



## Community Grant Program

### Abstract

The City of North Chicago Community Grant Program is designed to support nonprofits engaged in community-based initiatives that provide and expand public services which enhance quality of life, strengthen community engagement, and address the social, economic, and cultural needs of North Chicago residents. This program provides funding for innovative projects that advance city priorities, promote equity, build neighborhood pride, and foster long-term community resilience.

Gregory Jackson, Chief of Staff  
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## Community Grant Program

# City of North Chicago Community Grant Program

## 1. Program Overview

The City of North Chicago Community Grant Program is designed to support nonprofits engaged in community-based initiatives that provide and expand public services which enhance quality of life, strengthen community engagement, and address the social, economic, and cultural needs of North Chicago residents.

This program provides funding for innovative projects that advance city priorities, promote equity, build neighborhood pride, and foster long-term community resilience.

## 2. Program Goals

**The Community Grant Program aims to:**

- a. Support Community Development: Encourage projects that improve public spaces, expand public services, or enhance neighborhood vitality.
- b. Promote Health, Safety & Well-Being: Fund initiatives that support public health, youth programs, senior services, food access, and community safety.
- c. Enhance Civic Participation & Collaboration: Strengthen partnerships among residents, community organizations, local businesses, and municipal departments.
- d. Foster Arts, Culture, & Education: Support cultural programming, educational workshops, events, and creative placemaking efforts.
- e. Advance Equity & Opportunity: Prioritize projects serving underserved populations and reducing structural barriers.

## 3. Eligible Applicants

**Eligible applicants include:**

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations
- Local schools or educational programs
- Small local businesses partnering on community-serving initiatives

## 4. Eligible Project Types

**Funding may be used for community-benefit initiatives that advance the Program Goals described herein. Without limiting the generality of foregoing, some categories of eligible projects may include:**

- Youth development programs
- Senior support and wellness initiatives
- Food distribution, community gardens, or nutrition programs



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- Public safety and violence prevention activities
- Job readiness, workforce training, or financial empowerment workshops
- Arts, cultural, and heritage programming
- Beautification projects, murals, or neighborhood clean-ups
- Community events, festivals, and resource fairs
- Technology access programs
- Mental health awareness and support services

### 5. Grant Amounts

- Mini-Grants: Up to \$500 for small, short-term, or pilot projects
- Standard Community Grants: Up to \$1,000 for larger programs or multi-month efforts
- Funding availability is subject to annual budget allocations approved by the City Council.
- Grants are for one year. Grants are not guaranteed to be renewed.

### 6. Use of Funds

#### **Allowable expenses include:**

- Program supplies and materials
- Outreach and communication costs
- Equipment directly supporting the project
- Facility rental for program delivery
- Transportation for program participants
- Modest food/beverage costs for community-facing activities
- Stipends for youth or community workers directly related to work only for the grant-supported program

#### **Funds may not be used for:**

- Political activities
- Religious instruction
- Salaries for permanent staff
- Payment of debts, utilities, or ongoing operational expenses
- Alcohol, entertainment unrelated to program objectives, or personal expenses

### 7. Application Process

- a. Application Release: The city publishes application guidelines and deadlines.
- b. Information Session: Applicants are encouraged to attend an optional workshop.
- c. Submission: Applications must include:



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- Completed application form
  - Budget and timeline
  - Description of community impact
  - Proof of 501(c)(3) nonprofit status
- d. Review Panel: A committee of city staff and community representatives review and score applications based on:
- Alignment with program goals
  - Community benefit and equity impact
  - Feasibility and sustainability
  - Budget clarity
- e. Approval: Recommendations go to the Mayor's Office and City Council for final approval.
- f. Award Notification: Applicants receive award letters, funding agreements, and reporting requirements.
- g. Grant Agreement: Successful applicants will be required to execute a grant agreement as a condition of receiving funding.

## 8. Reporting Requirements

### Award recipients must:

- Provide a final report detailing accomplishments, expenditures, community impact, and participant data
- Maintain financial records for city audit
- Acknowledge the City of North Chicago in promotional materials

Failure to comply may affect eligibility for future grant cycles.

## 9. Program Administration

**This program is administered by the City of North Chicago – Department of Community & Economic Development (or another designated department). Responsibilities include:**

- Managing application cycles
- Providing technical assistance
- Overseeing compliance and reporting
- Evaluating program outcomes
- Presenting annual impact summaries to City Council

## 10. Annual Program Timeline (Example)

- January: Program announcement and application opening
- February: Information workshops



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- March 15: Application deadline
- April: Review & scoring
- May: Council approval and award announcements
- June–April: Implementation and monitoring
- April (following year): Final reports due