Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

General Training FY26

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Website with all information, forms etc: https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/nsp/

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

General Training:

1. **Overview**
   - FY26 Distribution Info
   - Purpose
   - NSP Program Qualifying Criteria
2. **Requirements of Councils**
   - NSP Review Committee
   - NSP Manager
3. **Conditions & Limitations**
   - Program Conditions; Ineligible & Limitations on Expenses
   - Eligible Categories
4. **Proposal Packet**
   - Applicant Information
   - Attachments
   - Proposal Forms Directions
   - Amendments
5. **Getting your money**
6. **Ongoing management**
   - Documentation
   - Financial Management

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Overview

Overview

INVEST IN neighborhoods

FY26 Distribution Info:

Note: cannot submit proposal unless previous year has been submitted and APPROVED

Distribution FY26 $9,666 per Council

Schedule for FY26

Proposals

- Submissions **Mar – June 2026**
- Submissions MUST be received by **4 pm**

Submission Deadline Date *(1st Fri of the month)*	**Review Committee Date**
Friday, **March 6**	Tuesday, **March 17****
Friday, **April 3**	Tuesday, **April 14**
Friday, **May 1**	Tuesday, **May 12**
Friday, **June 5**	Tuesday, **June 16**

Expenditures – through **Nov 15, 2026**

All spending/payments completed by Nov 15

Final Report – **Dec 15, 2026**

Quarterly Interim reports (online)

Qtr	Reporting Period: *(cumulative)*	Interim Report Due date:
1	Jan 1 through Mar 31	April 7th
2	through Jun 30	July 7th
3	through Sep 30	October 6th

Overview

Purpose:

- **Goal:** to enhance the quality of life in each Cincinnati community; to build leadership in the neighborhoods
- **Purpose:** to fund resident-controlled projects, improve the leadership capacity of Community Councils, and recruit, train, and increase the productivity of volunteers
- Recognizes local neighborhood leadership is best to determine what needs to be done in the neighborhood

Overview

Qualifying Criteria: Eligible

- All NSP-funded neighborhoods shall operate in accordance with the **City of Cincinnati Ordinance #20-1989***
- Public Good Purpose
- Members—(minimally) residents 18 years and older within the neighborhood
- Description of territorial boundaries, if not already on file, or in the individual by-laws of the Community Councils
- EEO statement and information (non-discrimination)

*Other specific requirements that are needed to be in your bylaws includes “NSP must be open vote to all residents (not just members)”

Overview

Qualifying Criteria: Active

- All Councils must submit annually (July) proof of active status
  - Active Status with State of Ohio
  - Proof of liability insurance (if not part of Insurance Aggregation Program)
  - Update bylaws (Bylaws must be in compliance with ORD 220-1989 & ORC 1702))
  - Current Board Profile (must have minimum 3 Board Members)

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

Requirements of Councils

Requirements of Councils

Review Committee FY26 Requirements

The Review Committee works as a **Peer Review System**

- 9 to 10 neighborhoods, rotation every 5 years, **REQUIRED** participation or lose funding
- **Have a back-up:** not having Council representation at review committee meetings can **make you ineligible** for the following year's funding

Avondale Community Council	Mt. Auburn Community Council
California Community Council	Mt. Lookout Community Council
Camp Washington Community Council	Pleasant Ridge Community Council
Lower Price Hill Community Council	Roselawn Community Council
Mt. Adams Civic Association	Villages of Roll Hill

Requirements of Councils

Review Committee Requirements:

Review Committee Process for Submissions

- Submissions sent to IIN 1st Friday of month
- IIN will work with Council NSP Manager to fix errors
- PRIOR to the Review Committee meeting, corrected submissions sent to RC
- RC reviews and prepares questions (form provided for guidance)
- At Review Committee meeting, submissions are presented. RC discusses and votes

Formal Amendments: ongoing until the end of the spending deadline (Nov 15) Review Committee reviews and approves Formal Amendments. No meeting required, form provided

