



Neighborhood Spruce-Up Grant Program 2020 Overview

The Southeast CDC

Southeast Community Development Corporation was founded in 1975. We practice a comprehensive and collaborative approach to community development by partnering with residents through investments in home renovation, new business development, community schools, neighborhood volunteerism, and leadership development. We offer full-service housing counseling including pre-purchase, foreclosure prevention, financial coaching, and reverse mortgage counseling in both English and Spanish. We manage the Healthy Neighborhoods loan program, which offers incentives for buying and renovating homes and have Community School Coordinators in three public schools.

Program Overview

Southeast CDC's Neighborhood Spruce-Up Grant program funds meaningful, long-lasting, neighborhood-driven public space improvements in Southeast and East Baltimore communities. These projects aim to raise the quality of life, facilitate grassroots engagement and ownership of neighborhood spaces, improve personal safety and streetscape appeal, and/or enhance the quality of the environment around schools.

This program is made possible thanks to the generous support of the Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative of the State of Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development (MD DHCD).

Timeline

Public workshop	Saturday, February 22, 2020
Letter of Intent due by midnight to molly@southeastcdc.org	Sunday, March 29, 2020
Notification of invitation to apply to eligible applicants	Friday, April 10, 2020
Full applications due by noon	Monday, May 18, 2020
<i>Applications reviewed by review team and funders</i>	May 19 – June 29, 2020
Awards announcement!	Monday, July 6, 2020
Signed grant agreements due , project period begins	Monday, July 13, 2020
Quarter 1 report due	Sunday, September 13, 2020
Quarter 2 report due	Sunday, December 13, 2020
Quarter 3 report due	Sunday, March 14, 2021
<i>Project period ends, all funding must be spent</i>	Sunday, June 13, 2021
Final report due	By Sunday, July 12, 2021

Eligible Applicants

Individuals and non-profits working on projects in the following communities: Armistead Gardens, Baltimore Highlands, Bayview, Broening Manor, Butchers Hill, CARE, Ellwood Park/Monument, Fell's Point, Graceland Park, Greektown, Highlandtown, Jonestown, Kresson, Little Italy, Madison-Eastend, McElderry Park, Medford, Middle East, Milton-Montford, O'Donnell Heights, Orangeville, Patterson Park, Patterson Place, Perkins Homes, Saint Helena, Upper Fell's Point, Washington Hill.

The applicant must have a 501(c)(3) designation, or use a 501(c)(3) as a fiscal agent.

Examples of Potential Spruce-Up Projects

- Creating and installing gateways and signage.
- Streetscaping and pedestrian lighting along key corridors.
- Facilitating the transformation of vacant lots.
- Activating and improving underutilized or "unfriendly" public spaces like plazas, bus stops, or school grounds.
- Creating and implementing public art projects.

Projects must connect directly to a community's master plan or neighborhood goals. Projects must include direct engagement with neighbors or other potential users; proof of local community support is required.

Letter of Intent

Please submit a one to two page letter that includes the following information:

- Applicant background
- Project idea and connection to community conditions
- What you hope to achieve with your project
- Potential partners
- Other funding being pursued, if applicable
- Brief description of applicant's connection to the project and ability to execute the project
- Amount of funding requested and general project budget, broken down by category
- Estimated project timeline
- Copy of 501c3 letter (of primary organization or of fiscal sponsor)

Application Process

Applicants will be invited to submit a full application based on the strength of your Letter of Intent; **eligible applicants will receive a template to work from.** Applications must include:

- A project description
- Description of the community need the project is aiming to address

- Evidence of support for the project from impacted stakeholders (such as neighborhood associations, schools, churches, or local businesses); evidence could include letters of support or petitions
- Project scope (specific description of what will be accomplished by the project)
- Description of applicant's connection to the project and ability to execute the project
- Project budget with uses and funding sources, including proof of outside funding commitments, if applicable
- Detailed timeline
- Pictures of existing conditions
- Conceptual drawings or renderings of final project, if applicable
- Evidence of site control/access and permits to implement the project

The applications will be reviewed by a committee of stakeholders including community residents and professional designers, public artists, and landscape architects. Once the grant review committee has made its final decisions, we will notify all applicants and publicly announce those projects that were awarded funding and the funding amounts. In some cases, we will award less money than was requested where we identify opportunities for savings or specific challenges with implementation.

Financial Guidelines

Spruce-Up funds can cover capital costs only, including:

- materials like paint, benches, plants, and trees
- design and installation labor
- permitting fees for installation

Spruce-Up funds cannot support operating costs, such as:

- staff time
- youth stipends
- permits for events
- conceptual design drawings

Funds cannot be used on any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office or the lobbying of governmental action, for religious purposes, or in any capacity that excludes any persons.

The size of grant awards typically range from \$7,500 to \$20,000. Southeast CDC can pay vendors directly or reimburse neighbors after purchases are made. Please know that it can take up to 45 days for our organization to process a check request.

Awardees must save all receipts and submit them to Southeast CDC as proof of payment using a "Request for Payment" form. Only expenses outlined in the approved budget will be reimbursed,

starting on the day of the funding period. Any funds not used by the deadline may be forfeited to MD DHCD.

Matching funds and in-kind donations can be used for any types of expenses, as designated by the donor. Proposals that include committed matching funds will receive priority in the grant review process, but there is no specific minimum or maximum matching amount that is required.

Monitoring and Reporting

Grant awardees submit quarterly project updates; Southeast CDC will provide a reporting template and outline the reporting schedule in the grant agreement. The reports allows SECD to monitor the progress of each of the projects ensuring that each project is on track and enable our staff to help problem solve issues that arise during the implementation process.

Promotion and Visibility

Projects must include a “marketing plan” that promotes the project to the community. Depending on the scale of the project, this could include regular social media postings on community Facebook groups, inclusion in a community newsletter, creating posters or flyers to share the project steps with nearby neighbors, or hosting events at the project site. We encourage project partners to mention or tag Southeast CDC in public postings about the projects; we will provide our logo for publications.

All sites will receive a Spruce-Up yard sign that includes funders’ logos and information about the program to display on site. Southeast CDC hopes to plan a summer tour of Southeast Baltimore Spruce-Up sites, which may include a stop to your site! We will be in touch at least one month in advance to notify you of the tour schedule. Partners are expected to tidy their site before the tour and are encouraged to participate, if possible.

Permits and permissions

Some projects may include work that requires City of Baltimore review; this is relevant for projects on City-owned land, or projects that require construction permits. Please account for City review in your proposal and timeline.

Because this project is funded by the State of Maryland, all projects are subjected to review by the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT). MHT examines proposals to ensure they are consistent with the historical design of the site and is primarily concerned with projects that involve physical changes to buildings, such as installing lighting or murals. This review may take up to 30 days and is incorporated in the project review timeline and coordinated by SECD.

*Please direct all program communications, including Letters of Intent and applications, to Molly McCullagh at molly@southeastcdc.org.
Feel free to call with any questions – 410-342-3234 x 35.*