



2025 Eastmorland Community Center Building Farewell Celebration

## 2026 Neighborhood Grant Program

The City of Madison Planning Division's Neighborhood Grant Program helps residents and groups that support neighborhoods to beautify gateways, create public gathering places, or build capacity and leadership skills. The grant program provides funding but neighbors' ideas, determination and pride are behind the most successful projects. The City expects to award \$25,000 in grants in 2026.

### Eligible Projects

Community Enhancement or Neighborhood Leadership and Capacity Building Projects that:

- Engage new and diverse communities
- Create/build community
- Increase community and neighborhood impact on public decisions and community life
- Are ready to begin within 1-3 months from award
- Are free and open to the public

### Eligible Applicants

Groups that serve a neighborhood or other defined geography such as:

- Small groups of 5 or more residents
- Neighborhood organizations and planning councils
- Non-profits and centers of worship
- Business associations and organizations engaged in community building and/or civic engagement activities

## How to Apply and Timeline

Project discussion with neighborhood and alderperson

Workshop 1/14, 5:30 p.m.  
virtual use QR code above OR  
5:30 p.m. 215 MMB, Rm 151

Project discussion with Planning staff and program guideline review

Application deadline  
2/10, 4:30 p.m.

Grant award announcement  
March 2026

Project completion by  
12/1/26

**Contact Us!** The City of Madison is committed to helping interested groups work through program requirements. If you have questions, please send an email to [neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com](mailto:neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com), or contact Linda Horvath at 608-267-1131, or Angela Puerta at 608-267-8739. Info also at: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/2023-neighborhood-grants/3739/>





2024 Bayview Foundation Hope Finds a Home Mural



2023 Emerson East Sign

## 2026 Grant Scoring Criteria

The Planning Division Staff Review Team uses the following criteria to score applications. Applications that are determined to adhere closely to the criteria will be more likely to achieve a high score.

### 1. Scope / Quality / Creativity / Project Readiness (0–50 points)

- The project has a well-defined scope, timeline, goals, detailed steps and measurable outcomes and will be completed by December 1, 2026.
- The project is highly creative.
- The leaders and have made a commitment to the project and set a tentative meeting schedule.
- Physical projects are highly visible and accessible to the public and there is a realistic plan and budget for ongoing maintenance.
- Public art is thoughtfully integrated into the project.
- The request is from a first time applicant.
- The neighborhood organization or other relevant groups approve of the project and supporting documentation is provided.
- The budget is well thought out and realistic and there is evidence of

contributions from a broad representation of neighborhood residents, businesses, and others.

- The project or activity involves a one-time expenditure.
- There are property owner letters of support which permit the project to occur on their land/premise.
- The applicant has no grants in progress from this program.

### 2. Community Benefit (0–25 points)

- The application is clear and specific on the issue(s) to be addressed and provides documentation of the problem(s).
- The proposal demonstrates a commitment to seek creative and workable solutions.
- The project will benefit people throughout the neighborhood.
- There is a well thought out plan for significant neighborhood and business community involvement in all project phases.

- Participants will actively include people of varying ages, ethnicities, races, and incomes.
- Residents will have the opportunity to take on leadership roles, develop new skills, and new leaders will emerge.

- The project will strengthen and/or build new partnerships with public/private entities or other community groups.

- There are letters of support, pledges of money and/or services, or other evidence of broad community support.

### 3. Consistency with City Policies and Adopted Plans (0–15 points)

- The project implements, or is a step in implementing, one or more recommendations of an adopted neighborhood plan.
- The project is clearly consistent with City policies.

### Grant program terms and contract requirements

- The City has sole discretion in determining whether applications are eligible, and if proposed projects meet program guidelines and criteria.
- If applicant is not a taxable entity, then a fiscal agent could be used like a community center, planning council, or foundation. City staff can help groups find fiscal agents.
- Grantees must sign a contract with the City by June 1, 2026 or risk forfeiting grant funds. If grantee is not using a fiscal agent and is not a taxable entity, the applicant must secure an EIN (Employer Identification Number) or TIN (Tax Identification Number from the IRS). City staff can assist.
- Projects that need permits prior to starting them include structures in public right of way, events on public land, and projects on private lands.
- Insurance may be required and City staff will help applicants determine insurance requirements.
- Projects must be free, accessible and welcoming to all. Grantees may not charge anyone to use or participate in the project.