Requirements of Councils

NSP Manager:

Duties of the NSP Manager -- You are the project manager

- Facilitate eligibility and meeting participation requirements
  - Work with CC to plan projects/budgets
  - Submit interim reports (Qtrly: **Apr, Jul, Oct***) and final reports
  - Make sure projects and NSP program adhere to Guidelines
  - Submit and/or retain all required NSP documentation and financial support materials by stated deadlines

  - Keep on top of the NSP program and projects throughout the year!!
    - Including financial tracking each month

*https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/nsp-interim-report/

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

Conditions and Limitations

https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/nsp-guidelines/

Conditions and Limitations

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NSP Program Conditions:

NSP is gov't $$ for a public good.

NOT permissible

- All direct social services such as emergency food, housing assistance and distribution of products or gifts is not permissible
- Direct cash awards to individuals or groups which include gift cards and gift certificates (think "bonus" or "reward")
- Advertising that appears in NSP-subsidized publications, with the exception of locally owned neighborhood businesses
- Entertainment, events and activities not for public purpose

Conditions and Limitations

INVEST IN neighborhoods

NSP Program Conditions:

NOT permissible (cont.)

- Payments to Board members, NSP manager, and/or their families, with the exception of minors participating in group activities
- Activities that duplicate government services which are currently available within the neighborhood.
- Use of NSP funds to endorse or promote political candidates or their activities.
- Activities that fail to serve any public purpose.
- Legal Fees to contest any City rulings.
- Improvement to Private Property.
- Activities Prohibited by City, County, State and Federal Law.

Conditions and Limitations

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Eligible Categories:

- **Neighborhood Leadership Development Activities** - that strengthen, improve, and develop neighborhoods through *human development* activities
- **Communication Projects** - specific or general activities that seek to inform, educate, and publicize the work of the Community Council, special activities, or events
- **Neighborhood Improvement Activities** - that focus on cleanup and beautification, recreation area development, conservation, capital improvements (not private property), and the acquisition of fixed assets.
- **Educational Activities** - which seek to enhance existing programs or opportunities, inform residents of new neighborhood initiatives such as environmental or development issues, or to create new programming that will fill an education void for youth, teenagers, adults, or senior citizens.

Conditions and Limitations

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Eligible Categories:

- **Neighborhood Services** - designed to aid law enforcement, develop or enhance recreation opportunities, stimulate economic or commercial development, or manage, study, or promote environmental issues.
- **Problem-Solving Projects** - to investigate problems or conditions in an effort to develop a comprehensive plan to improve or alter situations communities deem a priority.
- **Quality of Life** - projects or activities which will improve the quality of life and serve public needs that are consistent with the NSP Guidelines.
  •
- **Council Business/Administrative/Operations**—costs which are not direct project costs, but necessary for the work of the Community Councils

See Guidelines for more information and example activities

Conditions and Limitations

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Tips:

"Quality of Life" – this includes partnerships with schools, rec centers, arts orgs, parks, food pantries etc, - *but separate types into separate projects- EG separate events from collaborative partnerships*

"Educational Activities" does NOT include partnerships with school – it's for programs outside of that

"Direct Program Costs" vs "Council business / Administrative / Operations

This stuff could be program specific

- Storage for cleanups or whatnot (but TOOLBANK!!!!)
- Supplies
- Computer/printer
- Web services (eg hosting, maintenance, digital storage)

Operating expenses allowed, but limitations (see conditions and limitations)

- PO Box
- Utilities
- Rent
- Financial reviews/bookkeeping/audit

Conditions and Limitations

INVEST IN neighborhoods

NSP Program Conditions:

Limitations on expenses:

- Routine operating expenses, which are not direct project expenses of the Community Council, such as rent, utilities, phone service, and post office box, annual taxes, building maintenance and repair, and equipment rental, not to exceed **$1,500** per contract year
- Food expenses limited to **$2000** per contract year for community/public purposes
- Fundraising in support of NSP-eligible activities is allowed, however, expenditures for prizes **may not exceed $500** per contract per year. Community Council officers and their families may not be recipients of awards or prizes

