

April 2017

Greetings Neighborhood Council and Community Assembly Grant applicants!

The following is meant to be a helpful resource to you as you put together your Community Engagement applications, **due May 15, 2017 to codeenforcement@spokanecity.org**.

We look forward to hearing your creative and thoughtful ideas about boosting engagement and participation in your neighborhood thereby strengthening our City!

An important area for your consideration in the application is at the bottom of the first page:

Grant Funds – These grant funds are for promoting the awareness of and participation in the Neighborhood council and Community Assembly programs. Applications for grant funding to for the neighborhood council must be submitted under one or more of the following categories for maximum of \$500.00:

(a) Please describe exact nature of your project include description, rationale and measurable outcome of the project that increased neighborhood council or community assembly engagement. (Please use the City's information to formulate your budget, including the City's vendor information.)

(b) How will you know the project impacted your neighborhood in a positive way?

Specifically, within this section, it is important to tie in the following language from the Guidelines section:

Performance Measures

As the City of Spokane provides the public funds for the grants, accountability to the public is required. Grant applications must include a plan to track performance of projects. Neighborhood Councils and Community Assembly Committee's will have to measure if their use of funds met the objectives of their programs. For example, if the goal of printing and distributing fliers is to increase participation at Neighborhood Council meetings, the council should have a plan to either have surveys for attendees asking how they heard about the meeting or at least collect sign in sheets before and after distributing fliers to see if attendance increased. Each Neighborhood Council or Committee is responsible for creating performance measures to submit with their application and tracking these measures over the life of the grant funded project(s). The Budget Committee will collect and analyze this information at the end of the year. This will help the Budget Committee and the Office of Neighborhood Services determine successful project types or best practices to fund in the next grant cycle. Future funding may be based on performance and best practices created through this grant.

The highlighted portion above is so important because it assumes a neighborhood has applied for printing fliers as a means of boosting community engagement. However, in the last section of the first page, the applicant would realize that they needed to explain why printing fliers is important for boosting community engagement and how they will measure their progress towards their goals. The highlighted portion above gives an example of language and a process that would meet the requirement for performance measures.

In general, when writing your application, keep in mind the following questions:

What is it we are trying to do?

How will we know we are on the right track?

How will we know we have achieved our goal?

Below you will find an example from the Rockwood Neighborhood Council of a project that was funded through this grant program last year and is currently being measured for successful community engagement:

What is it we are trying to do?

The Rockwood Neighborhood Council used last year's grant to purchase 250 Welcome Bags (reusable grocery bags) with the neighborhood logo and 250 neighborhood council brochures. The brochures contain information about our neighborhood, neighborhood council purpose, meeting times and location. We are using the bags and the brochures as part of a Welcome Packet for new people moving into the Rockwood neighborhood. The Welcome Packets are distributed in collaboration with local area realtors to acquaint new neighbors with local businesses, information about utilities and City services, in addition to the neighborhood council. To date, 38 have been distributed. We will continue to distribute them until they are gone.

How will we know we are on the right track?

Our Neighborhood Council chair has received calls thanking him for the packet and inquiring about meetings, however we have not noticed an increase in attendance. We are able to follow up with these calls and increase our roster/database and list of contacts. Additionally, we are able to measure and track each additional participant.

How will we know we have achieved our goal?

We can include a place for new members/attendees to note how they found out about our meeting/event on the sign-in sheets. Additionally, we can compare the time between when we ordered the bags and distribution progress to see whether this is an effective way for us to reach new members.