

CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM

DEPARTMENT: Community & Human Development

AGENDA DATE: May 19, 2009 (REVISED)

CONTACT PERSON/PHONE: William Lilly, 541-4241

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: All

SUBJECT:

That Mayor and Council approve a resolution adopting the Neighborhood Improvement Program Round III Guidelines.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

The Neighborhood Improvement Program is part of the overall Capital Budget that was approved by City Council in 2006. This program's total budget is \$450,000 with \$50,625 allocated to each district and the \$45,000 be allocated for project design and administration. On April 17, 2007, August 27, 2007 and April 15, 2008 City Council approved the first round and second round of Neighborhood Improvement Program projects. Approximately \$450,000 of the funds in the Capital Budget have been reprogrammed and designated for the Neighborhood Improvement Program are available for a third round of Neighborhood Improvement Program funding for eligible public improvement projects.

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

The Neighborhood Improvement Program projects were approved on April 17, 2007.
Correction to the Neighborhood Improvement Program projects were approved August 27, 2007.
The Neighborhood Improvement Program Round II projects were approved on April 15, 2008

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

The Neighborhood Improvement Program is part of the 2006 Capital Budget.
Project: PCP06NA001
Fund: 27263
Account: 508027
Dept. Id.: 99331117

BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:

Enter appropriate comments or N/A

*****REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION*****

LEGAL: (if required) _____

FINANCE: (if required) _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD: _____

Anthony C. Shear for W. Lilly

(Example: if RCA is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)
Information copy to appropriate Deputy City Manager

APPROVED FOR AGENDA: _____

CITY MANAGER: _____

DATE: _____

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, in 2006 the City Council approved the Capital Budget, which included funding for the Neighborhood Improvement Program;

WHEREAS, the Neighborhood Improvement Program was categorized as a Priority Program, in which the requested projects from Recognized Neighborhood Associations must be for permanent public improvements that benefit all neighborhood residents and the general public at large; and

WHEREAS, the Program’s initial budget was \$1,000,000.00; however, these funds were to be apportioned equally among El Paso’s eight Representative Districts, with each District being allocated \$125,000.00 of available Neighborhood Improvement Program funds; and

WHEREAS, in 2007 and 2008, City Council approved the Neighborhood Improvement Projects for the first round and second round of Neighborhood Improvement Program funding and directed the City Manager or designee to proceed with allocation of the funds from the Capital Budget for the approved Neighborhood Improvement Projects; and

WHEREAS, approximately \$450,000.00 of the funds in the Capital Budget have been reprogrammed and re-designated for the Neighborhood Improvement Program and are available for a third round of Neighborhood Improvement Program funding for eligible public improvement projects and program administration costs; and

WHEREAS, the Community and Human Development Director and Neighborhood Services Division staff recommend adoption of Neighborhood Improvement Program Guidelines for the Round III funding cycle with project funding to be apportioned equally among the Representative Districts.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

That City Council hereby adopts the Neighborhood Improvement Program Guide Round III, attached hereto as Exhibit “A” and incorporated herein.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2009.

THE CITY OF EL PASO

John F. Cook,
Mayor

(Signatures Continue on Following Page)

ATTEST:

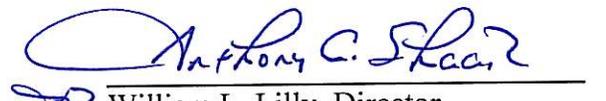
Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Marie A. Taylor
Assistant City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



William L. Lilly, Director
Community and Human Development

Exhibit "A"

NEIGHBORHOOD

EL PASO

City of El Paso

Neighborhood Improvement Program

Round III Guidelines



Acknowledgments

City Council

John Cook,	Mayor
Ann Morgan Lilly	District 1
Susie Byrd	District 2
Emma Acosta	District 3
Melina Castro	District 4
Rachel Quintana	District 5
Eddie Holguin Jr	District 6
Steve Ortega	District 7
Beto O'Rourke	District 8

City Manager

Joyce A. Wilson	City Manager
Debbie Hamlyn	Deputy City Manager—Quality of Life
Pat Adauto	Deputy City Manager—Development Services

Neighborhood Improvement Review Committee (NIRC)

Representatives from the following City Departments

Community & Human Development
Development Services Department
Engineering Department
Parks and Recreation Department
Street Department



Introduction

The **Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP)** is part of the overall Capital Budget that was approved by City Council in 2006. This program is categorized as a Priority Program where the requested projects must be for “permanent public improvements”. A “permanent public improvement” is defined as an improvement that must be on city-owned property or if another government entity is involved, the City of El Paso must have a legal interest in the property and the useful life of the improvement must be at least 20 years. Under this program, funding is made available to implement public improvement projects proposed in El Paso neighborhoods that are planned and requested by their respective Recognized Neighborhood Associations. Round III total budget is \$450,000; however, these funds have been apportioned equally among El Paso’s eight Representative Districts; consequently, each Representative District has been allocated \$50,000. Individual Neighborhood Improvement Projects, however, cannot exceed \$50,000 of NIP funds. For neighborhoods that fall between two or more representative districts, the total cost of the project will be equally divided among the districts the neighborhood is geographically located in.

