



***place matters* Neighborhood Mini-Grants Program**

Guidelines and Application

2009

Overview

Place matters is a regional initiative to support comprehensive community initiatives in Greater Cincinnati in three pilot neighborhoods, Covington, Avondale, and Price Hill. The initiative is funded by a collaborative of funders working in partnership with neighborhoods that are committed to creating solutions to critical issues and thus transforming their own communities. Funding partners include the City of Covington, the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, the Haile/US Bank Foundation, Chase, LISS of Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky, NeighborWorks America, PNC Bank, SC Ministry Foundation, and the United Way of Greater Cincinnati.

Place matters Covington is a comprehensive community development effort involving non-profit organizations, government, businesses, educational, and religious institutions and civic groups focused on achieving two community aspirations for transformational change.

1. Improve Covington's aging neighborhoods and housing stock.
2. Improve educational opportunities that lead to lifelong learning.

Neighborhood Mini Grants Program: Neighborhoods that have citizens who are actively involved in shaping the neighborhood's future are most likely to attract other people and investments to their community. The *place matters* Neighborhood Mini-Grants program provides funding that helps resident-driven neighborhood or civic groups engage more residents in their efforts and strengthen their organizations as they plan and complete community improvement projects. The program will be administered by the Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington.

Program Goal: To assist community groups organized by adult Covington residents improve the quality of life in their Covington neighborhood. All projects/activities must benefit and be open to the general public. Proposals for isolated projects/activities that do not benefit the neighborhood as a whole will not be considered.

Competitive mini-grants of up to \$2,000 may be awarded for projects or activities. No more than two applications may be submitted by any individual community group. In order to encourage resident-based groups to work together, two or more resident-based groups (ie: neighborhood associations, neighborhood watch, and so forth) which work together on a single project may

submit one grant application and request a maximum of \$4,000 for that joint project. Groups should not submit more than two applications.

Grants are available to fund the following types of projects and activities:

Community Enhancement: To assist and encourage neighborhood-based organizations in making improvement in public places. Livability of the neighborhood's streetscapes, parks, playgrounds, and gateways should be enhanced. Such projects/activities are generally highly visible.

Neighborhood Leadership and Capacity Building: To improve the capacity of neighborhood associations to address issues, improve conditions, and enhance the quality of life in the neighborhood. Projects that help an organization to recruit new members may include website and newsletter development, neighborhood-wide block parties, and educational programs.

Neighborhood Planning: To provide financial assistance to neighborhood organizations to help plan strategically for their future. Projects/activities that will be considered may include the preparation of neighborhood land use or community development plans. Such plans may cover an entire neighborhood, a sub-area of the neighborhood, or a neighborhood business district.

Grant Decisions

Grant decisions are made through a review process involving a Neighborhood Mini-Grants Advisory Committee made up of representatives from: the Center for Great Neighborhood of Covington, the City of Covington, place matters, and Friends of Covington. All applicants will receive notification if their proposal has been approved or not. Funding decisions will be made by May 15, 2009 and all grant funds must be expended by December 31, 2009.

Application Assistance

The Center for Great Neighborhoods will work with any resident-driven group to assist them in applying for these funds. If you have any questions about the process, please contact:

Rachel Hastings
Director of Neighborhood Housing Initiatives
1650 Russell Street
Covington, KY 41011
859-866-7527
rachel@greatneighborhoods.org

A mandatory workshop for grant applicants will be held on Wednesday, February 25 at 6:00 pm at the Center for Great Neighborhoods. During this session, we will also be evaluating rounds 1 and 2 of the mini-grant program.

Community groups may submit separate applications for no more than 2 projects. Completed applications must be typed or neatly handwritten. **Applications are due by 12:00 noon on Friday, April 17, 2009.** One copy of the application must be delivered to the Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington, 1650 Russell Street, Covington, KY 41011. Email or electronic submissions are encouraged.