### Receiving award and reimbursement

- Grantee must have a signed contract before beginning projects. If a fiscal agent is utilized, that entity must sign the contract in care of the organization that will do the project.
- Once a contract has been signed by all parties, 50% of grant award will be deposited into grantees' bank accounts. Grantees must submit proof of payment and deliverables to obtain the remaining 50% of grant.
- Grantees must submit a Final Report (see below) and remaining receipts/invoices to obtain the last 20% of the grant award.

### Reporting requirements

- Final Report – Grantees must submit a project evaluation and final report with three or more digital project photos to the Planning Division within 30 days of project completion, but no later than January 31, 2027. The city reserves the right to use grant pictures for future promotion or publications.

### Expenses not covered by grant funds

- Routine maintenance, on-going operating expenses (like salaries or publishing newsletters), replacement of existing items (unless it is a great enhancement over the existing).
- Playground equipment and other improvements on City owned or controlled lands that are elements of an ongoing City service or replacement cycle, and/or are typically part of another City agency's budget.
- Improvements to school-owned land and facilities, except where applicant proposes new and creative approaches.
- Direct social services like health clinics, food baskets, and emergency preparedness supplies.
- Direct grants, scholarships, or stipends to prepare grant applications.
- Facility rental, food, beverages, and entertainment like music and comedy (exception at staff discretion for capacity building projects where up to 50% of award can be used toward such expenses).
- Community gardening expenses (exception at staff discretion for capacity building projects).

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# Grant Application

Handwrite the application, complete it online, or submit a video of 10 minutes or less, via YouTube, that describes your project. Application deadline:

Monday, February 10, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

Applicant Organization	Project Name	
Contact Person	Address	Zip Code
Phone (daytime)	Email Address	

## 1. Project Scope

Describe the project and its creativity, followed by tasks, outcomes or products, responsible parties, and project completion date. **500 words or less (0–50 points)**. Attach additional materials like site plans, design drawings, photo examples, etc., or email to [neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com](mailto:neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com)

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## 2. Community Benefit and Neighborhood Participation

What issues will be addressed and what creative solutions are being proposed? How will you involve people of different ages, ethnicities, races, and incomes? How will residents take on leadership roles and/or develop new skills? Will new partnerships be created with other neighborhoods, community-based groups, and/or private entities? **200 words or less (0–35 points)**

## 3. Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies

Describe how this project will implement recommendations from an adopted plan, and how it is consistent with City policies. Send an email to [neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com](mailto:neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com) for assistance. **150 words or less (0–15 points)**

## 4. Budget

Neighborhood Grant Request:\_\_\_\_\_

Describe Budget Items	I.D. Fund Source: Neighborhood Grant, Neighborhood Organization, Business, Other	Calculate Total
1.		\$
2.		\$
3.		\$
4.		\$
Total:		\$

## Program Understanding

I have read the Grant Program Guidelines, and this application adheres to the requirements therein:

Applicant Signature	Name and Organization
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Nondiscrimination Based on Disability: Applicant shall comply with Section 39.05 Madison General Ordinances, Nondiscrimination Based on Disability in City-Assisted Programs and Activities. Under section 39.05(7) of the Madison General Ordinances, no City financial assistance shall be granted unless an Assurance of Compliance with Sec. 39.05 is provided by the applicant or recipient, prior to the granting of the City financial assistance. Applicant hereby makes the following assurances: Applicant assures and certifies that it will comply with section 39.05 of the Madison General Ordinances, entitled, "Nondiscrimination Based on Disability in City Facilities and City-Assisted Programs and Activities," and agrees to ensure that any subcontractor who performs any part of this agreement complies with sec 39.05, where applicable, including all actions prohibited under section 39.05(4), MGO."

2020 Ujaamaa Business Association