This program is designed to accomplish the following goals:

- To encourage El Paso’s neighborhoods to work in partnership with the city to resolve problems and/or concerns, and to work together to enhance the quality of life throughout the community.
- To empower neighborhoods to plan and work together in a dynamic fashion to accomplish neighborhood-based goals and objectives.
- To provide El Paso’s neighborhoods with the opportunity to make improvements and/or enhancements to ensure their long-term viability.

The NIP is a vital element of the city’s ongoing effort to preserve and improve El Paso’s residential neighborhoods. Undoubtedly, the NIP is an essential component of the city’s efforts to initiate public reinvestment in neighborhoods throughout the city of El Paso.

City Council has approved funding for specific types of neighborhood improvement projects; such as, entryway markers (provided they are placed on public property), public park improvements, enhanced landscaping in public areas, etc. Neighborhoods may be eligible to submit request applications funds of up to \$50,000 for public improvement projects. All NIP project requests must be submitted by the neighborhood’s Recognized Neighborhood Association (RNA). However, in such case where a neighborhood is not represented by a RNA, the neighborhood residents, upon reaching consensus, may request that a NIP proposal be submitted by the representing Civic Association. According to Chapter 2.102 (Neighborhood Recognition Ordinance), a civic association “means any organized group of 100 or more individuals or entities that own, reside, or have a place of business in one of the five planning areas designated as such in *The Plan for El Paso*.” Where there is no civic association present a RNA with Civic Association status may apply on their behalf. Please note: If no Recognized Civic Associations exists in a given planning area a neighborhood would need to become recognized by the city to apply for NIP funds.

If funds remain after Round III projects have been selected, the \$50,000 max will be waived and the City Manager or her designee is directed to work with the District Representatives how have remaining NIP funds to identify eligible public improvements under the program in conjunction with sponsorship of a RNA or Civic Association.



Qualifying Threshold

The NIP proposal process will have two phases; Pre-Application and Final Application.

NIP Pre-Applications will be reviewed by the Neighborhood Improvement Review Committee (NIRC,) in order to determine eligibility and feasibility of the proposed project. In order to be eligible to compete for a portion of these funds; **the proposal, the recognized neighborhood and/or civic association must meet the following:**

- Be in compliance with the City of El Paso's Neighborhood Recognition Ordinance, Chapter 2.102;
- Age of neighborhood must be greater than 10 years (age of neighborhood is determined by date of plat recording) and be within a neighborhood boundary as defined by The City of El Paso's Neighborhood Boundary Map;*
- Provide evidence that demonstrates reasonable efforts were made to allow all neighborhood residents to participate in proposal process;
- Identify an eligible project that results in a "permanent public improvement" that benefits all neighborhood residents and the general public;

* Projects proposed within Neighborhood Revitalization Areas **are not eligible.**

Approved NIP Pre-Applications will be invited to submit a final application which will be reviewed by the NIRC.

For more information, please contact:

Neighborhood Services Division; 2nd Floor
Community and Human Development Department
City of El Paso
2 Civic Center Plaza
El Paso, TX 79901
(915) 541-4643



REVIEW CRITERIA

Once NIP Final Application is submitted, the actual review and evaluation of all applications will be conducted by members of the Neighborhood Improvement Review Committee. The Committee will “score” all NIP proposals based on the following criteria.

Funding Amount: Since the City of El Paso’s effort is to preserve and improve as many of El Paso’s residential neighborhoods as possible, funding requests under \$19,999 will receive higher priority. Projects ranging from \$20,000 to \$29,999 will be next, \$30,000 to \$39,999 will follow, and finally those projects that are between \$40,000 to \$50,000.

