



## **Salem Park Improvement Fund (SPIF) FY 2019-2021**

### **I. PROGRAM SUMMARY**

The SPIF program was first established in 2006 and its intent is to provide an opportunity for Salem Neighborhood Associations to partner with the City to help make local park improvements. This is a matching grant program only for City-recognized Neighborhood Associations (NA). Each NA is limited to one project per grant cycle. The program currently allows awards up to 75 percent of the total project cost. The NA is responsible for raising the balance of funding needed after the grant award. This does not guarantee that the NA share will always be 25 percent. The match portion will vary depending on the strength of the individual application and the number of applications received.

City Council approved \$60,000 in SPIF matching funds for the 2019/20 fiscal year. All projects must be approved by City staff and fall within the requirements of the current City of Salem Comprehensive Park System Master Plan (Master Plan). Projects must be completed or construction started before June 30, 2021.

SPIF has an established review committee that consists of three Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members, one Salem Parks Foundation member, and Parks Operations staff. The committee reviews applications and awards funds.

### **II. HOW THE PARTNERSHIP WORKS – GENERAL OVERVIEW**

The NA identifies a project within one of their parks. The City works closely with the NA to ensure the project is feasible and within the standards of the Master Plan; however, the NA assumes the lead in developing and writing a quality proposal. Once a project has been selected and approved by the SPIF Project Review Committee, the City will award a portion of the funds needed to construct the project, and the NA raises the rest of the money. The City then oversees the construction and works with NA volunteers who wish to participate in the process.

### **III. HOW TO APPLY – THE DETAILS**

The application portion of the program is a two-part process: Part One is the submission of a Letter of Intent; Part Two is the submission of a formal application.

#### **Part One – Letter of Intent – Due October 31, 2019**

The Letter of Intent form (LOI) is a brief explanation of the project approved by the Neighborhood Association and signed by its Chair. All LOI forms must be submitted by October 31, 2019 to be eligible for this cycle of the program. The LOI form is on the last page of this packet.

All Letters of Intent are received by the City and reviewed by the SPIF Review Committee for eligibility. The project must meet the following eligible criteria listed below.

- A. The project is identified as an approved amenity in the Comprehensive Park System Master Plan. The Master Plan is designed to identify the needs of Neighborhood, Community, and Urban Parks. Park amenities are planned for different categories of parks based on a wide variety and number of users depending on the park classification. There may be a certain amenity that is appropriate for a

Community Park, but not for a Neighborhood Park based on type of use, maintenance received, location, and/or size.

B. Project meets all local, state, and federal laws for parks and recreation facilities.

Any new amenity added to a public park must meet local, state, and federal rules to ensure all citizens safe access and use. A new improvement may require infrastructure such as ADA accessible walkways to provide a safe route leading to the proposed project. If needed, this will be included in your project. Proposed projects should avoid impacts to natural resources such as wetlands, streams, and riparian areas that require state and/or federal permits.

C. The proposed amenity meets City of Salem, Parks Operations standards.

The City of Salem has a set standard for park furnishings and equipment in order to meet specific safety and maintenance requirements. Even an item as simple as a bench has to be made from a specific quality of material in order to withstand damage due to use, weather, and vandalism.

The initial focus of the Committee is to determine whether the project is consistent with the overall use of the park and falls within the requirements of the current City of Salem Comprehensive Park System Master Plan. If a project does not meet these requirements, the NA will be given opportunity to adjust the scope of their project.

**Part Two – Formal Application - Due January 31, 2020**

A. Pre-Application Meeting

Once the LOI is approved, the NA will be contacted by City staff for a pre-application conference.

B. Project Budget

After the pre-application review, City staff will develop a budget estimate for submission with the formal application. At that time, the neighborhood association will know the estimated cost of the project and can consider whether they are still interested in proceeding with their application. It is important to note project cost estimates are just that – estimates. Actual project costs can vary due to the economic and bidding environment at the time. If the proposed improvement can utilize volunteer labor, it will be discussed at this time as well. This will allow the representative to take this information to their neighborhood association meeting for approval prior to application submission.

C. Application and Review Criteria

Applications will include a description of the project, community support for the project, and the amount of matching funds already raised or the NA's plan to raise the matching funds. The application will also include the estimate provided by the City of Salem. The application must be signed by the neighborhood association chairperson.

When the applications have been submitted, staff will review the proposals and verify all of the information is complete. The applications will then be scored by the Review Committee. The Review Committee will score each application based on the project criteria below. Each item will have a possible total value of 20 points. Awards could vary based on the cumulative score of each application.