Conditions and Limitations

INVEST IN neighborhoods

NSP Program Conditions:

Limitations on expenses (con't)

- All NSP- funded publications **shall be limited to $3000** per contract year unless the Community Council distributes at least one issue to every residence in its neighborhood, in which case the Community Council is eligible for **$4000** per contract year
- Preparation of Annual audits and/or financial reports should **not exceed $1000** of NSP-funds
- Capital assets**, equipment, and/or cleanup supplies, tools, etc., **shall be made available to the neighborhood for NSP projects.**

***capital assets= items having a useful life of three years or more where cost exceeds $1500*

Conditions and Limitations

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Reminders & Tips:

Yes, you can pay for food for community meetings & events – only limitation is on annual amount

Yes, you can pay minors of Board members for group activity work (e.g $20 for clean-up day)

Yes, NSP covers taxes on purchases. You DO NOT have to remove that amount from your expenditures

No, you can't pay for anything outside of the spending dates (**from signing contract through Nov 15**)

- You can "upfront" pay on certain things – e.g. Don't pay monthly on your zoom – pay the annual fee, within the contract dates (it's also cheaper); same with storage units if it is annual

"cash awards" (which includes gift certificates or gift cards) does NOT mean prizes at events or fundraisers. It is to prevent selective giving of $$ to individuals – which is in the universe of "social services"

- e.g you can give gift cards as door prizes for first 20 people that show up or as raffle draws
- You CANNOT buy individual families food or books or whatnot, but you can partner with an agency that does distribute food (eg food pantry) or your local school. THEY then are doing the direct giving

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

Proposal Packet

- Directions & Checklist *(plus example)*
- Sec I: Applicant Information & Documentation Form
- Section II: Proposal Forms

Available online: https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/nsp-proposal-packet/

Full packet has example proposal (it's the pdf that has directions etc)
https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/NSP-Proposal-Packet-2-2025.pdf

Proposal Packet

INVEST IN neighborhoods

NSP Proposal Packet:

Directions & Checklist --- Read This in full & Review Example

Directions to Fill out Forms

Fill out the following:

- **Applicant Information & Documentation**
- **Summary List of Proposed Projects and Budget**

Fill out 1 per project: *(see example at the end of this section)*

- **Detailed Project description**
- **Detailed Project budget**

Please note: the assumption is a maximum of 10 projects. If you are exceeding 10 projects, then add another line

https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/nsp-proposal-packet/

Proposal Packet

NSP Proposal Packet:

Fill this out:

Section I: Applicant Information & Documentation

1. Application Information
2. EEO Statement and Information
3. NSP Vote
4. Persons authorized to handle funds (min 2)
5. Signed Verification (President)
6. Council Profile & Board
7. **Attachments:**
    1. Documentation of NSP Vote
    2. Any updated organization information between July and date of submission

NSP Proposal Packet

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Section I: Applicant Information & Documentation

Please fill in (type) the following:

1. Applicant Information

Council Name:	Awesome Community Council	**Amount Requested:**	$9666
Council EIN # (tax ID):	31-9568214	**Date of Submission:**	3/17/2026
	NAME	**EMAIL**	**PHONE #**
NSP Project Manager	John Smith	johnsmith@awesomeCC.com	513-789-8564
Council's Mailing Address, incl. Zip Code:	PO Box 1234, Cincinnati OH 45206		
	NAME	**EMAIL**	**PHONE #**
Council President:	**Jane Smith**	**pres@awesomeCC.com**	**513-321-6549**

2. EEO statement and information

Awesome Community Council (Council Name) does not discriminate against or limit participation of members, volunteers, or hires because of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.

Please indicate the current composition of your Council's Board:

# of Males	3	# of Caucasians	3	# of Hispanics	2
# of Females	6	# of African Americans	3	# of Asian/Pacific Islanders	1

Total Membership: 112

3. NSP Proposal as voted on at Council Meeting

When and what was the vote on this NSP Proposal?

