighborhood Matching Grant

program in 2021. Grant awards can range from \$500 to \$5000, can cover up to 50% of project costs, and must be matched by the RNA with direct financial contribution and/or in-kind labor and materials.

A total of twelve (12) applications were received for 2021. They were reviewed by an interdisciplinary team of city staff. Applications were evaluated against the following program goals:

- Result in a direct and lasting environmental benefit to the neighborhood and/or wider community.
- Enhance and beautify the neighborhood and/or wider community.
- Foster community engagement and enrichment opportunities through the use of neighborhood sweat equity.
- Ready to begin after funding has been approved.
- Likely to be completed by December 31, 2021 (or by December 31, 2022 for projects within the public right-of-way).
- Easily accomplished with volunteers.
- Does not require extensive City staff involvement to be completed.

The attached table provides a summary the applications received and recommended for funding. Which would award grants to the following RNA's Bigelow, Governor Stevens East Bay, East Side, Woodfield Estates, South Capitol, Southwest, Northeast, Northwest, and Cooper Crest.

Two applications are not recommended for funding because the applications were scored the lowest by the grant review team. Since the total amount requested exceeded the amount budgeted, not all projects could be completely funded. One of the unfunded proposals was determined to be the responsibility of the Homeowners Association and would not have been approved even if enough funds were available.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

RNAs continue to show a strong interest in this program. Over the last eight years, the city has funded an average of 8 applications per year. The 2021 Neighborhood Matching Grant funds will support many wonderful projects including community events, beautification efforts through mural maintenance and development, RNA communications, administration and gatherings, support of existing anti-graffiti programs, and landscape/trail improvements that increase community pride and sense of place. These projects bring residents together and benefit the wider community of Olympia by strengthening the vitality of our neighborhoods. The 2021 proposed projects continue a tradition to provide environmental, aesthetic, and community engagement benefits to City residents and businesses.

Options:

1. Approve the Neighborhood Matching Grants as recommended by the Grant Review Team.
2. Approve partial or full funding of a subset of grant requests that the Council finds consistent with the goals of the program.
3. Do not fund some of the applications recommended by the Grant Review Team.

Note: All options would be contingent on negotiation of agreements with recognized neighborhood associations to complete each project in 2021 (or 2022 for projects within public right-of-way).

Financial Impact:

The 2021 budget provides up to \$23,000 to fund the Neighborhood Matching Grant program. This funding will leverage \$73,558 in projects and improvements across the City and engage 1,495 volunteer hours of neighbors working together to make Olympia a better place to live. The estimated staff time to support each matching grant ranges from 10-15 hours, totaling 100-150 staff hours for the ten (10) recommended projects. Funding for this time is included in the City budget.

Attachments:

Grant Review Team Recommendation
Map