Project Review Criteria – Each item is worth up to 20 points

1. Feasibility

A project’s feasibility is based on the likelihood the NA can raise their portion of the funding within the designated time frame. The application should have a clear explanation of how they intend to raise the money and their experience in fundraising.

2. Matching Funds

Applicants must either have solid funding in place or be able to lay out a firm plan to garner their funds. Preference points will be awarded to those projects that have a high percentage of funds already in place.

Volunteer hours can be used toward a portion of the NA match; however, volunteer labor must be discussed prior to application, and will be determined and approved by the City on a case-by-case basis.

3. Community Support

Applicants need to show support from their neighborhood residents, businesses, school(s), civic groups, etc. Submission of letters of support from neighborhood residents, organizations, and/or businesses is encouraged. Contact your Neighborhood Services Counselor at 503-588-6207 for ideas on how to generate support.

4. Priority of Need

Applicant must show an identifiable need for the desired park improvement and the level of priority.

5. Maintenance Level

The proposal should show the extent to which the improvement will (1) reduce maintenance costs, or (2) require minimal, ongoing maintenance costs. Preference points will be given to those Neighborhood Associations who agree to assist with ongoing maintenance, and are willing to enter into an agreement to that effect for a period of time agreed to by both the Neighborhood Association and the City.

## IV. FUNDING

### A. How the Match Funding Process Works

The Salem Park Improvement Fund is a matching grant program. The SPIF program allows awards up to 75 percent of the estimated cost of the proposed project up to \$20,000. The NA is then responsible for the remaining balance. For example, if a project is estimated at \$10,000 and the SPIF Committee awards \$7,500 toward the project, the neighborhood association is responsible for raising the other \$2,500 by the required time according to these guidelines. The Review Committee typically does not award an amount greater than \$20,000. If a NA proposes a project estimated to cost more than \$25,000, they should be sure to consider how long it may take to raise their funds.

There are cases where circumstances have created a priority need in a park. In this instance, the Review Committee has the discretion to award more than the maximum level if the committee members agree the project is a high priority.

The award will be held by the City until such time as the NA has completed their fundraising and construction of the project can begin. All NA donations will be received and managed by the Salem Parks Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. A separate meeting will need to be set up between the NA representative and the Parks Foundation members once the SPIF project has been approved, to explain the process for making donations.

#### B. Fundraising Deadline – April 30, 2021

In order to schedule implementation of the project, all fundraising for the grant cycle should be complete by April 30, 2021. The project should be underway before the June 30, 2021 deadline. If funds are not raised by April 30, the project will be reassessed and one of the following courses of action will be decided by the NA and staff.

1. Determine a reduced scope for the project. The project will be assessed to see if the overall budget can be reduced to meet the funds available. The original SPIF award will be reduced to match the amount of funds raised by the NA; or,
2. Funds are used for other suitable and approved park improvements in the same park based on the funds raised; or,
3. If approved by the NA, the funds will remain in the Salem Parks Foundation account until a new project can be identified.

The SPIF Review Committee may consider reapplication by the Neighborhood Association in the next approved cycle. Reconsideration will be based on the overall efforts of the NA during the current grant cycle.

#### V. COMMUNICATION

During the planning and construction phases of the SPIF project, we ask each Neighborhood Association to appoint one or two representatives to work with the SPIF Program Coordinator who will coordinate City assistance for each Neighborhood Association by working with the Parks Operations Manager, Park Supervisors, Volunteer Coordinator, and the Neighborhood Counselor to answer any questions the NA representative may have during this process. This will simplify communications and ensure each party involved receives the same information on the project. The SPIF representative can be the Chair, Park Chair, or other person appointed by the NA Board.

## 2019-2021 SALEM PARK IMPROVEMENT FUND LETTER OF INTENT

**ALL AREAS MUST BE FILLED OUT AND SIGNED BEFORE SUBMISSION.**

**Please submit to:**

<b>Neighborhood Association:</b>	
<b>Chairperson's Name:</b>	Address:
Phone:	Email:
<b>SPIF Representative's Name:</b>	Address:
Phone:	Email:
Proposed Park Site:	
Type of Project: (check more than one box if appropriate)	
<input type="checkbox"/> New Park Feature (s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Replacement of Existing Park Feature (s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Park Rehabilitation	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Restoration
Project Description: (Description of the proposed work elements)	
Signatures Required	
_____	_____
Neighborhood Association Chair	Date