



The City of Bloomington's Department of Economic and Sustainable Development, in collaboration with the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS), is launching the 2023 Sustainable Neighborhoods grant program to provide financial support for small-scale neighborhood projects that enhance residential capacity to support Bloomington's community-wide climate action goals.

About the Program

The Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS) seeks to strengthen community progress toward sustainability by providing a small fund to spark neighborhood participation in achieving the goals of the Bloomington Climate Action Plan. The BCOS grant will highlight homeowner abilities to invest in meeting these communal goals, while also providing a practical source of funding to encourage them to take initial steps in doing so. All projects awarded this grant should encourage neighborhood adoption of sustainability practices in line with Bloomington Climate Action Plan (CAP) strategies. The maximum funding is for \$1000.

Qualifying Projects

Application criteria will evaluate projects that demonstrate environmental benefits that can be tied to one of the following identified CAP strategies:

- ***Transportation and Land Use:***
 - Strategy TL 1-I: Reduce citywide off-road and lawn equipment annual emissions to below 35,000 metric tons
- ***Energy and Built Environment:***
 - Strategy EB 2-B: Support and accelerate energy efficiency citywide.
- ***Waste Management:***
 - Strategy WM 1-A: Increase organics diversion by 40% of 2018 values
 - Strategy WM 1-B: Increase recyclables diversion by 35% of 2018 values
- ***Water and Wastewater:***

- Strategy W 1-A: Promote increased water conservation citywide
- Strategy W 1-B: Maintain and update city plans and standards in support of water conservation goals. See esp. W1-B-2
- Strategy W 4-B: Increase green infrastructure capacities citywide.
- **Local Food and Agriculture:**
 - Strategy FA 3-A: Increase local food supply.
- **Health and Safety:**
 - Strategy HS 2-A: Strengthen community response capacity and support networks.
- **Greenspace and Ecosystem Health:**
 - Strategy G 1-B: Improve the connectivity and functionality of greenspaces within the city.
 - Strategy G 2-B: Increase the use of native species and pollinator restoration areas.
 - Strategy G 3-B: Support and empower community partners, businesses, and residents in meeting tree canopy goals.
 - Strategy G 4-B: Increase water uptake capacity of greenspace.

Applicants will have the opportunity to provide a written proposal of their project, how it will benefit their neighborhood, and how the project supports the identified climate action goal(s). A few examples of projects that may qualify for a Sustainable Neighborhoods grant are listed below. This list is nonexhaustive.

Sample Project Ideas:

- Build a neighborhood community garden
- Planting native pollinator gardens
- Installing a neighborhood organics collection box for composting
- Updating energy efficiency of neighborhood assets
- Installing solar for neighborhood buildings
- Purchasing electric-powered lawn equipment for neighborhood upkeep
- Buy a group TerraCycling box
- Host an educational campaign with local experts on a selected sustainable topic, such as a weatherization DIY workshop, vehicle maintenance workshop, or sustainable landscaping workshop.
- Planting trees

How to Participate



SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT FLOWCHART



For any questions, please reach out to sustain@bloomington.in.gov
For more information, visit bloomington.in.gov/sustainability/sustainable-neighborhoods

1. Determine Eligibility

- The following groups are eligible to apply for the grant:
 - Group consisting of 4 neighborhood households with a designated liaison
 - Registered neighborhood association
 - Multifamily unit association
 - Civic or community service association
 - Education, ethnic, cultural or religious organization
 - Designated non-profit

Note: for-profit entities, individuals, government agencies/departments, non-place-based organizations, and schools are not eligible to apply

- Projects must occur within Bloomington city limits. Check the address of the desired project location at bloomington.in.gov/mybloomington.
- Cannot fund already completed projects
- No match required

2. Project Determination

Prior to applying, interested neighborhoods should identify a work together to determine a project that could benefit their neighborhood that they are interested in funding. Applications require a minimum of 4 households of any neighborhood to be aware of and interested in supporting the project in order to receive funding. After forming the project team, determine a neighborhood liaison who will function as the point of contact between the City staff and the project team. The neighborhood liaison should be the one to submit the application and will ultimately be responsible for handling funding management.

3. Project Application

Once the project team has determined their project and is ready to apply, they should work together to submit an application via the grant portal at www.cityofbloomington.smapply.io/. The application will require the following information:

- Project Team Information and Project Location
- Project Overview and Funding Request
- Project Narrative
- Project Deliverables
- CAP Alignment
- Project Timeline
- Project Budget
- Statement of Relevance
- Long-term Project Maintenance Plan (if relevant)

4. BCOS Application Review

Once, the application is submitted, City staff and BCOS members will work to confirm eligibility and conduct a thorough review of each element of the application to determine if the project supports the CAP and should be awarded funding, as well as to determine the appropriate funding amount based on application budget. The review can take up to 8 weeks and will utilize the following grant evaluation criteria:

- Meeting of eligibility requirements
- Well-developed, complete plan for project execution
- Attached to an identified strategy in the Bloomington Climate Action Plan

- Preference given to projects that can demonstrate a positive impact on diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as neighborhoods that are located in a Justice40 Census Tract.
- Application should demonstrate that benefits extend to the entire neighborhood
- Grant awardees will have up to one year to complete their project
- Follow-up is required one year after disbursement of funds
- Funds can be used for new projects or to expand or update existing projects, so long as the grant will enhance sustainability
- Funds can be used for a long-term project or one-time investment
- Funds **cannot** be used for operating or administrative expenses

5. Project Implementation + Grant Reimbursement

Once approved, project teams should begin the planning and implementation of their project. Approved projects must be completed within a year of application approval in order to maintain access to their funding. As grants are disbursed on a reimbursement basis, teams should maintain all records related to the financial investment in their projects including receipts, proposals, purchase orders, or contracts in order to provide proof of purchase to City staff.

Once completed, neighborhood liaisons will be asked to submit the proof of purchase, as well as additional proof of project completion (i.e. reports, photos, etc.) to City staff, along with their rebate agreement forms in order to receive the reimbursement.*

**Low income neighborhoods may reach out to City staff following project approval to request funding upfront rather than as a reimbursement. A self-attestation form will be required.*