

Community Matching Grant: FAQ

Who is eligible to apply for this Grant?

For the purposes of this Matching Grant, a project could be, but is not limited to, a structure or an event. If a community is interested in applying for a Community Matching Grant and completing a project in their area but do not have a formal HOA, they can partner with another incorporated organization in their area like a church, local business, or service organization. If the community cannot find one to partner with, the City can provide assistance, although the City cannot guarantee that an organization will be available. In this instance, the below requirements apply to the community:

- A majority of the members of the group must reside, work, or have a business located within the boundaries of the affected community
- The targeted community area must fall within the limits of the City of Auburn
- Be open to all residents in the targeted area, including young people between the ages of 12 to 18 and senior citizens. Membership fees, or comparable devices, cannot be used to restrict any resident within the designated area from voicing thoughts on matters concerning the Community Project
- Plan to hold at least one planning meeting to discuss the project with your community group and get their support (a Support Form will be required as part of the application). We also suggest one meeting during the implementation of the project and one meeting at the end of the project to make sure *everyone remains involved* with the project
- Designate at least one member of the community to represent it as its Project Coordinator

Any formal, incorporated HOA or management company is eligible to apply for the grant on its own as long as they meet the following requirements:

- The group of individuals taking on this project must be inclusive of all residents within the established community boundaries, both in decision-making and implementing the project
- The community must have a boundary within Auburn city limits
- The community must plan to hold at least one planning meeting to discuss the project with the residents and get their support (a Support Form will be required as part of the application). We also suggest one meeting during the implementation of the project and one meeting at the end of the project to make sure everyone remains involved with the project
- The community must designate at least one member or resident to act as its Project Coordinator to be the Point of Contact for the City during the process

If the applicant is a for-profit organization or business, they must demonstrate that they are working to benefit the community. Examples of demonstrating this include a certain portion of profits going to a charity, payment of livable wage to all employees, investment in the health of the community targeted by the project, 35% of occupants paying rent with HUD assistance or a voucher, etc.

Who is not eligible to apply for this Grant?

In general, organizations or groups that do not represent the Auburn community are not eligible. Organizations designed to elect candidates to public offices or lobby legislation are not eligible for funding. Religious organizations are eligible provided the organization does not discriminate against any person on the basis of religion or give preference or limit services on the basis of religion. The religious organization cannot provide any religious instruction or engage in any proselytizing while on the project site or while engaged in the business of implementing the project. The project cannot contain religious symbols or decorations other than those permanently affixed to a pre-existing structure or normally and routinely worn as part of the participant's clothing or apparel.

What is the maximum amount a group can apply for?

There are 3 different categories of projects available for a community to apply for, with different maximum levels of potential funding available. While a community can apply for multiple projects, each community can only apply for a maximum of \$2,500 across the different categories each calendar year.

Community improvement grant projects (\$2,500 max) are longer-term projects focused on:

- Creating an attachment between residents and their community
- Supporting physical, social, and mental well-being of residents
- Maintaining safe and beautiful communities in Auburn
- Increasing opportunities for residents to be civically engaged

Community Clean-up Grants (\$1,500 max) focus on organizing community clean-up campaigns such as hauling-away junked cars, appliances, and renting temporary dumpsters.

Community Event Grants (\$1,500 max) focus on organizing community events. The purpose of the Community Event grant is to cover the cost of items that support the event being made available to all people. Some potential funding may be available for needed pre-event purchases (outreach materials, food, rent of facilities, port-a-potties, etc.), but this will require a meeting with the Neighborhood Programs Coordinator (clovings@auburnwa.gov).

Event Grants can be start-up funding for a new event or significant enhancement funding of an ongoing event (community has an idea on how to enhance the event or expand it for greater participation). When applying (and if selected) the community group must provide info on sustainability for future events as funding is currently only on a one-time basis for events. This may be waived for future years based on changes to the event (event is more inclusive in following years, event is demonstrably different and unique, event addresses a different need, etc.).

What are some examples of events that a community could apply for?

Events include, but are not limited to:

- Block parties
- Cultural events or festivals
- Educational workshops

- National Night Out events

If attendees are charged for food or activities at the event, then the food or those activities will not be eligible for grant funding.

How many projects can a community apply for?

A single neighborhood/community (HOA, community-based organization, school, etc.) can apply for up to \$2,500 per year. That could be for a single project, or multiple projects that add up to a total ask of \$2,500. If you are applying for multiple projects, each project will need a separate application. Depending on the amount of funding available and amount of applications received, applicants submitting multiple projects may be asked to rank which projects they wish to take priority during the funding process. Please note that funding is limited for the Matching Grant program, so projects/events may be funded completely, partially, or not at all.

Is there a special event permit required to host my event?

If you would like to host a block party that requires closing a street in your neighborhood you'll need a Right-of-Way Use Permit. These generally take 3-4 weeks to process depending on the specifics of your request and require applicants to provide a completed application form, insurance certificate, permission/petition in favor of the block party from all adjacent neighbors, a traffic control plan showing how you intend to close the street including the specific signs and barricade that you intend to use to close the street and an application fee. Additional information and the [application](#) (PDF) for a Right-of-Way Use Type B Permit can be found at the [Permits & Licenses](#) page.

How does the required match work?

For every dollar requested from the City, the applicant must provide at least a dollar of match. If the applicant is an organization working in conjunction with a community, then the match can come from either the community or the organization or a combination. This division is agreed upon by the organization and the community themselves. The match may take the form of cash, donated professional services or materials, or volunteer labor. Match pledge forms are part of the Community Matching Grant application. The following are the requirements for eligible match:

- The total amount of the match must equal or exceed the dollar amount requested from the City's Community Matching Grant.
- The amount and type of match must be appropriate to the needs of the proposed project. The applicant must be prepared to justify that each element of the match, in the amount proposed, was necessary to complete the project.
- Volunteer time is valued by the City at a rate of \$40 per hour (established for Washington State by Independent Sector). Volunteer time cannot include time spent fundraising or time spent planning the project and preparing the grant proposal. Volunteer time must be recorded on attendance sheets provided by the City or comparable forms provided by the applicant.