Date:	3/1/2026	**# Yeas:**	44	**# Nays:**	8	**Total Attendance:**	52	**Quorum? (Y/N)**	y

*Please **attach** the Minutes & Sign-In Sheets from this Council meeting to your NSP application.*

Briefly describe method(s) of advertising meeting purpose, date, and time to residents:

Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor); flyers at library and barber shop; email ; word of mouth

Proposal Packet

Attachments

- **All proposals** will require **Meeting Minutes & Sign-In Sheets** from the meetings where NSP Proposal was introduced, **reviewed and voted on** by the Neighborhood—including all residents, regardless of Council membership
- The following documentation should be attached **only if changed between Jul 31** and the submission due date:
  - **Proof of Active Status** with the Ohio Secretary of State
  - **Certificate of Liability Insurance & D&O** (if not part of IIN's Insurance Aggregation Program)
  - **Community Council Bylaws or Constitution**

Proposal Packet

NSP Proposal Packet:

Section II: Proposal Forms

1. Proposed NSP Project Summary Sheet

And for ***each project***

1. Detailed Project Information—Narrative
2. Detailed Project Budget

Forms:

For budgets, you may use either the Word form, or the Excel spreadsheet. If using the spreadsheet, simply attach to the email with the other forms, you do not need to convert it

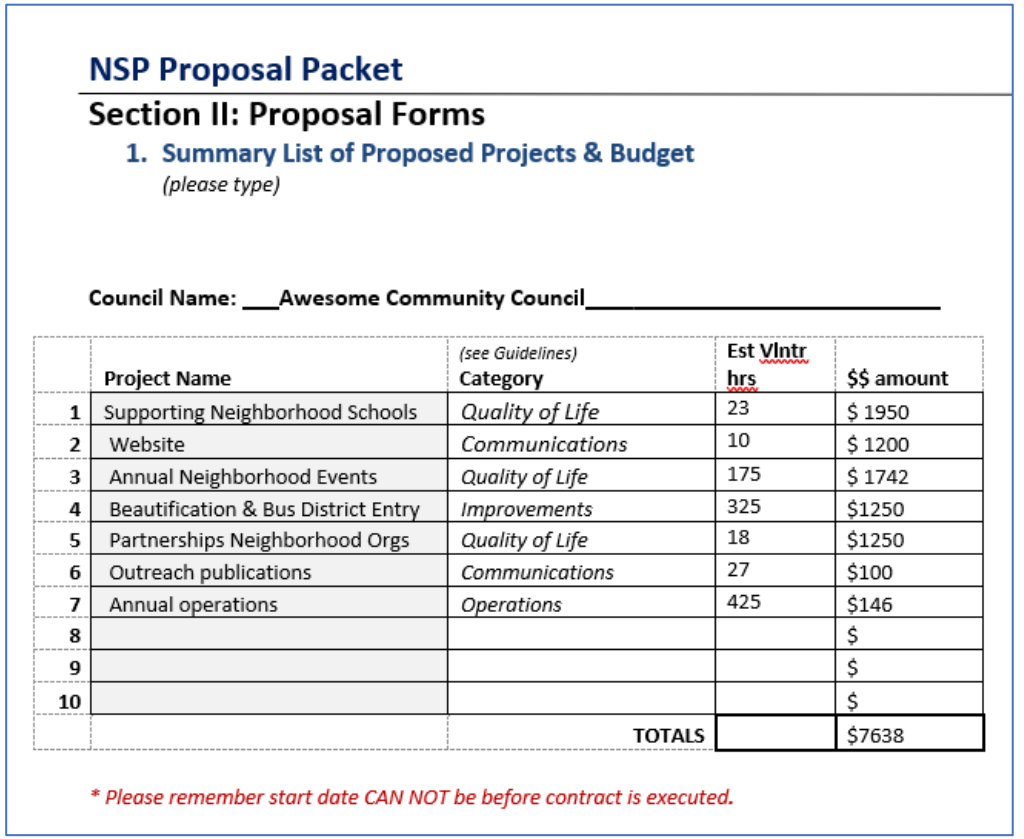
Proposal Packet

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Proposal Forms Directions:

Summary List of Proposed Projects & Budget

- **Summary List** of Proposed Projects:
  one line per project
- **Summary Budget:**
  - Identify which **Category** the Project is under. Categories can have more than one Project
  - Type in the name of the Project and the budget for that project
  - Fill in the total budget of all projects. This amount MUST equal the amount of the Fiscal Year Allocation



NSP Proposal Packet

Section II: Proposal Forms

1. **Summary List of Proposed Projects & Budget**
   (please type)

Council Name: ___Awesome Community Council_____

	Project Name	(see Guidelines) Category	Est Vlntr hrs	$$ amount
1	Supporting Neighborhood Schools	*Quality of Life*	23	$ 1950
2	Website	*Communications*	10	$ 1200
3	Annual Neighborhood Events	*Quality of Life*	175	$ 1742
4	Beautification & Bus District Entry	*Improvements*	325	$1250
5	Partnerships Neighborhood Orgs	*Quality of Life*	18	$1250
6	Outreach publications	*Communications*	27	$100
7	Annual operations	*Operations*	425	$146
8				$
9				$
10				$
		TOTALS		$7638

** Please remember start date CAN NOT be before contract is executed.*

Proposal Packet

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Proposal Forms Directions:

For EACH Project:

- **Detailed Project Description:**
  - What we intend to do – *brief description of what the project is*
  - How we intend to do it—*project plan /work plan that makes sense of the budget*
  - How will this benefit our neighborhood? – What is the purpose? Why are you doing this?
  - Volunteer hours needed – transfer this number to the Summary List
- **Detailed Project Budget**
  - Describe expense and amount
  - Project Total is transferred to the Summary Budget

Proposal Packet

EXAMPLE

Project Proposal Form:

Why is this a partnership or collaboration and not a donation or sponsorship?

Donations – unrestricted funds you give someone to do whatever they want

Sponsorships – although usually for an event, anything left over they can keep and do whatever they want (unrestricted)

Partnerships – in effect, you are giving them a grant to do something specific with. The funds are restricted to that purpose

Note: you can use spreadsheet provide online as alternative budget

INVEST IN neighborhoods

EXAMPLE Section II: Proposal Forms

2. Detailed Project Description – 1 per project

Council Name	Awesome Community Council		
PROJECT #	1	PROJECT NAME	Supporting neighborhood schools

WHAT WE INTEND TO DO *(brief project description)*

To support students in our neighborhood through partnership with our local elementary school to enhance and extend programs

HOW WE INTEND TO DO IT *(brief project plan / work plan)*

- give plaques to publicly recognize student achievement
- provide additional materials (books) for Summer reading program
- provide additional PPE supplies to local schools
- contribute to the purchase of additional school equipment

HOW WILL THIS BENEFIT OUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Partnering with the school to enhance and extend programs helps the children in our neighborhood by giving more kids the chance to participate in educational opportunities, which also supports families in the neighborhood by taking some of the cost of programs off them

3. Detailed Project Budget

EXPENSES

Line item (description)	$$ amount
Plaques to recognize neighborhood student achievement	$200.00
Summer Reading Program	$250.00
PPE Supplies local schools	$500.00
School equipment	$1,000.00
TOTAL	$1950

Proposal Packet

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Important Notes:

- All proposals MUST be electronically sent to NSP@investinneighborhoods.com
  file must be labeled "Awesome CC FY26 NSP Proposal"
- Invest in Neighborhoods website has been updated with the latest information pertaining to the NSP Guidelines and Proposal Packet
  - Please, refer back to the website for continued updates
- NSP Link: https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/nsp/