Neighborhood Support: Is the project supported by a majority of the residents of the neighborhood? Projects that demonstrate a high level of neighborhood support will be ranked higher than those with low levels of neighborhood commitment. Neighborhood residents should be asked for their input on the project. Applicants are urged to conduct a neighborhood meeting or use door-to-door ballots to determine what level of neighborhood support exists for the project. The result of this effort must be part of a completed application to ensure that the “democratic process” was utilized. All residents within a neighborhood’s defined boundary, as defined by the City of El Paso’s neighborhood boundary map, should be surveyed.

Age: How old is the neighborhood? Neighborhoods which are 40 years or older are the program’s top priority, followed by the neighborhoods that are 30 to 39 years old, then those that are between 20 to 29 years old and then those that are between 10 to 19.

Quality of Life: Will the project enhance the neighborhood aesthetic or promote neighborhood fellowship and improve quality of life?

Partnership Factor: Has the neighborhood provided matching funds in its proposal? Projects that promote the neighborhood partnership commitment by including partial funding may be given greater consideration than those that do not.

Percentage of Neighborhood Benefit: Will the project benefit a significant percentage of neighborhood residents? Requests that benefit a small number of residents may not be reviewed as favorably.

Ongoing Maintenance: If there is long-term maintenance associated with the proposed project. Projects that do not require ongoing operating and maintenance are a program priority. Projects that require maintenance must indicate how maintenance issues will be addressed as part of the application.



THE NINE-STEP PROCESS TO PREPARING A NIP PROPOSAL

The actual planning and preparation of your neighborhood's NIP proposal can be a challenging and rewarding experience. Although there are many different strategies to submitting a proposal, what follows are some basic "pointers" to help you and your neighbors plan and submit a great Neighborhood Improvement proposal.

Step 1: The Neighborhood Meeting

What: You should organize and conduct a neighborhood meeting to measure support in your neighborhood to apply for funds. At this meeting you should determine who is willing to help and can volunteer the time necessary to successfully complete the NIP Pre-application and Final Application, should your association be invited to submit one. You are encouraged to meet with Neighborhood Services to discuss your general ideas for possible NIP projects.

Why: Neighborhood support for your funding request is extremely important to the Neighborhood Improvement Review Committee when reviewing your proposal. The sooner the neighborhood can begin working together, the more effectively organized it will become.



THE NINE-STEP PROCESS TO PREPARING A NIP PROPOSAL

Step 2: The Neighborhood Survey

What: Your neighborhood should consider conducting a neighborhood survey to gather information on neighborhood needs and project ideas. Depending on the size of your neighborhood and the survey instrument you utilize, this process can take several weeks to complete. Survey instruments that you may want to consider include: asking questions door-to-door, circulating support petitions, mailing out surveys, etc.

Why: Conducting a neighborhood survey can provide you with answers to two of the seven evaluating criteria used by the NIRC when reviewing NIP applications. The first criterion is Partnership Factor - you can determine if your neighborhood is willing to offer matching funds to improve the neighborhood. The second criterion is Neighborhood Support - once you complete and prioritize your survey results, it can help you determine how many of your neighbors are in support of the proposed project.



THE NINE-STEP PROCESS TO PREPARING A NIP PROPOSAL (cont.)

Step 3: Is your project feasible?

What: Once your list of possible enhancement projects is identified, contact Neighborhood Services to discuss project feasibility. A sample of eligible NIP projects is listed below, as well as ineligible NIP projects. The project team **is required to** meet with Neighborhood Services staff to seek assistance in planning for your proposed project.

Why: The Neighborhood Services office can assist your neighborhood in identifying initial technical concerns or maintenance issues that may arise from your Neighborhood Improvement proposal.

The sooner the neighborhood can begin working together, the more effectively organized it will become.

Sample of Eligible NIP Projects

- ◆ Refurbish or enhance playground equipment
- ◆ Modular fitness equipment
- ◆ Park name sign
- ◆ Refurbishing park hard courts
- ◆ Neighborhood entry way sign
- ◆ Park furnishings (tables, benches, trash receptacles)
- ◆ Public Art
- ◆ Playground canopy
- ◆ Jogging/pedestrian walkway

Ineligible NIP Projects

- ◆ Purchase of land
- ◆ Resurfacing streets
- ◆ Repairing pot holes paving alleys
- ◆ Cleaning streets, alleys or drainage canals
- ◆ Repair and/or installation of sidewalks on public right of way external to parks.
- ◆ Installation of residential street lighting
- ◆ Drainage improvements
- ◆ Electrical or mechanical systems (except small modification due to an eligible project)
- ◆ Landscaping



THE NINE-STEP PROCESS TO PREPARING A NIP PROPOSAL (cont.)

Step 4: Submit Pre-Application to Neighborhood Services.