Criteria

In general, projects that address multiple points of the criteria will receive the highest ratings. In addition, projects should be well-planned, feasible and able to be completed by December 31, 2009.

- Projects must be sponsored by an established neighborhood association, civic group, or other community-based resident association.
- The project encourages increased involvement of residents in neighborhood improvement activities, involves a wide diversity of participants (including youth), and clearly provides benefits to the entire neighborhood.
- The project has a clearly defined plan of action with measurable outcomes for success.
- Successful completion of the project helps build the organizational capacity of the neighborhood/civic group.
- The project is enjoyable, builds citizen leadership capacity, and provides opportunities to increase social connections between residents.
- The neighborhood matches the grant with investments of its own funds, other donations/grants, or other in-kind resources, such as sweat equity.
- The neighborhood group agrees to report its successes, lessons learned, photos and stories to *place matters* and other community groups.
- The proposal identifies how the project's outcomes will be sustained in the future.
- The project increases its impact by partnering with groups or organizations from other Covington neighborhoods.

Financial Management Workshop

Your project budget should specify how you plan to spend the money awarded. Up to \$2,000 is available per request through this program. All grant awards will be disbursed through the Center for Great Neighborhoods. The Center may write a check directly to your neighborhood organization's existing account for the full amount of your grant, or you may request that the Center act as your fiscal agent if your organization does not have an account. We will be holding a Financial Management Workshop in mid-May to further explain how to manage your grant.

Reporting Requirements

If you receive a grant through this program, you will be asked to submit a report form evaluating the project within 30 days of its completion, or no later than January 31, 2010. In addition, a Neighborhood Mini-Grants Program Advisory Committee member will contact you when the project is done to discuss the result. Please take photos! We want to document the creative ways neighbors are making their community a better place to live and share their stories with other neighborhoods and interested organizations.

Organization Information

Name of organization/group:

Contact Person for this project:

Mailing Address:

Street Address (if different from mailing address):

Phone (work): _____ Phone (home): _____

Best time to call: _____

Email: _____

Total Project Budget: \$ _____ Amount Requested: \$ _____

Project Name: _____

1) Please provide a project description, including a timeline:

2) How will this project benefit the community? Who will benefit?

3) Why are you doing this project?

4) What opportunities will there be for input from those who will participate in and benefit from the project?

5) Briefly describe your neighborhood group. (Include answers to the following questions: When was the group formed? What other activities/projects has the organization conducted? How many people are routinely active in your group's efforts)?

6) What are your plans to get more people involved in your association as a result of this project? How many new group members are you hoping to recruit as part of this project?

7) How will this project be sustained after funds from the mini grant are expended? How will you maintain the project?

8) If this project is a part of a larger project or plan, please explain the relationship and indicate the expectations for completion of the larger project:

9) Briefly describe your neighborhood. (Include answers to the following questions: What are the boundaries? What are its assets and challenges? How would you describe the quality of life in your neighborhood)?

10) What other funding sources or partnerships are you exploring to complete this project?

11) How will you know that your proposed project is successful? (What do you hope to accomplish? Briefly describe how you will measure success).

12) If your organization received a *place matters* mini-grant in the past, how will this project differ and/or build upon the results of the previously-funded project?

Budget

EXAMPLE	EXPENSE DESCRIPTION	MINI-GRANT FUNDS	VALUE OF DONATIONS	VALUE OF VOLUNTEER HOURS (# hours x \$10/hour)	TOTAL
	<i>Plant 10 street trees along High Street</i>	<i>\$200 (buy water, snacks, & lunch for volunteers)</i>	<i>\$1,000 (trees provided by City)</i> <i>\$200 (mulch provided by City)</i>	<i>25 volunteers x 4 hours x \$10/hr = \$1,000</i>	<i>\$2,400</i>
	TOTAL				

Certification

I hereby certify that the information included in this application is correct and represents the consensus of our organization.

Signature of Organization Chair

Date