- If the project doesn't lend itself to volunteers, the group can connect with the Neighborhood Programs Coordinator to discuss alternative options which could include volunteering for the City or a local non-profit or other opportunities. The non-profits must provide a service to Auburn residents and cannot have religious affiliations.
- Professional services will be recognized at their customary rates. Donors of professional services will need to document the value of their contribution on letterhead from the agency providing the professional service.
- Donated materials or supplies are valued at their retail price. Borrowed tools and equipment can also be considered as part of the match and valued at the standard rental fee rate. The donor will need to provide documentation on the value of the donated tools and equipment along with the times and dates that it was used.

Who is responsible for maintenance should the project require it?

Should the project require ongoing maintenance, the residents must demonstrate an ability to do this maintenance. An explanation of how maintenance will occur will be a part of the Community Matching Grant application.

What are ineligible projects and costs?

The project must be non-profit in nature and must be developed and completed in compliance with city guidelines and requirements. The following are projects and costs that are generally ineligible for funding through Community Matching Grants:

- Projects that do not comply with City guidelines and requirements.
- Projects that require long-term maintenance. If continual maintenance is required, the applicant must demonstrate, before the grant is awarded, how they plan to pay for the necessary operation and maintenance of the project.
- Projects consisting of vegetation maintenance including but not limited to invasive species and tree removal.
- Expenditures or financial commitments made before all parties sign an Agreement regarding the Community Matching Grant are not eligible for funding or match.
- Ongoing services or programming are not eligible for a Community Matching Grant. Ongoing services are defined as activities and/or products that community groups currently provide without a Community Matching Grant.
- The following budget items are not eligible for reimbursement by grant funding but may be used to satisfy the match requirements:
 - Tools and Equipment
 - Out-of-City Travel Expenses
 - Administrative Overhead

Applications for grant funded projects must also comply with all Federal, State and Local laws, including, but not limited to:

- RCW 9 & 9A (criminal laws/criminal code)

- RCW 49.46 (labor standards)
- RCW 49.60 (discrimination)
- RCW 70A (environmental health and safety)
- ACC Title 8 (health and safety)
- ACC Title 10 (vehicles and traffic)
- Applicable COVID-19 health and safety guidelines

The City may deny any application that advocates for a particular political figure, cause, or election related activity, that promotes or endorses a specific religious affiliation, or that demonstrates unlawful discrimination against any person or group.

What are ineligible events?

- Events that do not comply with City guidelines and requirements
- Events that charge for entry, or is not open to all community members
- Events that are free of charge to attend but many of the activities are not free, is fundraising in nature, or is focused on income generation are not eligible for Matching Grant funding.
- Events that are not within Auburn City Limits (use the [City Limits Tool](#) to determine if the address of the event is within the City Limits)
- The following budget items are not eligible for reimbursement by grant funding but may be used to satisfy the match requirements
 - Tools or Equipment for general operational maintenance of the event site
 - Transportation costs
 - Administrative Overhead (Staffing costs, utility costs, etc.)
- Events that have been previously funded by the Matching Grant program (unless there is demonstrated enhancement or expansion of event that will be supported by grant funding)

The City may deny any application that advocates for a particular political figure, cause, or election related activity, that promotes or endorses a specific religious affiliation, or that demonstrates unlawful discrimination against any person or group.

How are the bills paid?

Procurement of goods and services purchased with Community Matching Grant funds must be in accordance with the City’s purchasing policies. Monies allocated to the project must be used solely and strictly for the activities or services stipulated in the grant application and/or project budget narrative.

Reimbursement Specifics: Since the community must be, or working with, an existing, incorporated, organization large enough to finance the project upfront, the City will enter into contract with that incorporated entity. The incorporated organization will be reimbursed after the service or activity is finished and receipts are submitted. If the community provides direct financial support to the project, they are responsible for having their own agreement with the incorporated organization to be reimbursed. The City will provide the organization a purchase order that lists eligible costs and the maximum amount authorized for reimbursement. Request for reimbursement must include copies of relevant invoices submitted by contractors and vendors for payment and/or other documents that support

the actual expenditure of funds. Each group must complete the project within the calendar year in which the contract is signed. Receipts for reimbursement need to be submitted to the City as soon as possible upon project completion or prior to the end of the calendar year.

What is the process for selection of projects?

The Neighborhood Programs Coordinator, along with another City staff member will use a rating system application rubric to determine initial eligibility. Using this rubric along with the application will provide us an understanding of the scope of the project that will help with deliberations for the internal selection process. Other factors taken into consideration will be timeline (can the project be completed in this calendar year?), potential impact on the community, and project maintenance. After the application goes through this process and depending on complexity of the project, the Neighborhood Programs Coordinator will connect with relevant City Departments, paying special attention to any permitting requirements or potential concerns from those departments. The next steps will be drafting and signing contracts by the end of April for projects that will be moving forward.

If the applications received exceed the maximum budgeted amount for the program (\$10,000), special consideration will be given to applications that will finish the project in the calendar year, match the scope and purpose of the Matching Grant program, and serve underserved communities in Auburn. The City reserves the right to select projects based on a combination of score and factors listed above. The award amount for individual projects may differ from the amount requested in the application. The City of Auburn also reserves the right not to award all funds included in this application process.

For any projects submitted, the Neighborhood Programs Coordinator will provide feedback and/or the rubric and notes from the selection process internally if requested.