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

Amendments:

1. Formal Amendment

- If you are adding a completely new project that was not in your original proposal
- Formal amendments may not be submitted more than **2x per contract year**
- Submit to IIN, RC reviews, must receive approval
- Latest: 2 weeks PRIOR to SPENDING DEADLINE

2. Informal Amendment

- Informal Amendments are project revisions which do not alter the contract. They are used to shift significant funds from one project to another

Note: Your Final Report Expenditures are the final numbers. You do not need to submit an informal amendment with the exact amount prior to submitting final report

Download amendment forms here: https://www.investinneighborhoods.org/nsp-proposal-packet/

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

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Getting Your Money

Getting Your Money

Getting your money:

- 2 authorized signatories for contract in person day of presentation** - receive check on the spot
- Yes, checks
- Lump sum upfront payment – must sign grant agreement as well to receive

Or, we send it to you electronically for second signature and then:

- Two options—mail check, or pick it up during allotted dates/times

Don't forget: expenditure date starts with date of last signature on contract

Triple check your mailing address we have is correct

***March 17 - might not be able to get check in hand that day b/c of City getting $$ over to Invest, however, can still submit, sign contract and then contract signed date is execution date – so all spending made from **execution date** can be reimbursed from NSP account to General Funds account*

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Ongoing Management

Ongoing Management

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Staying on top of things along the way

Documentation

Financial Management

Ongoing Management

DOCUMENTATION - ONGOING

Invoices / contracts / communications that show agreement of work or services

Receipts – physical receipts – take picture or make copy; online orders/receipts

Expense reports/requests for reimbursement

Receipts/payments and workers log/time sheets for payments to individual contractors. Don’t forget you have to get a receipt for cash payments to workers!!

Volunteer hours, tracked by project

Collect / have submitted on monthly basis!!!

Ongoing Management

DOCUMENTATION - ONGOING

Documentation of NSP project the CC retains but DOES NOT TURN IN with Final Report

Volunteer records

- Individual Volunteer Waivers **
- Individual Volunteer Time Sheet
- Project Volunteer Tracking Log

Hourly paid worker records

- Individual Paid Worker Waivers**
- Individual Paid Worker Time Sheet
- Project Paid Worker Tracking Log

- W-2s for all workers paid over $600
- (and any 1099s issued for them)

** REALLY important for youth volunteers and youth workers!

Ongoing Management

DOCUMENTATION & FINANCIAL - ONGOING

Basic understanding of rules: for every expense you have to prove:

Front end – *request for payment or receipts (what/need)*

Back end – *proof that amount came out of your bank account*

There is nothing that is being requested that is not something you should be doing anyway for every transaction in and out of your Council. This is what you would have to provide if you are ever audited, by anyone

Retention Policy: **ALL** NSP votes/minutes, reports, records, and documentation, including financial records – **retain for 5 years**

Ongoing Management

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT - ONGOING

Monthly financial tracking

Spreadsheet or accounting software that records:

When, to whom, what, how much, how, which project

DATE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF PAYMENT	AMOUNT	PROJECT
				$	

EVERY MONTH – *Get bank statement from Treasurer/work with Treasurer, review all receipts, etc and match to bank statement, add records to spreadsheet*

Ongoing Management

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT - ONGOING

Track ongoing project totals:

Per project total to date is required for Interim Reports

Tracking additional non-NSP funds used for a project

This is required reporting in Final Report

	NSP Approved Project Name	$$ NSP Amount	$$ Other Sources	Source of other funds*	Total Project $$
1	Awesome Beautification Series	$1500.00	$10,000	Safe & Clean Grant	$15,000.00
2	Community Events	$3000.00	$500.00	NAF Grant	$3,500.00
3	Awesome Communications	$3,138.00	$1000	General funds	$4,138.00
	TOTALS	**$7,638.00**	**$12,250.00**		**$19,888.00**

Neighborhood Support Program (NSP)

INVEST IN neighborhoods

Questions?