

ITEM # 8
DATE: August 12, 2008

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT GRANTS FOR 2008/09

BACKGROUND:

For the 13th consecutive year, the City Council has appropriated Local Option Sales Tax funds to finance the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP). This year, \$50,000 was approved for neighborhood programs, with \$25,000 earmarked for the NIP and the remaining \$25,000 allocated for a broader array of neighborhood projects to be determined by the City Council.

As you will recall, there are two main goals of the NIP: (1) to strengthen a neighborhood's appearance with the addition of permanent physical improvements, and (2) to promote a greater sense of community through resident participation in a neighborhood project.

Each project application is rated on the following 100-point system. A project must achieve at least 50 points to be considered:

Resident Involvement (30 points maximum):*

...the number of residents donating their time and/or labor to accomplish the project

...the number of residents donating funds to the project

*10 points 1-25 people; 20 points 26-50 people; 30 points over 50 people

Project Impact (30 points maximum):**

...the number of residents who will be positively affected by the improvement

**10 points 1-25 people; 20 points 26-100 people; 30 points over 100 people

Safety (10 points maximum):

...enhancement of safety in the neighborhood

Public Space (10 points maximum):

...promotion of social interaction by utilizing public space

Improved Housing (10 points maximum)

Environment (10 points maximum):

...support for the environment

Three applications were received for a total funding request of \$10,420.00. The Review Panel, comprised of City staff members and two citizens, scored the applications and recommended that the Somerset Triangle Park and Taft Court Cul-de-sac grants be approved at this time. The third grant application is incomplete. City staff has requested additional information from the applicants, and once that is received, the Review Panel will make its funding recommendation. In addition, a grant application submitted for the last round of funding had been put on hold until the developers met their requirements for tree planting in the new subdivision. It is anticipated that the pending issues will be worked out for that project in the near future, and it will be brought to the City Council for approval on August 26, 2008.

At this time, the Neighborhood Improvement Project Review Panel is requesting approval by the City Council of the following projects:

SOMERSET TRIANGLE PARK PROJECT

This project involves the purchase and installation of playground equipment, a park bench, signage, and trees at Triangle Park located on Clayton Drive in the Somerset Subdivision. This green space lies next to the intersection of two walking and biking trails and is frequented by many people. There are no public parks in the neighborhood.

The total cost of the project is \$15,074.42. Requested City funding is \$5,000. The applicants are providing \$5,135.42 in cash and in-kind contributions in the amount of \$4,939.

TAFT COURT CUL-DE-SAC LANDSCAPING PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to beautify the cul-de-sac on Taft Court by removing a tree stump, adding brick pavers, planting two trees, shrubs, and perennials, and installing a bench to promote the space as a gathering place.

The total cost of the project is \$916. Requested City funding is \$420. The applicants are providing \$76 in cash and in-kind contributions (labor and donated materials) in the amount of \$420.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can approve the expenditure of \$5,420 to fund the Neighborhood Improvement Program for Somerset Triangle Park Playground and Taft Court Cul-de-sac Landscaping projects.
2. The City Council can reject any or all of the projects for funding at this time.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Supporting projects that strengthen neighborhoods is in keeping with one of the City Council's goals. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, thereby approving Neighborhood Improvement Program

grants for the Somerset Triangle Park Playground project in the amount of \$5,000 and Taft Court Cul-de-sac Landscaping project in the amount of \$420.

Funding in the amount of \$19,580 remains in this year's allocation. If it is determined that the outstanding grant applications meet the eligibility criteria, City Council action will be sought.