What: Fill in with as much detail the Pre-Application for the review and evaluation of your NIP proposal. Your NIP Pre-Application is due to the Neighborhood Services Section April 24, 2009 by 5:00 PM. It may be mailed, hand delivered or faxed to . . .

Attn: Neighborhood Improvement Program
Neighborhood Services Division; 2nd Floor
Community and Human Development Department
City of El Paso
2 Civic Center Plaza; 2nd Floor
El Paso, TX 79901
FAX 915-541-4893

Why: The Pre-Application will help the City Staff better assess the feasibility of projects and improve the timetable for implementing selected NIP proposals.

Step 5: Receipt of Acceptance letter.

What: Receipt of an acceptance letter is your invitation to complete the application process. The letter will detail any concerns over the proposed project that should be addressed in the Final Application. Please continue to work with Neighborhood Services to address questions or areas of concern.

Why: The Neighborhood Review Committee and City staff have reviewed your proposal and it satisfies the criteria outlined by the NIP Guidelines.

If your proposal was not accepted.

This decision of the NIRC is final. Whenever possible letters of denial will include follow up information that might be able to assist in addressing the neighborhood issue your proposal hoped to address.



THE NINE-STEP PROCESS TO PREPARING A NIP PROPOSAL (cont.)

Step 6: Begin preparing the NIP application.

What: After meeting with Neighborhood Services and identifying project team members with individual responsibilities (i.e. taking photos and/or sketching plans; confirming any neighborhood pledge donations for the project, etc.), you should be ready to begin work on the written portion of your application. Obtaining a cost estimate from City Engineering Department will be the responsibility of Neighborhood Services Staff .

Why: Beginning to work on your application early will allow you plenty of time to make sure you answer the grant application questions thoroughly and ensure that all back-up documentation is complete.



THE NINE-STEP PROCESS TO PREPARING AN NIP PROPOSAL (cont.)

Step 7: Review of draft application with Neighborhood Services.

What: After completing the draft of your proposal, consider reviewing it with the staff of Neighborhood Services.

Why: Neighborhood Services can review your proposed application and offer editing tips and ensure it is complete and ready for submission to the NIRC.

Step 8: Final draft and neighborhood review.

What: Once you have completed your final draft and assembled all necessary attachments, ask your neighborhood project team to review the final application.

Why: A final review will ensure your application is complete

Step 9: Turn in application by May 29, 2009.

Attn: Neighborhood Improvement Program
Neighborhood Services Division; 2nd Floor
Community and Human Development Department
City of El Paso
2 Civic Center Plaza; 2nd Floor
El Paso, TX 79901
FAX 915-541-4893



Appendix A- NIP Scorecard

NIP SCORECARD

Project Description:

Funding Amount	Points	Points Received	Total (30 points max)
under \$19,999	30		
\$20,000 - \$29,999	10		
\$30,000 - \$39,999	5		
\$40,000 - \$50,000	3		

Neighborhood Support	Points	Points Received	Total (20 points max)
0-99 residents support project	0		
100-199	5		
200-299	10		
300-399	15		
400+	20		
If more than 50% of neighborhood households indicate support for the project, 25 points will be awarded.			

Age	Points	Points Received	Total (20 points max)
10-19 years old	5		
20-29 years old	10		
30-39 years old	15		
40+ years old	20		

Quality of Life	Points	Points Received	Total (10 points max)
Project has aesthetic value	2		
Project increases resident fellowship/pride	2		
Project increases neighborhood safety	2		
Project improves neighborhood health	2		
Project enhances youth activities	2		

Partnership Factor	Points	Points Received	Total (10 points max)
5% contribution to total cost of project	10		

Neighborhood Benefit	Points	Points Received	Total (5 points max)
5 x "% of households benefited by project"	up to 5		

Ongoing Maintenance	Points	Points Received	Total (5 points max)
No maintenance required	5		
Maintained in partnership with Association	2		
Maintained by City of El Paso	0		

TOTAL POINTS	Max Points	Points received	TOTAL
FUNDING AMOUNT	30		
NEIGHBORHOOD SUPPORT	20		
AGE	20		
QUALITY OF LIFE	10		
PARTNERSHIP FACTOR	10		
NEIGHBORHOOD BENEFIT	5		
ONGOING MAINTENANCE	5		



Appendix B– Available Funds NIP Round III

District 1-	\$50,625
District 2-	\$50,625
District 3-	\$50,625
District 4-	\$50,625
District 5-	\$50,625
District 6-	\$50,625
District 7-	\$50,625
District 8-	\$50,625
TOTAL:	\$405,000

