

LONGVIEW PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK GRANT POLICY & PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

The Neighborhood Park Grant Program is a capital program (budgeted in the capital projects fund) initiated by the City Council as a means of giving community groups the opportunity to improve and invest in their parks, while giving the city the opportunity to stretch its capital funds. Annually since 1997, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has evaluated applications and made recommendations to the council for final approval.

PURPOSE

To establish policies and procedures for considering applications for the Neighborhood Park Grant Program.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

- **City:** Municipal Government of the City of Longview, Washington
- **Department:** Longview Parks and Recreation Department
- **Director:** Director of Longview Parks and Recreation
- **Advisory Board:** The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board is a Council appointed committee whose functions include, but are not limited to, review and recommendation to the Director on parks and recreation related matters.
- **Applicant:** Private, for-profit company, non-profit organization, or public agency wishing to apply to the grant program.
- **Capital Improvement Project:** projects as those which include new or expanded physical facilities/assets, major renovation or replacement of existing facilities, the acquisition of real property (land), or the purchase of major pieces of equipment. Capital improvement projects involve the expenditure of \$5,000 or more for design, construction, and equipment; have a useful life of one year or more; and are for an item classified as a fixed asset.
- **Match:** (Matching Share) shall mean the portion of the total cost of a project which the applicant must provide.

POLICY FOR APPLICATIONS

It is the policy of the Longview Parks and Recreation Department to accept Neighborhood Park Grant Program applications for:

1. Projects that enhance, beautify, improve, supplement, support, or otherwise benefit the parks and recreation system.

2. Projects that are consistent with department mission, policies, park property restrictions, park master plans, and the most current comprehensive parks and recreation plan approved by the department staff and the Advisory Board.
3. Projects with no contingencies placed on the department and the full understanding that they become the property of the City and are subject to the laws, ordinances, resolutions, policies and procedures that govern the department.
4. Projects which the applicants acknowledge the department is in no way obligated to replace the park improvement if it is stolen, vandalized, deteriorated, irreparably damaged, or destroyed.
5. Park improvements which are of high quality to ensure a long life and are resistant to the elements, deterioration, and to acts of vandalism.
6. Projects that meet the City of Longview's definition of a Capital Improvement Project.
7. Park improvements that include an estimate and evaluation of the expected life cycle, repair and replacement costs, future employee labor and all types of maintenance costs as well as only accept improvements that do not cause undue financial burden on department staff and/or resources.
8. Projects located within a City of Longview Park, Facility, Trail, or designated play area such as at a school district facility that allows for public access which are identified in the Comprehensive Plan.
9. Projects that completely address the eight rating criteria that includes: need, community impact, access, financial responsibility, cost benefits, compliance, readiness to proceed, and funding.
10. Projects that include a comprehensive financial breakdown of the park improvement which includes: the estimated total cost of the project, applicant cash, applicant donations, estimated volunteer hours, and other supplemental information to validate anticipated expenses.
11. Projects that do not include routine maintenance on existing or proposed new facilities as that is not an eligible expense under this program.

POLICY FOR EXPENDING GRANT FUNDS

It is the policy of the Longview Parks and Recreation Department to expend Neighborhood Park Grant Program funds for:

1. Applications that were submitted by the publicized deadline.

2. Applications that were recommended by the Advisory Board and approved for funding by City Council.
3. Projects that are completed by the project deadline. Applicants who are unable to meet the deadline must submit a "Letter of Need" to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board 30 days prior to the deadline to ask for an extension.
4. Projects that are fully complete and accompanied by a Project Completion Summary Form with attached detailed documentation of all financial obligations related to the project and attached before and after photos.
5. Finished projects that include pictures and a 50% reimbursement request comprised of tangible supplies and paid service expenditures and do not include donated items or labor as reimbursable items. Applicants cannot financially benefit from the Neighborhood Park Grant Program.

PROCEDURE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK GRANTS

The City of Longview and the Parks and Recreation Department welcome interested applicants to apply for the Neighborhood Park Grant Program as an opportunity to improve and invest in their parks and recreation system.

Annual Neighborhood Park Grant Procedure

1. **(January - February)**

The Neighborhood Park Grant Program will open applications for outside organizations, groups, and individuals to apply for funding.

2. **(June - July)**

If all grant funding has not been expended during the first round of applications, a mid-year solicitation for applications will be again held for outside applicants

3. **(September - October)**

If all grant funding has not been expended during the second round of applications, the City of Longview Parks and Recreation Department may apply for funding.

- a. Funding provided to the department may only be used for Capital Improvements within the park system.
- b. Neighborhood Park Grant Funds may only be used to purchase tangible items and not to offset labor or maintenance costs of the department.
- c. The department is required to fill out an application for the Neighborhood Park Grant Program. The Advisory Board will weigh the request against the criteria and make recommendation to City Council for funding.
- d. City Council makes the final approval for project funding for all applicants.
- e. The department is not required to provide a 50% match for grant funds.

- f. If the remaining funds to be allocated are below the Capital Improvement monetary threshold, the department may choose to supplement the shortfall using money from the operating budget.
- g. The department is required to fill out a Project Completion Form with accompanying supplemental information and photos for records.

Application Submittal

Those wishing to apply must submit a complete Neighborhood Park Grant Application and provide eight (8) copies of the application as well as any accompanying supplemental materials by the application deadline. The application must explain how the project meets the eight rating criteria and the financial breakdown of project funding.

Application Review

After the deadline is complete and all proposals have been submitted, the Advisory Board will set a meeting to discuss all of the proposals together. All applicants will be invited to make presentations regarding their projects to the board. Applicants will be notified of the date and time, and during that meeting may bring additional information or hand outs and answer questions pertaining to the proposed projects.

Funding Recommendations & Approval

The Advisory Board will weigh the proposals against the rating criteria. The board will determine which projects best meet the criteria. If there are more proposals than funding available, the board will determine whether or not to fund full or partial projects depending on applicant ability and readiness to proceed. The board will make a priority list of projects for the Director to bring forward for funding recommendations to City Council. City Council has the final approval for funding. Applicants will be notified by letter, at the address provided on their proposal, of the funding decision/approval by the Council. Once notified, applicants may begin their projects.

Completion

Once the project is complete, applicants provide the department a fully finalized "Project Completion Summary Form" with the attached detailed documentation to validate each line item. Along with the summary form, before and after photos of the finished project are required. Department staff will work with applicants to ensure that all paperwork is comprehensive and meets requirements for reimbursement.

Project Extension

The City understands that there can be unforeseen circumstances that may not allow completion of the project by the December 30 deadline. Applicants may submit a "Letter of Need" to the Advisory Board for consideration of an extension on the project deadline. The letter must be received prior to the December 30 deadline to be granted.