

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: 2013/14 NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT GRANT**

**BACKGROUND:**

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

Two new grant applications for FY 2013/14 have been received and evaluated by the Review Panel. Both applications received more than the required number of points to be recommended for approval by the City Council. A total of \$4,030 is being requested in City NIP funding. There is \$22,374.73 remaining out of the \$25,000 allocation in the NIP Capital Improvements Plan account for FY 2013/14.

The projects are as follows:

**BLOOMINGTON TOWNHOME NEIGHBORHOOD POND LANDSCAPING PROJECT:**

A prairie wildflower bed will be established around the pond at the entrance to the neighborhood. In addition to the pond landscaping, neighborhood residents will be gathering to add mulch around trees, paint foundations, and trim trees for those who need assistance. The list of plant species will be approved by the City. Benches will be constructed out of large boulders on the east side of the pond to provide areas for residents to get together to relax by the pond. All ongoing maintenance will be provided by the neighborhood residents.

The total cost of the project is \$5,000. Requested City grant funding is in the amount of \$2,500. The residents of the neighborhood will be providing in-kind labor and cash in the amount of \$2,500.

**BROOKSIDE SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD STREET PAINTING PROJECT:** The purpose of this grant application is to bring the neighborhood residents together for a street painting project. The plan for the painting is a seasonal mural; the design of which has been approved by all residents of the neighborhood. Lee Street is one-block long, and the mural will span the length of the Street. It will serve as the location for occasional neighborhood picnics and parties after the appropriate block party permit has been approved by the City. The City's Transportation Engineer has approved the project.

The total cost of the project is \$1,530. Requested City grant funding is in the amount of \$1,530. The residents of the neighborhood will be providing in-kind labor in the amount of \$1,530.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can approve the expenditure of \$2,500 and \$1,530 to fund NIP grants for the Bloomington Townhome Neighborhood Pond Landscaping Project and Brookside South Neighborhood Street Painting Project, respectively.
2. The City Council can reject the projects for funding.

**MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Supporting projects that strengthen neighborhoods is in keeping with one of the City Council's goals. It is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, thereby approving Neighborhood Improvement Program grants in the amount of \$2,500 and \$1,530 for the Bloomington Townhome Neighborhood Pond Landscaping Project and Brookside South Neighborhood Street Painting Project, respectively.