

The basic premise of the MVP Grants is to improve the quality of life in Ocoee by assisting Ocoee residents and organizations in making improvements to their neighborhoods or creating programs which benefit our citizens. Financial grants of up to \$2,000 are made to qualified organizations. The grant cycles opens each November.

Applicants may submit projects which beautify a neighborhood, address public safety concerns, or foster cultural, recreational, or educational wants and needs of the neighborhood or organization. Applications are judged on how well they meet the criteria, the amount of involvement from the neighborhood or organization, whether they have a partner or partners to contribute to the project, and the feasibility of the project.

Applicants should try to match the City's contribution with a combination of cash, in-kind donations of goods and services, and volunteer time. The value of the applicant's contribution should in most cases, be equal to or greater than the City's grant.

The City is highly supportive of neighborhoods who have organized themselves with or without benefit of a legal homeowners' association. The City also knows the importance of other community organizations. The City Commission is hopeful that this MVP Grants Program will empower neighborhoods and community organizations to take advantage and take responsibility for planning and implementing projects that address their specific needs. These groups are encouraged to partner with other neighborhoods, local businesses, churches, and

Project Categories (with examples of possible projects)

Educational, Cultural, and Recreational Projects



- Literacy Programs
- Computer Labs
- Family Learning Centers
- Youth Athletic Leagues
- After School Enrichment Programs
- Dance, Music, Art, or Theater Training Programs

Physical Improvements Projects



- Playground Equipment
- Neighborhood Beautification
- Neighborhood Identification
- Improved Lighting
- Benches and other Park Improvements

All physical improvement projects must meet all City Codes and are subject to City review and permitting procedures. Exact site location with the size and measurements of the proposed improvement must be submitted in detail with the application.

Public Safety Related Projects



- Family Safety Training
- Neighborhood Watch Programs
- Drug Prevention Programs
- Fire Prevention Programs
- Senior Citizen Home Safety Programs

Eligible Neighborhoods/Organizations

Neighborhoods, civic clubs, religious groups, and other organizations may apply as long as they can demonstrate that their project provides a benefit to the community. These groups should be located in Ocoee and serve the Ocoee community.

Eligible Projects

Projects should benefit a certain segment of the population in Ocoee whether it be a neighborhood or other group. Neighborhood residents or organization members should be directly involved in all phases. Projects should be completed within six months of funding. Grant funds may **not** be used to supplement regular operating budgets.



For additional information on the MVP Grant Program, please contact:

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Ocoee's

Most

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Partnership

Grants



The City of Ocoee's
Neighborhood
Matching Grants
Program

Grant Amount and Application Match



MVP Grants are matching grants. The match is generated by a combination of the following three sources:

- **Volunteer hours from the applicant**

To ensure applicant involvement, at least 25 percent but not more than 50 percent, of the matching amount should be volunteer hours from residents who reside in the defined neighborhood or organization members. Volunteer labor is valued at \$10 per hour for the purpose of calculating the match. Volunteer Hours Pledge Sheets are required for itemizing volunteer time commitments.

- **In-Kind Donations**

These donations include supplies, equipment, space or professional services. The dollar value is based upon the reasonable and customary value of the item or services rendered. A letter from the donor is required describing each donation and the proposed market value.

- **Cash Donations**

These may be from the applicant, partners, or other contributors.

- **Community Partners**

Applicants are responsible for recruiting partners to meet the match for MVP Grant

funds. Partners are an important component of the program. They provide cash, in-kind services, supplies and/or space to support a successful project. They may also benefit directly or indirectly from the project. A letter of intent must be included for every partner recruited and attached to the grant application to verify the applicant match.



Group Awarded MVP Program Grants

Each recipient is encouraged to have a kick-off event to publicize the project and to recruit additional neighborhood/organization involvement. Groups are encouraged to invite residents, community partners, and the City Commission.

In order to document each phase of the project, grant recipients should provide color photos, newsletter articles, newspaper clippings, etc. These will be used to highlight the projects in various publications.

Once the grant is awarded, there are standardized Monthly and Final Report forms which the grant recipients must complete. Corresponding receipts, invoices and other paperwork must accompany the forms to provide a complete financial accounting.

The MVP Grant program is designed to provide a one-time grant for projects that can be completed within the grant period. Any pro-

grams designed to be ongoing need to identify other funding sources to continue the program after the first year. Applications may be submitted for phased projects; however, each phase must be such that it can stand on its own since funds can not be guaranteed for subsequent years.

Grant Application Guidelines and Requirements

Besides being an eligible neighborhood/organization and having an eligible project, applicants must have the support of their general membership. For formal associations or organizations, this means a vote to approve



the grant application before submitting it. Minutes reflecting the vote must accompany the application as well as incorporation papers. For groups who are not formally organized, a petition is required with

two-thirds of the homeowners/organization members signing in approval of the project.

The applicant must create a Project Team consisting of at least seven (7) members. The purpose of this team is to plan, manage, and ensure the project's completion if awarded a grant.

The team must have a Project Leader and should have an Historian, Report Coordinator, and a Partner/Volunteer Coordinator. The Project Leader serves as the chairman of the team. The Historian is responsible for ensuring that photographs are taken to

describe the project from beginning to end. The Report Coordinator completes monthly and final reports under the direction and assistance of the Project Team. The Partner/Volunteer Coordinator makes sure that the partners are invited to project activities and kept informed of progress, and keeps track of partner in-kind services and project volunteer hours. Other team members may include “work day” managers or research people.

