



News Release

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Durham Seeks Neighborhoods for Matching Grant Health Program

Neighborhood Project Applications Due April 30

DURHAM, N.C. – Durham resident groups seeking to make their neighborhoods healthier places to live may now apply to receive funds for projects through a City of Durham health grant program.

The City's Neighborhood Improvement Services Department is now offering [Neighborhood Matching Grants for Health](#), which provides grants up to \$2,500 to neighborhood associations, homeowner associations, community watch groups, and resident groups for projects that benefit residents' health.

The department, which is partnering with Duke University Health System and Healthy Durham 20/20, recognizes neighborhoods are important factors in the health of individuals and communities. Thus, these health grants will fund projects that increase neighborhood involvement and address Durham County's health priorities as identified in the most recent [Community Health Assessment](#). These priorities are obesity and chronic illness, access to medical and dental care, mental health and substance abuse, and HIV and sexually-transmitted infections.

Past neighborhood matching grant projects have funded park rejuvenations, open space improvement, murals, community gardens, neighborhood trails, park signs, walking clubs, fitness classes, and walk-to-school clubs.

The Southside neighborhood previously won \$2,500 in funding from this program to create a neighborhood garden near their community center. According to Southside resident Scarlett Harrod, the City grant helped her neighborhood come together to create resident connections amongst themselves and their community center. "As the neighborhood continues to grow, the garden is a great focal point for working to get neighbors involved and learning about their food. The neighborhood was involved from the start on ideas for the grant as well as preparing the application. Throughout the process we worked to get individuals and groups involved on work days as well as smaller tasks that can be done at individual convenience. Our project is very visible and has become a natural topic of conversation whenever people pass by the center. Neighbors of all ages joined in during the garden work days, mural painting day, collection of photos, and celebration party held in July. Many people met each other for the first time during these group events," said Harrod.

Parkwood Village also previously won \$2,500 in funding from this program to improve their open space and create a neighborhood trail to educate their neighbors on native plant species and to encourage physical exercise. "The neighborhood has a path to walk from the townhouses to the pool or for a walking circuit with the pool road. Many people who never had walked down the pool road learned about the beauty that was on the pool road, discovered the pool, and now are enjoying the beauty of the Wiggly Trail and its environs," said Colleen Haithcock, a resident of Parkwood Village who led this project. "The property next to the pool has changed from a muddy, unattractive, and eroding swale to a native plant garden that includes identification of plants and placing plant species markers to make it useful for school classes or nature programs."

Selected projects must match the City funds awarded through volunteer labor, in-kind donations or cash donations. Neighborhood groups can visit the [department's webpage](#) to review the complete application guidelines. Applications are due Monday, April 30. For additional information contact the department's [Community Engagement](#) team at (919) 560-1647 or by [email](#).

About the City of Durham Neighborhood Improvement Services Department

The [Neighborhood Improvement Services Department](#) works to preserve and improve quality of life conditions for Durham residents, and to encourage active participation in neighborhood redevelopment and public policy and decision-making dialogue. The department is responsible for enforcement of quality of life ordinances and state statutes including the City's Fair Housing Ordinance; Minimum Housing Code; Nonresidential Code; Weedy Lot, Abandoned & Junk Vehicle ordinances; and the State of North Carolina's Unsafe Building Statute. The department's rapid responders, known as the Impact Team, remediate non-compliant housing properties; abate public nuisances, such as graffiti, illegal dumping, and abandoned shopping carts; and conduct neighborhood service projects. The department's Community Engagement staff provides outreach and education to Durham residents and community organizations. Guided by the City's [Strategic Plan](#), the department helps ensure that Durham has thriving, livable neighborhoods by providing the highest quality of services to engage and educate the community, eradicating blight, ensuring safer neighborhoods and enhancing neighborhood revitalization.

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