

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: 2011/12 NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT GRANT

BACKGROUND:

The City Council annually appropriates Local Option Sales Tax funds to finance the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP). As listed in the approved Capital Improvements Plan, \$50,000 is 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.

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

One grant application for FY 2011/12 has been received to date. It was scored by the Review Panel on February 23, 2012, and received more than enough points to be recommended for approval by the City Council. The project is as follows:

HISTORIC OLD TOWN/SUNRISE NEIGHBORHOODS STREET TREE PROJECT:

The Historic Old Town Neighborhood Association is partnering with the Sunrise Addition Neighborhood Association to purchase and plant 50 new trees within the “parking strip” portion of street rights-of-way within the boundaries of those two neighborhoods. Approximately 35 new trees will be planted in the Old Town Neighborhood, which extends from 6th Street on the south to 13th Street on the north, Grand Avenue on the west, and to the east side of Duff Avenue. Fifteen (15) trees will be planted in the Sunrise Addition Neighborhood, which runs from 9th Street to 13th Street between Duff and Maxwell Avenues. The primary focus of the project will be to plant new trees to fill gaps in coverage.

Each neighborhood association has surveyed their neighborhoods and identified areas where there is space for additional trees, given the guidance on street tree placement provided by Public Works. Property owners will be contacted to determine their interest in having a tree planted in their yard and in committing to watering it over the growing season. Based on last year’s experience of the Old Town Neighborhood, it is not anticipated that they will have any problems finding caregivers for all 50 trees. Volunteers have already been lined up to assist with the planting process.

Tree species to be planted will be consistent with the City’s Street Tree Policy. Actual siting of the trees will be done with input from the Public Works Department to avoid issues with utility lines. The City will not be responsible to replace trees in the parking due to improper care within five years of planting.

The total cost of the project is \$5,850, and requested City funding is \$1,950. The applicants will be providing in-kind labor and water in the amount of \$3,900.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can approve the expenditure of \$1,950 to fund a NIP grant for the Historic Old Town/Sunrise Addition Neighborhoods Street Tree Project.
2. The City Council can reject the project 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 as stated above.